Q. Does NEA have membership for members who have retired?

A. Yes. NEA has Retired membership that “shall be open to any person who is at least forty-five (45) years of age or who is eligible to receive a pension from an educational employment retirement system (including Social Security), and who was employed for at least five (5) years in a position that qualified him or her for Active membership but who is no longer so employed or who retires and returns to either day-to-day or regular full- or part-time employment as part of an early retirement agreement with the local school district.” (Source: NEA Bylaw 2-1 [d] pg. 134-135)

Q. How do I join?

A. To join the NEA-Retired program, members should contact their state associations because NEA-Retired membership is initiated at the state level. Members must join their state’s Retired program as well as the national program. There are two exceptions:

- NEA-Retired Lifetime members who enrolled prior to unification of the national and their state program are exempt as long as they do not waive that exemption by subsequently holding state Retired membership.
- Any 1984–85 state Retired member exempted by the appropriate governing body of the relevant state affiliate need not maintain NEA-Retired membership in order to remain a state Retired member.

Q. What are the dues for Retired membership?

A. There are two types of NEA-Retired membership:

- Retired Annual—NEA-Retired annual dues (as of September 1, 2006) are $25 per year for members who retired on or after September 1, 1973, and $5 for members who retired prior to September 1, 1973;
- Retired Lifetime—NEA-Retired Lifetime dues (as of September 1, 2006) are a one-time payment of $200.

See Appendix B for current state affiliates’ dues structures.
Q. I am an Active Life member. When I retire, do I automatically become a member of NEA-Retired?

A. No. “Active” Life members do not automatically become NEA-Retired members upon retirement.

(A definition of “Active” Life member is included in appendix H Glossary.)

Q. If not, must I join NEA-Retired?

A. “Active” Life members are not required to join NEA-Retired. However, to participate in the Retired program and receive This Active Life (the NEA-Retired publication), “Active” Life members must join the Retired program as either Retired Annual or Retired Lifetime.

Q. My state is unified, and I would like to join NEA-Retired as a Retired Lifetime member and my state retired program as Retired Annual. Is this possible?

A. If your state provides an annual membership category and permits this arrangement in its dues structure, then you may do so. Some states require the same type of membership at both the state and national levels. Please contact your state association for further details. State Retired Annual membership must be maintained each consecutive year. If, whether accidentally or intentionally, you drop your state Retired Annual membership for even one year, your NEA-Retired Lifetime membership may be terminated.

Q. My state is unified, and I would like to join NEA-Retired as a Retired Annual member and my state Retired program as Retired-Lifetime. May I do this?

A. If your state’s policies permit this arrangement, you may do this. You should contact your state association for further information.
How does unification apply to my Retired-Lifetime membership?

NEA Retired-Lifetime members who joined prior to the effective date of unification of the state affiliate are exempt from the unification requirement unless they waive this exemption by joining as a state Retired member. NEA Retired-Lifetime members who joined on or after the effective date of unification of their state affiliate are subject to the unification requirement.

- Non-unified NEA Retired-Lifetime members are eligible to hold NEA-Retired Advisory Council positions and may be members of the NEA Board of Directors and Executive Committee. They are eligible to vote for their state association’s Retired delegates, but they are NOT eligible to be delegates (in unified states). They are counted for the purposes of allocation of delegate credentials for their state associations.

- Membership applications and dues are processed by state associations for non-unified, as well as unified, NEA Retired-Lifetime members. (Note: Retired unification between the state affiliate and the National Organization. Some States may require Local Unification so please Check with your State Affiliate office)

I am an NEA Retired-Lifetime member who was just informed that I must join my state association’s Retired program because of unification. What happens if I don’t?

When information is received that an NEA Retired-Lifetime member is or may be in violation of unification, NEA will write to the member involved indicating this situation. The member is requested to 1) present evidence of unified membership, 2) join the appropriate organization(s), or 3) resign his or her NEA Retired-Lifetime membership. A copy of the letter is sent to the state association through which the member joined and belongs to NEA. If the member has not complied within 60 days after he/she has been notified, NEA will notify the member of his/her lack of compliance and termination of his/her NEA Retired-Lifetime membership. A copy of the letter will be sent to the state association, which would then cancel the member’s NEA Retired-Lifetime membership.
Q. When I retire, I plan to move to a different state. Must I join NEA-Retired in the state in which I was an Active member or may I join in the state to which I will be moving?

