

Instructions and application for purchasing

Other Massachusetts public service

INSTRUCTIONS

If you were employed by a Massachusetts public employer and, during your employment, you were not a member of a Massachusetts contributory retirement system, you may be eligible to purchase credit for your prior service. Such employment includes, but is not limited to:

- Municipal service rendered while a temporary or seasonal employee in any city, town, or county government agency or authority in the Commonwealth;
State service rendered while an employee of a state office, agency, or state-run facility; or
Higher Ed service rendered as a part-time or temporary employee of a Massachusetts state college or university, for example, as a student employee, adjunct faculty member or visiting lecturer.

Step 1: Determine your eligibility

1) Were you employed by a city, state or county governmental unit in Massachusetts prior to entering (or re-entering) active service with the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System? ... Yes No
If "yes," please go to Question 2. If "no," your service is not eligible for purchase.

2) Was this service rendered as an "independent contractor"? ... Yes No
If "no," please go to Question 3. If "yes," this service is not eligible, as service rendered as an independent contractor may not be purchased.

3) Was this service rendered without compensation as a selectman, city councilor or alderman, school committee member, moderator or library trustee? ... Yes No
If "no," please go to Question 4. If "yes," this service is not eligible, as uncompensated service rendered in any of these specific positions may not be purchased.

4) During your employment, were you a member of a Massachusetts contributory retirement system? ... Yes No
If "no," you may be eligible to purchase credit for your prior service. Please go to Step 2.
If "yes," and:

- you left your funds on account with that system, please call us and let us know. We will review our records to determine if your prior service has already been credited with us; if it has, we will let you know, and if not, we will contact that system and request a transfer of your account.
you took a refund of your account from that system, you may be eligible to receive credit by "buying back" your refund. To initiate this process, please complete our Prior refunded service with a Massachusetts contributory retirement system application.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS: From the time that you begin to gather your required documentation to the time that we send you an invoice, the service purchase process can take several months. If you are approaching retirement and you wish to purchase this service, you should be sure to complete and return your application at least six months before your date of retirement, so please plan ahead. As a reminder, service cannot be purchased after the effective date of your retirement.
Have questions or need assistance? Please don't hesitate to contact our main office at 617-679-6877. We're here to help!

MAIN OFFICE
500 Rutherford Avenue, Suite 210
Charlestown, MA 02129-1628
Phone 617-679-MTRS (6877)
Fax 617-679-1661

WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE
One Monarch Place
Springfield, MA 01144-2048
Phone 413-784-1711
Fax 413-784-1707

ONLINE
MTRS
MASSACHUSETTS TEACHERS' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

## Step 2: Review these Q&A to understand the restrictions and application process

### Are there any requirements or restrictions I should know about?

Yes—the maximum amount of credit you may purchase for time during which you were not a member of another Massachusetts contributory retirement system is 20 years. (There is no limit on the amount of service you may purchase for time during which you were a member of another Massachusetts contributory retirement system.) Additionally:

- Service rendered as an independent contractor is **not** eligible for purchase. Also, service paid from a state subsidiary "03" account is explicitly excluded from the definition of "Employee" for the purposes of membership in a public employee contributory retirement system per *M.G.L. Chapter 32, Section 1*, and is thus ineligible for purchase.
- Effective July 1, 2009, credit may no longer be purchased for uncompensated service rendered as a selectman, city councilor or alderman, school committee member, moderator or library trustee; however, service in these positions that was purchased prior to 7/1/2009 will count as creditable service.
- If the service rendered was on a day-to-day basis after July 1, 2009, and you earned less than \$5,000 annually, then this service may be ineligible for purchase.

### How can I determine if it makes financial sense for me to purchase all—or just a portion—of my other Massachusetts public service?

Depending on how much creditable service you will have at the time of retirement, purchasing your other Massachusetts public service credit may or may not make financial sense for you. Please be aware that a retirement allowance can be no higher than 80 percent of your allowable final salary average, and a service purchase, once made, cannot be refunded. So, before you decide to purchase this service, or decide how much to purchase, please consider whether you expect to be at or near the 80 percent maximum at the time of your retirement *without* this purchase.

