



The State University  
of New York



# THE SUNY OPTIONAL RETIREMENT PROGRAM (ORP) PROVIDED THROUGH TIAA

## Making the Most of Your Retirement

Pre-Retirement Questions and Answers

## THE SUNY OPTIONAL RETIREMENT PLAN (ORP) PROVIDED THROUGH TIAA

Pre-Retirement Questions and Answers

### 1. What is the earliest age at which I can retire?

There is no minimum or maximum retirement age under SUNY's Optional Retirement Program. You can begin to collect retirement income whenever you leave active employment with SUNY or with any other entity described in the New York Education Law as having employees eligible for the ORP and the New York State Education Department. However, if the employee separates from service before reaching age 55, there may be a potential 10% penalty by the IRS for early distribution.

### 2. What is the oldest age that I am allowed to work to?

You are not required to retire by a certain age. After you terminate employment with SUNY or any other entity described in the New York Education Law as having employees eligible for the ORP or the New York State Education Department, you can postpone the start of retirement benefits until April 1 after the year you reach age 72, or if later, until April 1 in the year following your retirement. This is referred to as the required beginning date under federal tax law. Under the SECURE Act, the "begin date" to start taking RMDs from your pre-tax retirement plan accounts and IRAs is the year you turn age 72. The previous age was 70½.

### 3. What are some key milestones dates for consideration when thinking about retirement?

- Age 55. If you separate from service in the year you turn age 55 or later, you can withdraw funds from your Plan and avoid the 10% early withdrawal penalty according to the IRS Rule of 55. Of course, any withdrawal is still considered taxable income to you.

- Age 59½. This is when the withdrawals from tax-advantaged retirement plans are no longer subject to the 10% early withdrawal penalty.
- Age 62. You can begin receiving Social Security benefits, but at a reduced amount.
- Age 66. If you were born between 1934 and 1954, this is when full Social Security benefits are available (regardless of any future earnings). Visit the Social Security website at [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) to see other ages for full Social Security benefits for years of birth after 1954.

Age 72. If no longer employed by SUNY, you must generally begin withdrawing funds from your SUNY retirement plan. The age at which required minimum distributions (RMDs) must begin has increased from age 70½ to age 72 for individuals who attain age 70½ after December 31, 2019 (those who attained age 70½ before this date are not affected and will continue to be subject to RMDs).

- Employer plans: By April 1, following the year you turn age 72 or retirement from the sponsoring employer, whichever is later.
- IRAs (except Roth IRAs): By April 1, following the year you turn age 72.

- Age 75. You must begin withdrawing funds exempt from the age 72 distribution requirement (those funds contributed to a 403(b) plan before January 1, 1987), unless you are still employed and meet certain criteria.
- Age 90. You must begin income from after-tax annuities. It's the latest you can start taking lifetime annuity income from a TIAA retirement account.

#### 4. When I retire, may I consider taking income from TIAA Traditional or from the variable accounts?

Within the context of your overall financial holdings, you may consider a strategy of taking payments from a combination of TIAA Traditional<sup>1</sup> and variable account income, which may help protect against the effects of inflation. Payments from TIAA Traditional are guaranteed,<sup>1</sup> but may lose some purchasing power as a result of inflation. While the variable account payments will vary from year to year, depending on the investment experience of the accounts, they may provide a hedge against inflation. We suggest you consult with your TIAA financial advisor to help you identify your retirement income needs and to help plan your income strategy.<sup>2</sup>

#### 5. How will inflation impact my retirement benefits?

It's impossible to predict with certainty the inflation that will occur during your retirement years. When evaluating your retirement income needs, it's important to remember that today's dollar *may not* be worth as much in the years ahead. For example, assume inflation does average 5% for the first ten years of retirement. You will need \$16,289 at the end of the tenth year to buy the same items you bought for \$10,000 in your first year. Your income will not automatically be indexed for inflation.

