

# Your financial security

The IFT advocates for you every step of the way.



As your union, the **Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT)** advocates for you from Day 1 on the job until the day you retire – and beyond. One way we do that is by working together to protect your financial security, both during your career and in retirement.

If you are new to your profession, your pension is probably far from your mind right now, but it is one of the most important benefits in your contract. Because most teachers and other public workers don't pay into Social Security, you may one day rely on your pension for financial security. That's why the IFT works so hard to protect it.

## Most IFT members belong to one of these public pension systems:

- **Teachers Retirement System (TRS)** – for all PreK-12 teachers outside of Chicago
- **State Universities Retirement System (SURS)** – for college and university educators
- **State Employees Retirement System (SERS)** – for state government workers
- **Chicago Teachers Pension Fund (CTPF)** – for PreK-12 educators in the Chicago Public Schools

You pay into your pension from every paycheck, and the state has promised to provide it to you in exchange for your public service. Over the last few decades, lawmakers in Springfield shorted or skipped the state's required payments to the pension systems, causing them to be significantly underfunded and putting your pension at risk.

While there have been several attempts to cut your protected benefits as a way to fix the problem they caused, the IFT has successfully staved off these threats. Along with our labor partners, we filed suit and won a major victory for members in 2015 when the Illinois Supreme Court declared pension-cutting legislation (Senate Bill 1) unconstitutional.

Our experienced legislative staff continuously monitors the state pension systems, reviews proposals that may affect your financial future, and works with lawmakers to seek fair and legal solutions to the challenges we face. But IFT members are the key! By reminding your elected officials of their responsibility and holding them accountable, you are the strongest voice to protect your financial future.

Learn more about your pension, how the IFT advocates for you, and how you can help at [ift-aft.org/pensions](http://ift-aft.org/pensions).

For helpful retirement planning tips during every stage of your career, read *Retiring Wisely* at [ift-aft.org/your-work/retirees/retiring-wisely](http://ift-aft.org/your-work/retirees/retiring-wisely).



Illinois Federation of Teachers  
A Union of Professionals

[ift-aft.org](http://ift-aft.org) [facebook.com/iftaft](https://www.facebook.com/iftaft) @iftaft