To compare your retirement benefits both *with* and *without* this service purchase, visit our website at [mass.gov/mtrs](http://mass.gov/mtrs) and use our online estimator.

## Step 3: Apply to purchase this service

If you have read and understand the Q&A in Step 2, and believe that you are eligible to apply to purchase credit for your other Massachusetts public service, please:

- 1) **Complete** ALL of **Section 1** of the application form
- 2) For completion of **Sections 2-4**, contact the payroll or business office of your prior Massachusetts public employer and explain that, for purposes of potentially purchasing your prior service credit, you need documentation of your service, and that you would like to have a representative complete a portion of your application. Ask this person to complete Sections 2-4 and then return the form to you.
- 3) **Make** a copy of your completed application for your records.
- 4) **Submit** your completed **original** application pages to either our main or Western Regional office (addresses on form). Please note that your application will not be accepted unless **ALL** sections are complete; if any required sections are not complete, your form will be returned to you for completion.

After we receive your completed application, we will review it, determine your eligibility to purchase the service, and, if eligible, send you an invoice. Along with your invoice, you will receive information regarding how you may pay for your purchase.

## How is the cost of my service purchase calculated?

The cost of purchasing your past service is based on what you would have paid in retirement contributions to the MTRS during the period of your employment with the other Massachusetts public employer at the contribution rate that would have been in effect—plus interest\*, at the actuarial interest rate in effect at the time of your application.

### EXAMPLE

If you worked in the Cambridge Public Works Department from June to September 2008, and your earnings for that period were \$10,000, your cost to purchase those three months of service (0.25 year of creditable service) would be \$1,100, plus actuarial interest from June 2008 to the date of your purchase.

Earnings from June–Sept 2008	\$	10,000		
x Contribution rate of 11%			x	0.11
Annual contributions to MTRS for period		\$	1,100	
+ Actuarial interest from June 2008 to date of purchase			+	Interest
Total purchase cost			Total cost	

### CONTRIBUTION RATE TABLE

If your MA public service was rendered...	The contribution rate applied is...
Before January 1, 1975	5%
January 1, 1975 through December 31, 1978	7%
January 1, 1979 through December 31, 1983	7% + 2% on earnings over \$30,000
January 1, 1984 through June 30, 1996	8% + 2% on earnings over \$30,000
July 1, 1996 through June 30, 2001	9% + 2% on earnings over \$30,000
July 1, 2001 or after	11%

\*EXCEPTION: If you established membership in a Massachusetts public retirement system on or after April 2, 2012, and you had previously been a member of a Massachusetts public retirement system and taken a refund of your account, you will have one year from the date that you re-entered public service to apply and pay for your service purchase at the lower "buyback" interest rate in effect at the time of your application. After your first year of re-entry to membership, you will be subject to actuarial interest.

Service credit purchase application

# Other Massachusetts public service

**SECTION 1**

**APPLICANT DATA,  
 STATEMENT, AND  
 SIGNATURE**

**Instructions to applicant:**  
 Please provide your personal data and then forward these three pages to the payroll official of the governmental unit in which you rendered your prior service for completion of Sections 2-4.

The payroll official will then return these completed pages to you, and you are responsible for forwarding the completed application to the MTRS in order to apply to purchase this service.

a) Name of applicant .....

b) MTRS member number, if known. ....   Not known

c) Social Security number. .... XXX-XX-XXXX

d) Former/maiden name, if applicable .....   Not applicable

e) Mailing address ..... Number and street   
 City  State  ZIP

f) Phone number .....   Home  Cell  Work

g) E-mail .....

h) Are you currently employed by a Massachusetts school district? .....  No  Yes. If "yes":  
 Name of current employer .....   
 Current MTRS employment status. *Check one*  Active  On an authorized leave of absence for not more than one year

i) **Prior MA public service you are seeking to purchase:**  
 Name of employer (e.g., City of Cambridge, Commonwealth of MA) .....   
 Unit (e.g., DPW, UMass Boston) .....   
 Position/title (e.g., lifeguard, visiting lecturer) ...   
 Period of service ..... mm/dd/yyyy From  to

