

PSERS Employer Bulletin

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Public School Employees' Retirement System

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Voting Status Field

PSERS is in the process of preparing for the next PSERS Board of Trustees election. During this proceeding, it was discovered that there are employers who still do not understand the significance of the Voting Status field on the Contract Record. The Voting Status determines which election the employee will participate in to fill a seat on the PSERS Board. When the voting status is wrong, it causes the member to receive incorrect Board Election voting material. This could lead to a vote or signature on a candidate's petition not being counted as eligible to participate.

To ensure that the employee's voting status is properly identified, select "Certified" if the employee's position requires certification through the Pennsylvania Department of Education. This includes employees who are currently certified or who are in the process of obtaining certification. Any other position is classified as non-certified. Please note that the voting status is associated with the position, not the employee. If an employee holds multiple positions, each contract record must reflect the proper voting status for that position. It is possible that an employee may have a "Certified" status for one position and a "Non-Certified" status for another. More information is found in *Chapter 4 – Member contract Records*, of the Employer Reference Manual.

Some examples of certified employees are teachers, supervisors, principals, assistant principals, vice-principals, directors of vocational education, dental hygienists, visiting teachers, home and school visitors, school counselors, child nutrition program specialists, school librarians and school nurses. For more details on which positions require certification, go to the Pennsylvania Department of Education website.

T-F Election Rate Deductions

When updating your employees' Class T-F Election rate deductions, make sure to start the new rate deductions with the first payroll of the following month. This will ensure that the updated rate will be applied to the entire month, instead of a partial month. For example, the *Employer Notification*

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Invalids and Exceptions on the Work Report

Prior to approving your work report, it is very important to check both the Invalids and Exceptions. If you cannot figure out why a record is invalid, you can refer to *Chapter 5 – Monthly Work Reports*, of the Employer Reference Manual or contact your Employer Service Center (ESC) representative for assistance. Invalids must be resolved prior to approval of the work report; or they will drop off the report. Even though records will process with an exception, these should be addressed before proceeding. Please review both of these messages and take action if necessary.

If you see a “Warning - Member is Qualified, Begin Withholding” message, you must set up that employee to have contributions withheld from that point forward. If you are unsure of the member’s class and rate, you can check this on the Employer Web under Member Contract Info, View/Edit Member Contract. Just enter the member’s social security number and you will see his or her class and rate displayed above the contract history.

When you see “Warning - Member Elected Class T-F, Update Rate,” be sure to make those changes in your payroll software effective with the start of the following month. The Class T-F rate is currently 10.3%.

Please do not ignore Contribution Rate exceptions. When you see “Warning - Contribution rate should be x.x%,” our system is telling you that the total wages (BASE, URCC, OT and SUP) times the contribution rate in PSERS’ system do not match what is listed in the Contributions field of your work report. Verify that the wages and contributions match the amounts the employee was paid to be certain that the reporting is correct. It could be that Non-Retirement Covered Compensation (NRCC) is listed in the wrong field or contributions were not withheld on Supplemental wages.

If you are certain your reporting is correct and the wages match the contribution rate you are using for that employee, the reason for the exception warning may be because the rate information you are using for that employee and the rate information PSERS has for the same employee do not match. You may be withholding the wrong rate from your employee or the rate could be incorrect in PSERS’ system. Regardless of the reason, it must be addressed. Call your ESC Representative and explain you have a rate exception. He or she will verify the rate, make sure that the member’s account is corrected, and advise you on any actions you need to take.

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Invalids and Exceptions... (continued from page 2)

Remember that when a rate exception exists, your Member Contributions account will be billed at the rate in PSERS' system and the employee's account will be credited with that amount. This will occur even if that is not what was withheld from the employee's pay or what is listed in the Contributions column of your work report.

Remember to click back to your work area after you receive the message that your file has been approved. If it shows any Invalid records after approval, it means those records dropped off the report during transmission. You will have to do an adjustment to re-enter that data.

Make it a habit to correct this information as soon as possible. If you have Invalids showing in your work area and are not sure whether the adjustments were done, check the Approved Adjustments. If you use a description such as "April 2015 Invalids," it will be easy to tell if they were done without having to open up the files. It will also help with reconciling your accounts by matching up the adjustment with the monthly report on which it should have appeared.

If you fixed all your Invalids before approving the file, the only time records should drop off is if you have more than one record per Wage Type. If it happens repeatedly, you might want to check your payroll software to determine why it is not combining all the wages for the month into one record.

T-F Election... (continued from page 1)

of Change in Member Class /Rate or Obtaining Qualification (CROQ) report informs you of a Class T-F rate change on May 10. You update the member's contribution rate for your May 31 payroll. This means that one pay in May had a contribution rate of 7.5% and the second pay in May had a contribution rate of 10.3%. In this case, you want to make the rate change to take affect for the first payroll in June. Appropriately applying the rate with the first payroll of the month will ensure that you will not have to spend time to research the additional information necessary for partial-month processing. If you need further clarification regarding contribution rate updates, please refer to *Chapter 4 – Member contract Records*, of the Employer Reference Manual or contact your Employer Service Center representative.

Reminder about Substitute Teachers and Contract Records

On occasion, substitute teachers are hired by an employer but never actually work, which results in unnecessary open contract records. For this reason, employers should not create a contract record for an employee who is a substitute teacher until the employee actually works and is being paid. If you have already created the Contract Record and subsequently discover the substitute teacher will not be working for you, cancel the Contract Record by entering an End Date equal to the Start Date. For more information refer to *Chapter 4 – Member contract Records*, of the Employer Reference Manual.

PSERS Website

www.psers.state.pa.us

The goal of our web-based reporting features, news, Bulletin, Employerpedia, employer forms, and Employer Service Center staff, is to provide you with the information and support you need right at your fingertips. From the PSERS homepage, click on **Employers** to access all online resources.

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**Important Information from the
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Public School Employees' Retirement System**