

## Requests from members of the public for public data kept by TRA

This guide is provided in accordance with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act (Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 13), which requires government entities to establish public access procedures for data requests from the public.

The Government Data Practices Act presumes that all government data are public unless a state or federal law says otherwise. Government data means all data collected, created, received, maintained, or disseminated by any government entity regardless of its physical form, storage media, or conditions of use.

With respect to data on TRA members, survivors, and beneficiaries maintained by the statewide retirement systems, including the Teachers Retirement Association (TRA), the Government Data Practices Act says that TRA may be only required to disclose name, gross pension, and type of benefit awarded, notwithstanding any law to the contrary.

Other sections of the Government Data Practices Act say that social security numbers are considered private, as are the following data on beneficiaries and survivors of TRA members: address, birth date, direct deposit account number, and tax withholding data.

### How to make a data request

Members of the public can look at (inspect) public data that TRA keeps by coming in to the office or by asking for copies. TRA may charge for copies, but members of the public may look at the data in person, free of charge, before deciding to request copies.

Requests for data must be in writing. TRA provides a request form on its website for convenience. Requesters must include a clear description of the data they are seeking and whether inspection or copies of the data or both inspection and copies are sought.

Requests can be submitted by email to [datarequest@minnesotatra.org](mailto:datarequest@minnesotatra.org) or by mail to **Data Practices Compliance Official  
Teachers Retirement Association  
60 Empire Drive, Suite 400  
St. Paul, MN 55103**

TRA cannot require persons requesting data to identify themselves or explain the reason for the data request. However, depending upon how the requester wishes to receive the data, TRA may need contact information.

If TRA does not understand the data request and there is no contact information, then there may be a delay or difficulty fulfilling the data request.

### How TRA responds to data requests

Upon receiving a written data request, TRA will work to process it as follows:

- » If TRA has the data and the data are public, TRA will respond to the public data request within a reasonable period of time by:
  - Arranging a date, time, and place to inspect the data, if that is the nature of the request.
  - Providing copies of the data as soon as reasonably possible by either in-person pick up, mailing, emailing, or faxing to the address, email address, or fax number

provided. Electronic copies are provided upon request if the data is kept in electronic format. Information about copy charges appears below.

- » If TRA does not have the data, TRA will notify the requester in writing as soon as reasonably possible.
- » If TRA does have the data, but the data are considered not public, private, or confidential, then TRA will notify the requester in writing and cite the specific law that protects the data.

The Government Data Practices Act does not require TRA to create or collect new data in response to a data request if TRA does not already have the data, nor does the act require TRA to provide data in a specific form or arrangement if TRA does not keep the data in that form or arrangement.

## Requests for summary data

Summary data are statistical records or reports that are prepared by removing all personal identifiers from private or confidential data on individuals. TRA will prepare summary data if the data request is in writing. There may be a charge for staff time and analysis required to prepare the data in summary form.

## Copy costs

TRA may charge members of the public for copies of data they request. These charges are authorized under Minnesota Statutes, section 13.03, subdivision 3(c).

For 100 or fewer pages of paper copies, the cost is 25 cents for a one-sided copy or 50 cents for a two-sided copy.

The charge for most other types of copies is the actual cost of searching for, retrieving, and compiling the data, and making copies of or electronically transmitting the data. In determining the actual cost of making copies, TRA will factor in employee time, the cost of the materials (paper, CD, DVD, etc.) onto which the data is copied, and mailing costs (if any). If the data request is for copies of data that TRA cannot reproduce (such as photos), then TRA will charge the actual cost paid to an outside vendor for the copies.

If, because of the subject matter of the request, TRA finds it necessary for a higher-paid employee to search for and retrieve the data, TRA will charge at the higher salary/wage of the personnel involved in fulfilling the data request. If possible, and upon request, TRA will provide requesters with an estimation of the total cost of supplying copies.

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This document was created and provided to you by the Teachers Retirement Association. It serves as a summary of the applicable state statutes in effect as of the date this document was issued. In the event that there is a discrepancy between information in this document and the governing laws and policies, the laws and policies shall apply. Plan provisions are subject to change. No information in this document should be construed as tax, financial, or legal advice.

**This document can be made available in alternative formats to individuals with disabilities by calling 800-657-3669 or through the Minnesota Relay Service at 800-627-3529.**



60 Empire Drive, Suite 400, St. Paul, MN 55103  
800-657-3669 | 651-296-2409 | Fax 651-297-5999  
[minnesotatra.org](http://minnesotatra.org)

TRA provides retirement, disability, and survivor benefits to Minnesota's public educators assisting them in achieving future income security. TRA strives to provide benefits that attract and retain competent teachers who serve communities throughout the state, building a stronger education system. TRA is committed to safeguarding the financial integrity of the fund and takes pride in providing exceptional, innovative services.