If you're concerned about inflation, you might consider using the **Graded Payment Method** available through the TIAA Traditional Annuity. It is only available for contracts where the payout interest rate is 4% or higher. TIAA Traditional Annuity offers two types of payment methods which provide a guaranteed level of benefit payments, plus the potential for additional income through additional amounts. With the **Standard Payment Method**, monthly payments remain the same every year, as long as TIAA Traditional additional amounts don't change. However, if the declared additional amounts decrease or increase, the amount of your payments will change accordingly. With the Graded Payment Method, your initial monthly payments will be lower than the Standard Method, but as the years go by, they gradually increase. This is accomplished by using part of your TIAA Traditional additional amounts to buy additional lifetime income, rather than paying it out immediately. For more information about the Consumer Price Index, you may visit [www.bls.gov/cpi](http://www.bls.gov/cpi).

Historically, stocks and other equities may have provided a good hedge against inflation, so taking income from the TIAA and CREF variable investment accounts can also help you maintain purchasing power through the years. Keep in mind that past performance is no guarantee of future results.

#### 6. Once I decide on an annuity income option, can I ever change my mind?

Income options, payment methods and annuity partners cannot be changed. However, deciding where to take your annuity income from is no longer an irrevocable decision. Through the annuity income transferability option, you can generally change the source of your income by transferring all or part of the accumulation being annuitized from one account to another. You can transfer:

- Among the TIAA and CREF variable accounts
- To TIAA Traditional under either the Graded or Standard Payment Methods
- From TIAA Traditional to any of the CREF Equity Accounts

You can also switch your TIAA Traditional Payment Method from Graded to Standard. Additionally, transfers among the variable annuities is limited to once per calendar quarter.

#### 7. Is it possible to outlive my monthly benefit?

It is not possible to outlive your monthly retirement benefit if you choose a life annuity. However, you can outlive lump-sum cash, systematic withdrawals, and fixed-period withdrawals. Please see question 12 for a description of the other forms of payment.

#### 8. What happens if I die before I select an income option?

If you die before beginning lifetime annuity income, your beneficiaries can transfer ownership of your accounts into their names and then they can select from the following:

- Receive only the required minimum distribution amount each year
- A lifetime annuity with a minimum number of payments guaranteed
- A fixed-period payment of two to 30 years of payments guaranteed

<sup>1</sup> Any guarantees under annuities issued by TIAA are subject to TIAA's claims-paying ability. TIAA Traditional is a guaranteed insurance contract and not an investment for federal securities law purposes.

<sup>2</sup> The TIAA Traditional Annuity is a guaranteed annuity backed by TIAA's claims-paying ability. The TIAA Traditional Annuity provides a guarantee of principal and a specified interest rate in the accumulation phase. The TIAA Traditional Annuity also offers the potential for greater growth through additional amounts, which may be declared on a year-by-year basis by the TIAA Board of Trustees. Such additional amounts, when declared, remain in effect for the "declaration year" which begins each March 1 for accumulating annuities, and January 1 for payout annuities. Additional amounts are not guaranteed for periods other than the period for which they were declared.

- A lump-sum settlement (A lump sum will automatically be paid if your beneficiary is an estate, corporation, or any entity other than a person.)
- A rollover to an IRA

### 9. Who can be named as beneficiary?

Your spouse and/or dependent children can be designated as beneficiaries. You can also designate any other individuals and can designate multiple individuals. You should review your beneficiary designation from time-to-time. If you wish to change it, you may visit [TIAA.org](https://www.tiaa.org) and log in to your secure TIAA account to make beneficiary changes online. Select *Actions* then *Add/edit beneficiaries* located under **All accounts**. If you do not designate a beneficiary, your estate receives the entire accumulation.

### 10. How can I find out what my future benefits might be?

TIAA will prepare personalized income illustrations for you at your request. These illustrations can be extremely helpful to your retirement planning. In addition to the single-life annuity options, TIAA will also illustrate the joint life options if you give them the date of birth of your annuity partner. These illustrations are available by request by calling TIAA at **866-662-7945** (SUNY dedicated line) or through the TIAA Individual Consultant assigned to your campus location. Please also note, if you are separated from service however, planning to return to work at SUNY, once you have elected any annuity income options, NYS law prohibits you from receiving any further contributions to the ORP after returning to active service.