A. Prior to 1995, NEA policy required that NEA-Retired members join either in the state from which their pensions are received or in the state in which they reside. In 1995, the NEA Board of Directors modified this policy, as shown below, providing the following principles for crediting NEA-Retired membership:

- NEA-Retired members who move to another state have the option of either transferring their NEA-Retired membership/governance rights to the resident state or maintaining membership/governance rights in the pension state. Thus, NEA-Retired members may choose in which state they wish to exercise NEA-Retired governance rights. If the state of residence is unified with NEA, a state association-Retired-Life membership from the pension state will satisfy the unification requirement. NEA-Retired members may take a second state Retired membership but are not required to do so.

- NEA-Retired members who leave a pension state where they held unified membership and opt to credit the resident state for NEA-Retired governance purposes must continue to be unified with that pension state Retired program (Annual or Life).

- NEA-Retired members who were not previously unified in their pension state and move to a state where retired unification is required cannot have their NEA-Retired membership credited to the resident state without unifying. NEA-Retired members may opt to remain credited to the pension state without unification.

- NEA-Retired members who are obligated to maintain unified membership and fail to do so may not remain NEA-Retired members. There is no provision for a refund of NEA-Retired Retired-Lifetime dues in this case. Refund policies of state association Retired dues are subject to the discretion of the state association, and refunds generally are not recommended.

- NEA-Retired members may have a second state association Retired membership and pay dues to two state associations.

- NEA-Retired members may be candidates for NEA-Retired office in any state where they have the option to exercise NEA governance rights.
Q. How are NEA-Retired dues established?
A. The NEA-Retired Advisory Council makes recommendations to the NEA Board of Directors. Retired dues are established by the NEA Board of Directors.

Q. Who is responsible for processing NEA-Retired membership?
A. State associations are responsible for processing Retired membership. With few exceptions, Retired dues, both state and national levels, are paid directly to the state associations. The exceptions are individuals in the District of Columbia, New York City, and foreign countries (not affiliated with Federal Education Association).

Q. I am an NEA-Retired member who has returned to teaching because of a teacher shortage in my area. How does this affect my Retired membership?
A. NEA-Retired members returning to active service must contact the State leadership to determine the level of membership required by the employment agreements in place. Most bargaining units require active employees to purchase membership or pay a “fair share” fee for the maintenance and improvement of the contract.

Q. What happens to my NEA-Retired membership if I return to active service?
A. Membership reverts to pre-retired status and will be reinstated to Retired-Lifetime when the part-time or full-time employment ceases.

Q. Can I become a short call substitute (day-to-day) and remain an NEA-Retired member and would I receive Liability Insurance?
A. Yes! You would be covered by the Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Program if you return to the classroom. If you are employed where day-to-day employees are included with full-time employees in a bargaining unit, you must join NEA as an Active member. In either circumstance, you would be covered by EEL. In these circumstances, the member is covered by EEL. Becoming a substitute member, which would make a member eligible for EEL coverage, is not an option because Retired or Active membership provides a higher level of governance participation. If a Retired-Annual member returns to education employment on a part-time or full-time basis, he or she must become an Active member. The Retired Dues would be refunded on a pro-rated bases.
Q. What are the benefits of joining NEA-Retired?

A. By joining NEA-Retired, you may enjoy the following benefits:

- Government relations and political action, including Lobbying
- Networking opportunities
- Intergenerational mentoring
- Outreach To Teach
- Read Across America
- Regional conferences
- Organizing institutes
- NEA-Retired Annual Meeting
- Aging organization conferences
- *This Active Life* (published several times a year)
- *NEA Today* (published monthly)
- State affiliate publications
- Maintaining your Member Benefits plus additional NEA Member Benefit for NEA-Retired Members

Q. May an individual join NEA-Retired prior to retirement? If so, what benefits are derived from pre-retired (NEA-Retired) membership?

A. NEA members may join NEA-Retired membership prior to their retirement. Pre-Retired Subscribers receive a membership card, helpful brochures that include pre-retirement planning information, and the Retired program’s magazine, *This Active Life*. However, pre-retired subscribers have no governance rights through NEA-Retired until they retire. Also, pre-retired subscribers must maintain another appropriate form of NEA membership until retirement to remain eligible for pre-retired NEA-Retired status.

Q. How does my Pre-Retired Subscription convert when I retire?

A. Upon retirement and by notifying your state association of your retirement, your NEA Pre-Retired subscription converts to Retired Lifetime membership. The amount that was paid to become a Pre-Retired member counts as your NEA-Retired Lifetime payment.
Q. Is a Pre-Retired member eligible to be elected as a delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly?

A. Not as a Retired delegate. However, qualified Pre-Retired subscribers, i.e., those who have current Active membership, may be elected as delegates to the RA but only for their Active member status.

Q. Who sends me my membership card?

A. Effective September 1, 1999, NEA began issuing Retired Lifetime cards to all new Retired Lifetime members.