

1 State of Arkansas
2 93rd General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2021
4

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1274

5 By: Representative S. Smith
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For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT CONCERNING THE MEMBERSHIP OF VOLUNTEER POLICE
9 OFFICERS IN THE ARKANSAS PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT
10 SYSTEM; CONCERNING RECIPROCAL SERVICE CREDIT EARNED
11 BY VOLUNTEER POLICE OFFICERS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
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Subtitle

14 CONCERNING THE MEMBERSHIP OF VOLUNTEER
15 POLICE OFFICERS IN THE ARKANSAS PUBLIC
16 EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM; AND
17 CONCERNING RECIPROCAL SERVICE CREDIT
18 EARNED BY VOLUNTEER POLICE OFFICERS.
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22 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
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24 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 24-4-101(17)(B), concerning the definition
25 of "employees" as applicable to the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement
26 System, is amended to read as follows:

27 (B) Excepting members of the General Assembly and those persons
28 participating in a local firemen's relief and pension fund because of their
29 status as volunteer firefighters, those persons participating in a local
30 policemen's pension and relief fund because of their status as a volunteer
31 police officer, and those persons who have dual full-time employment in
32 separate positions covered by the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement
33 System and the Arkansas Local Police and Fire Retirement System respectively,
34 the term "employees" shall not include persons who are members of any other
35 retirement system, excepting Social Security, which retirement system is
36 supported by state funds or is authorized by the laws of the state. In



1 addition, the term "employees" specifically shall not include the following:

2 (i) Persons in the employ of the Division of
3 Arkansas State Police who are members of the State Police Retirement System;

4 (ii) Persons in the employ of the Department of
5 Education or the Arkansas Teacher Retirement System, except as otherwise
6 provided by law;

7 (iii) Persons in the employ of the University of
8 Arkansas or any other state-supported institution of higher learning, except
9 as otherwise provided by law;

10 (iv) Justices of the Supreme Court, judges of
11 circuit courts, or judges of chancery courts;

12 (v) Persons in the employ of the General Assembly
13 who are employed on a less than full-time regular annual salary basis, except
14 that any person who has served or who shall serve during at least six (6)
15 legislative sessions as Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives and who
16 has served in the employ of the General Assembly during at least twelve (12)
17 previous legislative sessions shall be eligible to receive credited service
18 in the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System for any period of
19 employment with the General Assembly since July 1, 1957, but only if the
20 employee is, or was, an active member of the system with at least ten (10)
21 years of credited service and only if the employee pays or causes to be paid
22 all employee contributions at the rate and on the compensation that would
23 have been paid had he or she been a member of the system during those periods
24 of time, all employer contributions based on the employer normal cost from
25 the most recently completed regular annual actuarial valuation and the
26 compensation that would have been paid had he or she been a member during
27 those periods of time, and regular interest on the employee and employer
28 contributions computed from the date of service to the date the payment is
29 received by the system;

30 (vi) Persons who are in the employ of the Arkansas
31 Department of Transportation;

32 (vii) Persons employed with the intent of working
33 less than ninety (90) calendar days;

34 (viii) Persons who are employed for a period of more
35 than ninety (90) consecutive calendar days but who do not qualify as full-
36 time employees shall be excluded from membership. A person shall be

1 considered a full-time employee if that person works at least eighty (80)
2 hours per month during a period of ninety (90) consecutive calendar days;

3 (ix)(a)(1) Persons whose rate of pay does not
4 constitute employment that is substantially gainful shall be excluded from
5 membership.

6 (2) A rate of pay less than the federal
7 minimum wage for the year shall not be considered employment that is
8 substantially gainful.

9 (b) A tipped food service employee of the
10 Department of Parks, Heritage, and Tourism who is guaranteed the prevailing
11 minimum wage by the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, 29 U.S.C. § 201 et
12 seq., as it existed on January 1, 2009, is in employment that is
13 substantially gainful.