I, the above-named member of the Massachusetts Teachers' Retirement System, hereby apply to purchase credit for my prior service, subject to my eligibility to do so. I understand that if I wish to purchase this service, I must: apply for this service purchase while I am a member in service (either an active member of the MTRS or an inactive member on an authorized leave of absence for not more than one year); have Part 2 of this application completed by a representative from my prior governmental employer, and submit Parts 1 and 2 together to the MTRS at the same time; and, pay the total amount due before my date of retirement from the MTRS. I certify under the penalties of perjury that the information I have provided is true and accurate.

Signature  Date

**For our processing purposes, please answer the following questions:**  
 Are you also applying to purchase other public service rendered with any other Massachusetts employer? .....  No  Yes  
 When do you plan to retire? .....  1-6 mos.  7-12 mos.  1-2 years  2+ years



**The following sections must be completed by the payroll official of the governmental unit where this service was rendered (named in line i above).**

Applicant's name

MTRS member number

**SECTION 2**

**EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

- a) During any period of the applicant's service, did he or she contribute to any Massachusetts contributory retirement system? . . . . .  Yes  No
- If "yes," please identify the system . . . . .
- b) What was the applicant's employment status during this service? . . . . .  Employee  Consultant/Vendor  
 Independent Contractor  
 Other
- c) Was the applicant a seasonal employee? . . . . .  Yes  No
- d) **If the applicant was a state or higher ed employee,** was he or she paid from a state subsidiary "03" account as a contracted employee? . . . . .  Yes  No  Not applicable  
*(municipal employee)*

**SECTION 3**

**SERVICE AND SALARY INFORMATION**

Please use the applicable table(s) in this section to provide the applicant's service and salary data.  
 If the applicant's service was rendered:

- as either a municipal or state employee, and his or her service was rendered:
  - on an **annual basis**, complete **Table A**;
  - on a **daily or hourly basis**, complete **Table C** on the next page.
- in a higher ed position, and his or her service was rendered:
  - as a temporary instructor (i.e., adjunct faculty, adjunct instructor, visiting lecturer, etc.) complete **Table B**;
  - on a **daily or hourly basis**, complete **Table C** on the next page.

If you have any questions, **please contact the MTRS at 617-679-6877.**

**TABLE A) STATE OR MUNICIPAL SERVICE RENDERED ON AN ANNUAL BASIS**

Period during which service was rendered		Member's title or position during service	Percentage of full time	Employee status		Annual contract rate	Gross amount paid
From mm/dd/yyyy	To mm/dd/yyyy			Check one Temporary	Permanent		
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

**TABLE B) SERVICE RENDERED IN A HIGHER ED POSITION AS A TEMPORARY INSTRUCTOR**

Period during which service was rendered		Position title	Semester (Fall, Winter, Spring, Summer)	School year	Credits taught per semester	Full-time credits per semester	Contract rate	Actual gross amount paid
From	To							
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Applicant's name

MTRS member number

**SECTION 3** (continued)

**TABLE C) STATE, MUNICIPAL, OR HIGHER ED SERVICE RENDERED ON A DAILY OR HOURLY BASIS**

Month/year in which service was rendered	Member's position title	Number of DAYS worked	Daily rate	<b>OR</b>	Number of HOURS worked	Hourly rate	Actual gross amount paid
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$
/			\$			\$	\$

If the applicant was a student employee, did he or she receive tuition reimbursement for credits for work performed?  Yes  No  Not applicable

**SECTION 4**

**STATEMENT AND SIGNATURE OF GOVERNMENTAL UNIT'S PAYROLL OFFICIAL**

I certify that the information I have provided above is true and accurate.

Signature of payroll department official...  Date

Name (please print)

Title

Governmental unit/agency

Address

City  MA Zip

Phone

Fax

E-mail

REMINDER: Please return these three ORIGINAL pages directly to the applicant, not the MTRS. Thank you!