### 11. Will my pension benefits be taxable?

Your income—the part attributable to SUNY’s contributions, to your contributions made on a before-tax basis, and to all credited investment earnings, including TIAA Traditional interest payments under the IPRO—will be subject to federal income tax when you receive it. An IRS 10% tax penalty will generally apply to cash withdrawals made before age 59½, unless you have medical expenses exceeding the tax-deductible limit or you become disabled, die or retire after attaining age 55. Under New York State tax law, the income is not subject to state income tax. For more specific information concerning New York taxation on pension benefits, consult a tax professional.

In addition, currently, the State of New York allows for an exclusion of up to \$20,000 of pension and annuity income from state and local taxes each year. If you were age 59½ or older for the entire

tax year, you may exclude up to \$20,000 of your qualified pension and annuity income from your federal adjusted gross income for purposes of determining your New York adjusted gross income. If you became age 59½ during the tax year, the exclusion is allowed only for the amount of pension and annuity income received on or after you became 59½, but not more than \$20,000.

To qualify for this exclusion, you must meet several requirements which are defined under question 15.

**To discuss your options in more detail, please call TIAA at 800-732-8353 to schedule an individual advice session.**

### 12. What are my income choices once I retire?

With TIAA’s retirement income options, you have the flexibility to create a balance of stability and growth potential to pursue your financial goals. In fact, you do not have to select one income option to the exclusion of all others. You may find that you can best meet your financial needs by combining different payment options, including lump-sum payments, periodic withdrawals and lifetime annuity payments.

To accommodate your financial goals in retirement, you can select from among the following payment choices. You can choose any one or a combination of any of the settlement options outlined below:

- Lifetime Annuities (single or joint life options)\*
  - Retirement Transition Benefit (RTB) is not considered an income option. It is available only if you choose a lifetime annuity.
- Systematic withdrawals from your cashable variable account accumulations
- Fixed-Period Annuity\*
- Transfer Payout Annuity
- Interest-Only (IO) Option
- Minimum Distribution Option (MDO)

#### A. Lifetime Annuities (single or joint life options)

##### From TIAA Traditional, TIAA Real Estate Account and CREF Accounts

A **lifetime annuity** is a contractual agreement in which you can exchange your accumulation for an income that lasts for as long as you live. You can arrange to have the lifetime income continue to loved ones (annuity partners) after your death.

\*Any guarantees under annuities issued by TIAA are subject to TIAA’s claims-paying ability. Payments from the variable accounts will rise or fall based on investment performance.

The amount of your annuity payments will depend on the size of your accumulation, your age at retirement, and the annuity income option(s) you select. A TIAA Traditional Annuity pays a benefit that can change, but can never fall below a minimum guaranteed level. The TIAA Real Estate Account and the CREF variable annuity accounts pay a variable income that changes from year to year, depending on investment experience.

Unlike lump-sum or systematic periodic withdrawals, lifetime annuities provide income you can't outlive. Once you take a lifetime annuity, it cannot be cancelled. If you're interested in lifetime income for yourself only, you can choose a **one-life annuity** (also called single-life annuity), which guarantees you income for as long as you live. A **single-life annuity** provides the largest amount of monthly income. It is only paid to you and, therefore, no death benefits or other distributions will continue to anyone after you die. However, if you select a guaranteed payment period, and you die during that selected time span, payments will continue to a beneficiary for the remainder of the period. If you are separating from service however, planning to return to work at SUNY, once you have elected any annuity income options, NYS law prohibits you from receiving any further contributions to the ORP after returning to active service.

If you're interested in providing income to both yourself and an annuity partner, you can choose a **two-life annuity** (also called joint annuity), which guarantees lifetime income to you and, upon your death, to your annuity partner for his or her life. The level of income you'll receive depends on which annuity option you choose:

- **Full Benefit to Survivor:** You receive lifetime income and, upon your death, your annuity partner continues to receive the full amount. Since this option offers the most coverage (full income as long as either you or your annuity partner is living), your initial income is lower than any of the other lifetime annuity options.
- **Half Benefit to Annuity Partner:** You receive lifetime income and, upon your death, your annuity partner receives half the amount you would have received had you lived. There is no reduction in your lifetime income if your annuity partner dies first.
- **75% Benefit to Annuity Partner:** You receive lifetime income. At your death, your annuity partner receives 75% of the amount you would have received had you lived. If your annuity partner dies before you, there is no reduction to your lifetime income.
- **The Two-Thirds Benefit to Survivor:** You receive lifetime income. At the death of either you or your annuity partner, the payments are reduced to two-thirds of the amount that would have been paid if both had lived; the two-thirds benefit continues to the survivor for the lifetime of the survivor.