14 (c) The employee and employer contributions
15 for a tipped food service employee of the Department of Parks, Heritage, and
16 Tourism is computed based on the tipped food service employee's hourly rate
17 of pay;

18 (x) Persons who are first employed or those who are
19 reemployed as participants on or after July 1, 1979, under the Comprehensive
20 Employment and Training Act [repealed]. However, those persons participating
21 in the program prior to July 1, 1979, shall continue to be members of the
22 Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System while employed by a
23 participating public employer;

24 (xi) Any person previously denied coverage by the
25 Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System because that person was eligible
26 for membership in but did not participate in another retirement system that
27 is supported by state funds or that is authorized by the laws of the state,
28 shall become a member of the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System
29 from the date of July 1, 1999, if in an otherwise eligible position due to
30 employment with a participating employer. Any person previously denied
31 coverage by the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System because that
32 person was eligible for or receiving benefits from another retirement system
33 supported by state funds or that is authorized by the laws of the state shall
34 become a member of the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System from the
35 date of July 1, 1999, if in an otherwise eligible position due to employment
36 with a participating employer. That person may receive, at the employee's

1 option, credit for service rendered to a participating public employer before
2 that date, subject to the following conditions:

3 (a) The member is a participating employee
4 covered under the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System at the time of
5 the purchase;

6 (b) The member furnishes proof in a form
7 required by the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System of the service
8 and compensation received;

9 (c) The member pays or causes to be paid all
10 employee contributions at the rate and on the compensation that would have
11 been paid had he or she been a member during that time, all employer
12 contributions based on the employer normal cost from the most recently
13 completed regular annual actuarial valuation and the compensation that would
14 have been paid had he or she been a member during that time, and regular
15 interest on the employee and employer contributions. The interest shall be
16 computed from the date the service was rendered to the date the payment is
17 received by the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System. The member may
18 purchase all of the service or any portion thereof in multiples of one (1)
19 year; and

20 (d) The payment of funds shall be made in one
21 (1) lump sum;

22 (xii) The surviving spouse of any person deemed
23 erroneously enrolled due to receipt of a benefit from another retirement
24 system supported by state funds or that is authorized by the laws of the
25 state but whose service had not been refunded at or before the date of death
26 shall be eligible to receive a benefit under the provisions of § 24-4-608,
27 provided that the person was an employee of the participating employer on the
28 date of death. The monthly annuity shall be payable on the first day of the
29 month following the month of application and shall be retroactive to the date
30 the benefit would have been otherwise payable as provided for in § 24-4-608;
31 and

32 (xiii) Any person previously denied coverage by the
33 Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System because that person was employed
34 in dual full-time positions covered by the Arkansas Public Employees'
35 Retirement System and the Arkansas Local Police and Fire Retirement System,
36 respectively, shall become a member of both systems from and after the date

1 of July 1, 2001, if in otherwise eligible positions with participating
2 employers. The person may receive at the employee's option credit for service
3 rendered to a participating public employer before that date, subject to the
4 following conditions:

5 (a) The member is a participating employee
6 covered under the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System at the time of
7 the purchase;

8 (b) The member furnishes proof in a form
9 required by the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System of the service
10 and compensation received;

11 (c) The member pays or causes to be paid all
12 employee contributions at the rate and on the compensation that would have
13 been paid had the person been a member during that time, all employer
14 contributions based on the employer normal cost from the most recently
15 completed regular annual actuarial valuation and the compensation that would
16 have been paid had the person been a member during that time, and regular
17 interest on the employee and employer contributions. The interest shall be
18 computed from the date the service was rendered to the date the payment is
19 received by the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System. The member may
20 purchase all of the service or any portion thereof in multiples of one (1)
21 year; and

22 (d) The payment of funds shall be made in one
23 (1) lump sum.
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25 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 24, Chapter 4, Subchapter 5, is amended
26 to add an additional section to read as follows:

27 24-4-524. Reciprocal service credit – Volunteer police officers.

28 (a) A volunteer police officer is entitled to receive reciprocal
29 service credit from the Arkansas Public Employees' Retirement System for
30 service credit earned by the volunteer police officer under the Arkansas
31 Local Police and Fire Retirement System or a local policemen's pension and
32 relief fund.

33 (b) The reciprocal service credit to which a volunteer police officer
34 is entitled under this section is subject to the provisions of § 24-2-401 et
35 seq.
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