



Section 10: CETA Service

CETA Guidelines

Chapter 291 of the Laws of 1998 extended original legislation that defined retirement rights for teachers employed under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). The guidelines are:

1. Teachers who are not members of NYSTRS and who commence service as a teacher under CETA on or after September 1, 1975, are prohibited from joining the System.
2. Teachers who commenced full-time teaching service under CETA prior to September 1, 1975, and who became members of NYSTRS before September 1, 1975, are eligible for service credit with the System for their CETA service.
3. Teachers who became members of NYSTRS due to previous employment as a teacher (non-CETA who later assume employment as teachers) under CETA are entitled to service credit for their CETA employment regardless of their date of employment under CETA.
4. Non-members of NYSTRS whose teaching salary is financed in part by CETA and in part by a participating employer of the System are not entitled to membership in NYSTRS.

Obtaining Credit

While Chapter 291 prohibits CETA employees from joining NYSTRS on or after September 1, 1975, these employees may eventually be entitled to receive some retirement credit for their CETA service if they join the System at a later date as a result of regular employment as a teacher (non-CETA).

After a member is credited with five years of regular teaching service, they may claim up to four years of CETA employment, as long as all the following apply:

- Compensation was paid by a participating employer.
- The service was as a teacher as defined in the Education Law.
- The member joined NYSTRS within 90 days of the termination of their CETA employment.

Such a claim must be made within one year after the completion of five years of creditable service.

Once claimed and verified, the member must pay the appropriate employee contributions plus interest. In addition, the employer will be billed for the appropriate employer share plus interest. All payments must be made within a time period of at least one year but not greater than the amount of service being purchased.

Questions regarding CETA service and membership eligibility should be directed to our Service Crediting Unit at (800) 348-7298, Ext. 6030. If calling from the Albany area, use (518) 447-2900, Ext. 6030.

For more information regarding claiming CETA service as prior service, please refer to **Section 12: Prior Service**.