As permitted by applicable law, you can also add a **guaranteed payment period of 10, 15 or 20 years** to a joint annuity, perhaps naming a child as the beneficiary. This way, if you both die during the time span you selected, the annuity payments will continue to your beneficiary for the remainder of the period. A guaranteed payment period assures that income payments will continue for either 10, 15 or 20 years. However, regardless of the length of the guaranteed period, you will always receive annuity payments for as long as you both live if it is a joint annuity. If you die during the guaranteed period you select, the payments will first continue to the joint annuitant (if there is one). If the annuity partner also dies during the guaranteed period, payments will continue to the beneficiaries through the remainder of the guaranteed period. If you select a single-life annuity with a 15-year guaranteed period and you die after three years, your beneficiary will continue receiving the annuity payments for the twelve years remaining in the period. (Of course, if you—or your annuity partner—live beyond the guaranteed period, income will continue for the rest of the survivor's life. And there will be no income to a beneficiary.)

#### Potential advantages of Lifetime Annuities

- Income you can't outlive.
- Income may continue to loved ones upon your death.
- Guaranteed minimum level of income available through the TIAA Traditional Annuity. Please refer to footnote 2 on page 2.
- Opportunity to continue participating in the investment experience of the variable annuity accounts.

#### Potential drawbacks of Lifetime Annuities:

- You can't change the annuity option or annuity partner once you begin receiving income. (You can change your beneficiary.)
- Once you use your account balance to set up a life annuity, that balance isn't available for income under other distribution options. However, you can change the annuity account. So, for example, if you have a life annuity being paid out of the CREF Stock Account, you can transfer to have the income be paid from TIAA, another CREF Account or the Real Estate Account.

Of the TIAA Traditional and/or variable account accumulations you are in the process of converting to lifetime annuity payments, with whatever is left, you can take income using another option, like a life annuity, fixed-period annuity or minimum distribution payments.

Your monthly annuity income will then be reduced in proportion to the amount received.

- Lump-sum withdrawals and you'll have less available for retirement income.

### **Retirement Transition Benefit (RTB). A lump-sum cash withdrawal**

RTB is not an independent income option, and not a frequently used option along with lifetime annuities. A RTB is a lump-sum (single sum) payment of up to 10% of the TIAA Traditional and/or variable account accumulations you are in the process of converting to lifetime annuity payment. With whatever is left, you can take income using another option, like a life annuity, fixed-period annuity or minimum distribution payments. Your monthly annuity income will then be reduced in proportion to the amount received. Please contact TIAA to learn more about advantages and disadvantages.

### **B. Systematic Cash Withdrawals**

Cash withdrawals are available after you have terminated employment. From the TIAA Real Estate Account and the CREF Accounts, you can take cash payments in a single sum, over a fixed period, or in one or more “systematic” withdrawals.

**Systematic Withdrawals**—Through the Systematic Withdrawal option, you can specify that you be paid any dollar amount (the minimum is \$100) from your cashable accumulation. You can receive payments on a semimonthly, monthly, quarterly, semiannual or annual basis. And you can change or stop the payment amount whenever you need to. You should note, however, that because this is not an annuity arrangement, your accumulation can be depleted.

With Systematic Withdrawals, you can always convert the remainder of your accumulation to lifetime annuity payments, or combine any of the payment method options available through TIAA and CREF. While the Systematic Withdrawals feature does not guarantee lifetime income, any remaining balance in your account would be payable as a death benefit to your beneficiaries.

Any income you receive for a period of less than ten years is generally subject to 20% withholding, unless you're rolling it over directly to an eligible retirement plan or IRA.

