Retirement Times
Employer Newsletter

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Tips, Tricks, and News for Our Public School Employers

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In This Issue...

Who is a member of the retirement system?

Knowing which employees to report can sometimes be confusing. Most position types are programmed into your payroll system software. But lately there have been some questions about which employees should be included on your retirement reports. Chapter 2 of the *Reporting Instruction Manual* (RIM), has detailed information about membership, so when you have questions the RIM is your best resource. Here is clarification on membership questions that have come up most recently.

Substitute teachers.
Substitute teachers are members and can be reported for the hours and wages they earn in your reporting unit. ORS collects the information from all the individual schools where a substitute teacher works and reports that information back to the member on the Annual Member Statement.

Third-party hires.
To be reportable for retirement, the person must be an employee of the reporting unit and must be performing a service for that reporting unit. Further, the reporting unit must have control over the details of the employee's work (when, where, and how). The person's service cannot create gain for a third party. This includes temporary employees hired through a temporary service, on-site independent contractors (such as for technology projects), and private administration organizations (e.g., payroll services).

Employees under age 19.
Full-time students who work in your reporting unit are not members of the retirement system and should not be reported. Similarly, employees under 19 who work in a temporary, intermittent, or irregular seasonal or athletic position are not members regardless of school status. There are situations in which a person under age 19 has completed

Print this newsletter

Quicklinks

- Employer Website
- Production Reporting Website
- Member Website

Highlights From the Last Quarter

- In mid-July, your office should have received copies of the *Is There a Yacht in Your Future?* brochure, intended for new employees. Please share one with every person who joins your reporting unit this year.
- You also should have received a supply of the new *Got a Dream for Life After School?* poster. We hope you will post these in lounges, kitchens, garages, and any other place where employees gather.
- If you need more of either of these products, there is a quick and easy way to order them online.

Retirement Times Survey

ORS is beginning to plan this year's Retirement Reporting Seminars. Tell us what topics you'd like us to include by typing in the space below.

Submit

high school and is now employed with you. If you report these employees, the record will flag because of the employee's age. As long as there are no other edits to this record, it will post after you have accepted the report.

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Start with ORG FIXES when cleaning up reports

In early June, ORS deployed screen design changes that show you the status of records on your reports. The new labels indicate whether there is an “Org Fix” on the record (you can resolve the error), the record is “In Queue” (the recording is waiting for a previous pay period’s record to post and does not need any action), or the record is “On Hold” (the record cannot be posted by the reporting unit). Now, you know exactly which records need your action in order to post.

Please be sure to work on records with Org Fixes regularly so that these records can post and your reports can stay up to date. A list of the most common messages and how to resolve them is posted under Tools on the navigation bar. If you are consistently seeing the same messages, please contact your vendor; a programming or data entry change might prevent this from happening again.

Contact our Employer Reporting Call Center at (517) 636-0166 if you need any assistance.

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Using the Download Detail to verify your totals

Verifying totals.

The online reporting system processes your report the night you upload it, then gives you an opportunity to compare your payroll totals against the retirement totals created by your software program. When you click on "View Totals” you will link to a summary page that has a total of unposted wages and TDP deductions. Compare these figures to your payroll report. If the totals differ, try this:.

1. Look at the employee count. Is it right?
2. Look at the wage & contribution amounts, specifically:
   a. gross wages
   b. member contributions
   c. total TDP deductions

   Do these match your payroll report? If not, the Download Detail (see below) can help you find the differences.

Once you verify your totals, you can accept your report.

About the *Retirement Times*

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Thanks for reading!

Using the Download Detail chart.

Some of you have told us that trying to find the differences between your payroll totals and your retirement totals is difficult. Because of this, we provided you with a link to detailed information about your report. You can view the Download Detail chart online or you can download it to your desktop. The chart includes a MIP Discrepancy column which calculates the difference between the MIP you reported and the MIP we calculated. Using this column may help you find the difference between your report and ours.

You'll get the most out of the Download Detail chart if you know how to use spreadsheet software. You can sort the downloaded chart by SSN, by name, or by any field to find what you're looking for. For example, if you sort the Member Contributions column in ascending order, all the employees for whom you reported zero MIP will be at the top. If the calculated column shows an amount, it will tell you we are looking at this employee differently than you are, and you will want to look at that record. See the example below.

SSN	Member Contributions Reported	Member Contributions Calculated	Member Contributions Discrepancy
XXXXXXXXX	0	0	0
XXXXXXXXX	0	0	0
XXXXXXXXX	0	0	0
XXXXXXXXX	13.44	13.44	0
XXXXXXXXX	0	0	0
XXXXXXXXX	54.35	54.35	0
XXXXXXXXX	7.86	7.85	-0.01
XXXXXXXXX	83.36	83.37	0.01
XXXXXXXXX	92.35	92.36	0.01
XXXXXXXXX	28.64	28.04	-0.6
Totals	280	279.41	-0.59

If you are not familiar with the handy features of spreadsheet software, we encourage you to ask someone to show you how to sort and rearrange the data.

For help using the Detail Download, contact the Employer Reporting Call Center at (517) 636-0166 or email at ORS_Web_Reporting@michigan.gov.

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Reporting pre-2002 wage adjustments

You are accustomed to submitting Detail 2 adjustment records when you need to adjust wages and/or hours for an employee for a previous pay period. The online reporting system will accept adjustment records for pay periods since October 1, 2002. If you need to adjust hours or wages for an employee for a time period before this date, please fax or mail a letter to ORS, and the web coordinators will process the adjustment for you.

Reporting a status change

When an employee's status changes (e.g., new hire, maternity leave, termination), the online reporting system needs a one-time Detail 1 record indicating the date and the status change. Most reporting units are successfully reporting these changes. However, some reporting units continue to submit these Detail 1 status change records with each payroll report and the records suspend. If your software program creates these automatically, you can resolve the record by simply deleting the Detail 1 record; to prevent them in the first place, talk with your vendor. Remember: You only need to report a status change and date once; it stays in effect until the employee's status changes again.

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Recap of recent enhancements

These last few months have seen substantial changes in the ORS reporting system. Based on feedback from the reporting units, we deployed a series of program changes that streamlined the delivery of wage and service information. Because of these changes, many reports have advanced to 100% posted and many more records moved out of edit status. The following were key changes to the system:

- The ability to post records for MIP-Fixed and Basic members as they are received regardless of any previously suspended records.
- The ability to create two Detail 2 records for employees who are working during the summer while receiving summer-spread wages.
- Simplification of the retroactive wage process.
- Completion of the system updates that advanced retiree records.

In addition to these program changes, ORS added the following features to make the system easier for you to use:

- The TDP Lookup feature which allows you to see the balances of all the TDP Agreements with your reporting unit.
- Screen design changes that allow you to see at a glance which reports need your attention.
- The ability for your designated web administrator to make changes to contact information and to reset passwords.
- A new and simplified remittance advice form.

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