



Signature NEWSLETTER



North Carolina
Total Retirement Plans
401k | 457



Dale R. Folwell, CPA
STATE TREASURER OF NORTH CAROLINA
DALE R. FOLWELL, CPA

A Message from Treasurer Dale R. Folwell, CPA



Good News! As of March 1, the **“fee holiday” is back** and will save Plan participants approximately \$1.6 million over the next year. This is the third “fee holiday” in my tenure as State Treasurer, resulting in savings of nearly \$6 million for participants.

With 1,100+ employers and over 315,000 participants, the NC Plans are one of the largest, most cost-effective public retirement plans in the country. Local governmental employees who have the benefit of an employer contribution have participation rates two times higher than state employees. To help close this gap, I have proposed the Supplemental Income Matching Program through Legislative Enactment (SIMPLE), which matches dollar-for-dollar up to \$25 monthly for contributions made by TSERS, CJRS, LRS and ORP members.

The NC Plans’ recordkeeper has completed a migration as a result of Empower acquiring the full-service retirement business of Prudential in April 2022. This was a business transaction between Prudential and Empower and neither the Department of State Treasurer, Retirement Systems Division nor NC Plans were a part of this decision. However, after two years, we have now fully integrated onto the Empower platform, which requires that all participants re-register for online account access. Please see important information in this newsletter about the steps you need to take to re-register your account. If you need assistance, you may reach out to your dedicated counselor or call the Empower call center directly (866-627-5267).

Thank you for your service to the citizens of North Carolina.

Sincerely,

Dale R. Folwell, CPA

Dale R. Folwell, CPA
State Treasurer of North Carolina

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Administrative Fee Holiday

Good news! NC 401(k) and NC 457 Plan participants will experience a 12-month waiver of the Plans’ administrative fee. The fee holiday equates to 10 cents per \$1,000 held in a participant account¹ and is expected to save participants approximately \$1.6 million. Also, over 550 employers offer a contribution to the Plans, so take advantage of all the benefits offered and make sure you are not leaving money on the table. Is there an opportunity to increase your personal contributions? Even the smallest contribution or increase can have a positive effect on your future retirement.



Important! Register your online account

Your NC 401(k) and/or NC 457 Plan account has been upgraded to an enhanced online experience and you must register your online account,² **even if you have done so in the past.**

How to register

To register your Plan account:

- Visit [myNCPlans.com](https://www.empower.com) and choose *Register or Access my Account*.
- Choose *Register*.
- Select *I do not have a PIN*.
- Enter your personal information and then hit *Continue*.
 - To confirm your identity, you will be sent a verification code by either text, email, or a phone call (based on the most recent information Empower has on file).
- Enter your verification code.
- Create a username and password.
- Select *Sign In* and log in to your account with your new username and password.

Important: If using a mobile device, you will be directed to download our mobile app before you can complete your registration.

Cybersecurity tips

When registering your account, keep these best practices in mind:

Protect your Plan account



Add your mobile phone number and current email address to your profile



Create complex and unique passwords and PINs



Use multi-factor authentication



Monitor your account

Keep your personal devices safe



Turn on auto-updates



“Lock down” your devices



Never select the option “remember this device”



The Empower Security Guarantee

Empower stands behind its online and mobile security with the Empower Security Guarantee.* The security and protection of your NC 401(k) and/or NC 457 Plans' account is a top priority. Visit <https://www.empower.com/about-empower/security> to learn more.

* Exclusions apply. For complete details, visit <https://www.empower.com/about-empower/security>.

For more information regarding account security, including the Empower Security Guarantee, visit [empower.com](https://www.empower.com) and, from the list of additional links at the bottom of the page, click *Security*.

If you receive an unsolicited email or text

If you receive an email or text message from Empower asking for your password, PIN or account credentials, immediately call the Customer Care Center at **866-NCPlans (866-627-5267)** for assistance.



Have you checked your beneficiary lately?

Your beneficiary designation lists the person who will receive the money in your Plan account if something should happen to you. Most people choose someone they are close to, such as a spouse, sibling, or parent.

Your NC 401(k) and NC 457 Plans' beneficiary is an independent election from your pension beneficiary.



If you have inherited a Plan account, you should name a beneficiary, which will give you more control over your Plan assets.

Why your beneficiary designation is important

Without a beneficiary on file, your Plan account money will be paid to your estate and distributed according to state law. If the money goes to your estate, it could be subject to additional delays and taxes, such as estate taxes.

The importance of checking your beneficiary designations regularly

Checking your beneficiary designation at least once a year can help ensure that the person who you want to receive your Plan account money *will* receive it someday. Doing so is important because life events — such as marriage, divorce and the birth of children — can all trigger a change in who you select as your beneficiary.

To check and/or change your beneficiary, sign in to your account at myNCPlans.com and select *View/edit beneficiary information* from the “I want to...” drop-down menu.



Be prepared and take action!

The enhanced online experience provides new tools and resources, and added security measures. Take action today to make sure your personal information is up to date, including your address, email address, beneficiaries and external accounts.

If you are updating or adding an external bank account (to receive withdrawals), please be aware that these changes require additional security measures and may put a hold on account transactions while these updates are confirmed.

You never know what the future holds, and it pays to be prepared.



Participants in action

6,202

participants have increased their contributions

13,212

attended group meetings

6,548

NC 401(k)/NC 457 Plans' Retirement Plan Counselor meetings with individuals

*YTD data as of 3/31/2024.

DEFINING TERMS



Investment basics: The NC Fixed Income Fund³

The NC Fixed Income Fund (Fund) provides participants in the NC 401(k) and NC 457 Plans with an actively managed fixed income option that is intended to provide exposure to the broad domestic fixed income market.

Investor profile

The NC Fixed Income Fund may be most attractive to those who are looking for:

- income and safety of principal
- a fixed-income investment to help manage risk in a diversified portfolio

Bond prices generally fall when interest rates rise (and vice versa) and are subject to risks, including changes in credit quality, market valuations, inflation, liquidity, and default. High-yield bonds have a greater risk of default.

Investment objective

The Fund is actively managed and seeks to provide investment growth through interest income with the potential for low to moderate capital appreciation and low volatility.

Investment management

The Fund's assets are divided between two complementary, but independent, managers, TCW (Trust Company of the West) and PGIM (PGIM, Inc., formerly known as Prudential Investment Management), which improves diversification compared to having a single investment manager.

Benchmark

The Fund's performance is benchmarked to the Bloomberg U.S. Aggregate Bond Index.

To view the fund fact sheets for the Plans' investments, visit myNCPlans.com and click on *Information for Employees* and then *Investment Options & GoalMaker*.

¹ Administrative fee waiver was effective March 1, 2024. Other fees, including the recordkeeping and communications fee charged by Empower, the investment management fees charged by investment management companies and the operating fee, continue to apply.

² Exclusions apply. For complete details, visit <https://www.empower.com/about-empower/security>.

³ Carefully consider the investment option's objectives, risks, fees and expenses. Contact Empower 866-NCPlans (866-627-5267) for a prospectus, summary prospectus for SEC-registered products or disclosure document for unregistered products, if available, containing this information. Read each carefully before investing.

It is possible to lose money when investing in securities.

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Empower Retirement, LLC provides the communications and recordkeeping services for the NC 401(k) and NC 457 Plans. The investments offered to you within the NC 401(k) and NC 457 Plans are not offered by or affiliated with Empower Retirement, LLC.

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