#### **Potential advantages of Systematic Withdrawals:**

- You have the control and flexibility to specify the amount and frequency of your income.
- You can convert your remaining balance to another income choice at any time.

#### **Potential drawbacks of Systematic Withdrawals:**

- You need to carefully manage your withdrawals to ensure that you don't outlive your savings.
- You may have less available for lifetime income.

### **C. Fixed-Period Annuity\***

You can also take payments from your cashable accumulation from the TIAA Real Estate Account and CREF variable annuity accounts over a fixed period of 5 to 30 years. If you die during the fixed period, payments will go to your beneficiary for the duration of the fixed period. Your beneficiary can also elect to take the commuted value of the remaining payments in a lump-sum payment.

### **D. Transfer Payout Annuity (TPA)**

This option allows you to access and reallocate TIAA Traditional. All cash withdrawals from TIAA Traditional Annuity are made in ten annual installments through the Transfer Payout Annuity (TPA). The amount you wish to withdraw is placed in a TPA contract. The ten annual payments pay out the settled accumulation with interest. The minimum TPA contract will be for \$10,000 or the entire TIAA accumulation if it totals less than \$10,000 or the entire TIAA Traditional accumulation if less. Once a TPA is initiated, the distributions cannot be stopped but they can be directed to any of the variable accounts or back to TIAA Traditional. You may also elect to convert the remaining payments to TIAA income.

#### **Potential advantages:**

- You can receive predictable withdrawals over a set period of time rather than a lump-sum payment.
- You continue to earn guaranteed interest and any additional amounts in the TIAA Traditional Annuity.
- You may elect to transfer the remaining TIAA amounts to other accounts, if your plans change.
- You can convert remaining payments into lifetime annuity income anytime.

#### **Potential drawbacks:**

- Payments are only for a limited number of years; this option does not guarantee income for life.
- If you payout the TIAA Traditional in full, it will be important that you have other sources of income to cover your expenses once this option is exhausted.

\*Any guarantees under annuities issued by TIAA are subject to TIAA's claims-paying ability. Payments from the variable accounts will rise or fall based on investment performance.

## E. The TIAA Traditional Interest Only (IO) Option

If you are between the ages of 55 and 69½, you may choose to receive as income the interest that would otherwise be credited on your TIAA Traditional Annuity account balance and postpone your selection of a lifetime annuity option. With this Option, you have the benefit of receiving some income without drawing down your principal.

The Interest Only Option (IO) is available for all of your SUNY ORP TIAA Traditional account accumulation or any portion of at least \$10,000.

Since the interest is paid directly to you, your accumulation stays the same while you receive IO payments. The rates credited on TIAA accumulations while you are using the option will determine your payments. If you die while receiving IO income, your beneficiary will receive the amount of your starting accumulation, plus any interest earned, but not yet paid.

Once you begin to receive IO payments, you must continue to use this method for at least a year. After the first year, you can switch to another income option, like one of the lifetime annuity choices.

*Once you reach age 72, we generally recommend that you switch to an income option designed to meet the IRS minimum distribution requirements.*

### Potential advantages of IO Option:

- You can preserve your principal until taking lifetime income or required minimum distributions.
- You can use interest payments to supplement income during a transition to full retirement or if you're working part time in retirement.
- You can combine this option with other income choices.

### Potential drawbacks IO Option:

- You may not receive enough interest income to satisfy your required minimum distribution (once you reach age 72).
- You must receive interest-only income for at least one year before switching to another income choice.
- You can use this option only for balances in Retirement, Group Retirement and Retirement Choice Annuities.

## F. The TIAA Minimum Distribution Option

You can choose to receive Required Recurring Minimum Distributions (RRMD) if you wish to hold off on starting your TIAA retirement income. This option will provide the minimum payment the IRS requires you to take by April 1 of the year after

your reach age 72, or by the 1st of April in the year following retirement, if later. With this option you can preserve as much of your accumulation as possible to be used at a later date or to leave to your beneficiaries. You may switch to another method of payment in the future.

### Potential advantages:

- You automatically meet the federal requirements for amounts that are recordkept at TIAA.
- You have the convenience of receiving withdrawals, monthly, quarterly, semiannually or annually.
- You have flexibility to change to another income choice.

## 13. Do the retirement payments from TIAA attributable to my employment at SUNY qualify for full exclusion as a New York State pension?

**Yes**, SUNY employees who opted to join TIAA as part of the ORP qualify to exclude their Retirement Annuity pension income that was contributed by SUNY, the public employer, as long as they reside in New York State. **However**, if you are receiving distributions from the SUNY TDA Plan, also called the Supplemental Retirement Annuities (SRA) 403B plans, Group Supplemental Retirement Annuities (GSRA), IRAs or Roth IRAs, these **DO NOT** qualify for full exclusion as a New York State pension since the contributions were made by the employee. These distributions would qualify for the \$20,000 pension exclusion as long as the distributions were taken in periodic payments pursuant to Section 612(c)(3-a) of the tax law.

## 14. More information about the New York State and City Taxation Unlimited Exclusion?

Currently, New York State tax law allows an unlimited exclusion from state and city income taxes for pension and annuity payments made under certain conditions. Payments must represent a return of contributions made to the plan while the individual was an employee of New York State or New York City, along with any attributable earnings. Beneficiaries of former New York State and City employees receiving such payments are also eligible for the exclusion. This law applies to the SUNY (ORP) benefits paid to SUNY employees who elected the ORP. This unlimited exclusion applies to accumulations attributable to employer contributions and corresponding earnings. The exemption applies to all payments from the ORP (lifetime annuity, interest only, lump sum, systematic withdrawals, RTB, minimum distribution, etc.) provided the contributions and earnings are attributable to SUNY employment.

Spouses who receive a SUNY annuity under a QDRO are also eligible for the exemption on the portion of annuity payments attributable to SUNY accumulations. This unlimited exclusion only applies to the ORP and does not apply to distributions from the Voluntary Savings Plan (or Tax-Deferred Annuity), TIAA Supplemental Retirement Annuity (SRA) or Group Supplemental Retirement Annuity (GSRA) contracts.

However, there is an annual \$20,000 New York State tax exclusion for annuity and periodic payments that can be applied to distributions from the SUNY Voluntary Savings Plan accumulations (i.e., 403b or Tax Deferred Annuity, also called TDA). TDA accumulations with TIAA are invested in an SRA or GSRA contract. See the next section titled “New York State \$20,000 Annual Exclusion” for more details. SUNY ORP accumulations (attributable to SUNY employment) that are rolled over to an IRA, either within or outside of TIAA, continue to be entitled to the unlimited exclusion provided the ORP rollover funds within the IRA can be identified from other contributions and earnings. However, new earnings in the IRA will not be eligible for the unlimited exclusion. Therefore, subsequent withdrawals from an IRA (except earnings from the IRA) are eligible for the unlimited exclusion. Earnings that grew in the IRA after the rollover are eligible for the \$20,000 exclusion (see below).

Amounts entitled to this exclusion should be indicated on the New York State Form IT-201. You can also refer to instructions for Form IT-201 for additional details. Keep in mind that this is our understanding of New York State tax law. You are encouraged to consult with your accountant, tax advisor, or The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance for your particular financial situation.

#### **15. New York State \$20,000 Annual Exclusion. What determines if an amount that an individual receives as a pension or annuity qualifies for the \$20,000 pension and annuity exclusion on the New York State personal income tax return?**

Currently, the State of New York allows for an exclusion of up to \$20,000 of pension and annuity income from state and local taxes each year. To qualify for this exclusion, you must meet several requirements. Under New York State tax law and regulations, the requirements are as follows:

Pension and annuity income, not in excess of \$20,000, received by an individual may be subtracted (every year) in determining New York adjusted gross income provided the following conditions are met:

1. Pensions and annuity income must be included in federal adjusted gross income.
2. Pensions and annuity payments must be periodic unless they are taken from an IRA or Keogh.

3. Income must be attributable to personal services performed by the individual prior to retirement from employment.
4. Individual must be age 59½ or older. If the individual attained age 59½ during the year, only the amount received after attaining age 59½ is eligible for the exclusion.
5. Pensions and annuity income must have arose from an employer-employee relationship or from an employee’s tax deductible contributions to a retirement plan.

**Important note:** It’s clear that annuity payments qualify as periodic.

Residents filing a resident income tax return may take this exclusion. It is not a requirement for the participant to have earned the money in the State of New York. The New York State \$20,000 annual exclusion applies to all of TIAA’s individual and group retirement contracts used with retirement plans or IRAs.

Distributions that are not eligible for the unlimited exclusion (noted above) can be considered for this \$20,000 exclusion. However, the following are exceptions to the exclusion:

- A lump-sum payment from the SUNY Tax-Deferred Annuity Plan
- IRA distributions attributable to contributions following retirement

A survivor beneficiary would also qualify for the New York State \$20,000 annual exclusion as long as the decedent would have qualified at the time of his or her death.

SUNY employees can take advantage of the New York State \$20,000 exclusion in addition to the SUNY unlimited exclusion. Therefore, SUNY ORP retirement plan payments may have the unlimited exclusion, and income received from other sources such as non-SUNY employers, IRAs and even your SUNY SRA or GSRA (the tax-deferred annuity) can take advantage of the \$20,000 exclusion.

**Keep in mind that this is our understanding of New York State tax law. Participants should consult with their accountant, tax advisor, or The New York State Department of Taxation and Finance for their particular financial situation.**

#### **16. Is a pension received from a state other than New York eligible for full exclusion on the New York State personal income tax return?**

No. To qualify for full exclusion the pension must have been received from New York State or local government pension plan or a federal pension plan. However, if you have reached age 59½, the pension may qualify for a pension and annuity income exclusion under Section 612(c)(3-a), up to \$20,000.

### 17. What happens if I relocate from New York State. Will my pension still be excluded?

If you are thinking about leaving New York State, you should check that states' tax rules and regulations to see what will happen with your New York State pension income. You may want to visit [www.RPEA.org](http://www.RPEA.org), which is the Retired Public Employees Association information showing which states tax New York State Pension Income.

### 18. Can I consolidate accounts when I retire?

Yes, you may be able to consolidate retirement and tax-deferred annuity funds you accumulated outside of SUNY with your SUNY plans. Before consolidating outside retirement assets, you may want to check with your employee benefits office on whether you can directly transfer those assets to your current retirement plan. You should carefully consider your other available options. You may also be able to leave money in your current plan, roll over money

to an IRA, or cash out all or part of the account value. You should weigh each option carefully and its advantages and disadvantages, including desired investment options and services, fees and expenses, withdrawal options, required minimum distributions, tax treatment, and your unique financial needs and retirement plan. You should seek the guidance of your financial professional and tax advisor prior to consolidating assets.

### Have questions?

TIAA is committed to helping you answer questions regarding your retirement plan, including income distributions.

- **TIAA by phone:** Call TIAA at **866-662-7945**. Consultants are available weekdays, 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. (ET).
- **TIAA virtually:** To schedule a virtual session with a TIAA financial consultant, call **800-732-8353**, weekdays, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (ET).
- Visit **TIAA.org/SUNY** for additional information.



TIAA Traditional is a guaranteed insurance contract and not an investment for federal securities law purposes.

Advisory services are provided by Advice & Planning Services, a division of TIAA-CREF Individual & Institutional Services, LLC, a registered investment adviser.

**Investment, insurance, and annuity products are not FDIC insured, are not bank guaranteed, are not deposits, are not insured by any federal government agency, are not a condition to any banking service or activity, and may lose value.**

The TIAA group of companies does not provide legal or tax advice. Please consult your legal or tax advisor.

**You should consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. Call 877-518-9161 or access TIAA.org/SUNY for current product and fund prospectuses that contain this and other information. Please read the prospectuses carefully before investing.**

TIAA-CREF Individual & Institutional Services, LLC, Member FINRA, distributes securities products. Annuity contracts and certificates are issued by Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America (TIAA) and College Retirement Equities Fund (CREF), New York, NY. Each is solely responsible for its own financial condition and contractual obligations.

©2021 Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association of America-College Retirement Equities Fund, 730 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017