The Employer's Role in the PSERS Member Journey

Presented by PSERS Employer Service Center
Spring 2023

Your Role in the PSERS Member's Journey

- **The Beginning (Not in Kansas Anymore)**
  - New Member Reporting
  - Member Enrollment Resources
- **The Middle (Follow the Yellow Brick Road)**
  - Member Resources
  - Employer Reporting
- **The End (Going to See the Wizard)**
  - Resources for Members Nearing Retirement
  - Entering Correct Termination Records
- **Return to Service (The Return to Oz)**

Many of you have asked what kinds of documents and information members receive from PSERS throughout their careers. This workshop follows the PSERS member's journey while highlighting the actions that you take along the way that impact how smoothly that journey happens for your employees.

There are four segments to today's workshop. Like any good story, we've broken the journey into the beginning, the middle and the end, and for a select few, a return to the workplace after retirement. We hope this presentation answers the questions you've had and helps to explain why PSERS asks you to do some of the things you do.

The Beginning: Not in Kansas Anymore

- New Member Reporting

- Member Enrollment Resources

The journey begins when a new employee is hired and becomes a new member of the Public School Employees' Retirement System. As an employer, you play a vital role in getting a member's journey started even before they start working for you by simply obtaining and entering the correct demographic and contract record details. This action enrolls them in PSERS system. Most members qualify for membership on day one of employment by having a full-time position or salaried position. We'll discuss qualification a little bit later when we talk about contract record entry. Please note, regardless of an employee's qualification status, all employees must be reported to PSERS unless they are specifically ineligible for membership, such as someone under a return to service exception or reported to an alternate retirement plan.

As your district hires more Class T-G members, the timing of enrolling new hires and the accuracy of entering information becomes much more important not only to the member's experience, but to your workload and frustration level!

The Foundation: Entering Demographic Information

- Demographics are reported by the employer
- Member is sent a demographic confirmation letter
  - Qualification requirements overview insert
  - MSS Quick Start Guide insert
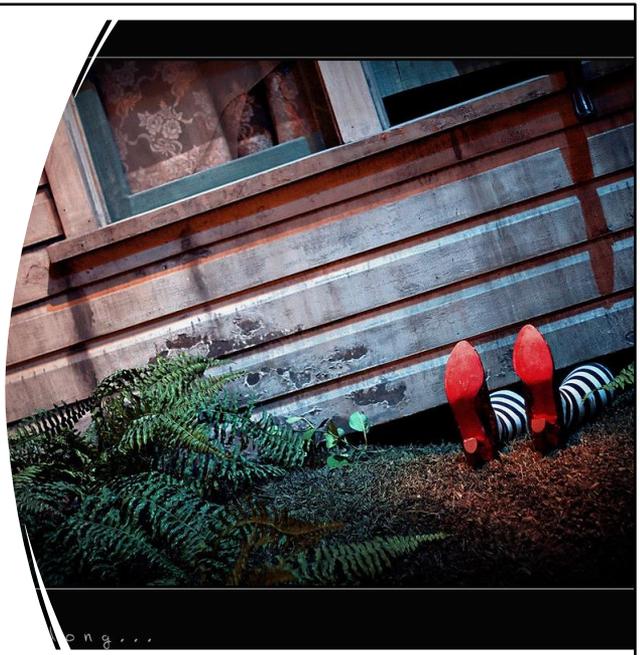
Your employee's enrollment is started by entering their demographic information into ESS either by a Manual New Hire process or through a Demographic File Upload. The demographic information, specifically entering an employee's name, SSN, and DOB correctly is critical. But entering accurate addresses, email and phone numbers are just as important because it gives PSERS a way to contact the member.

Keep the Witch Away!

- Verify demographic information is correct when entering it into ESS
  - SSN and DOB corrections require documentation. PSERS must process those changes for you.
- Remind members to keep demographic and contact information current

One of the issues that slows down a member's journey is having incorrect information entered when creating the member record. Human errors happen. It is important to have a process in place to double check that SSN and DOB information is entered into your system accurately so it can be uploaded to PSERS accurately also. Sometimes a district has one department responsible for new hire paperwork, then another person enters contracts from a report and another staff member does the actual reporting. In this scenario there are multiple chances to accidentally enter incorrect information. If this sounds familiar, consider creating a system of checks and balances to avoid errors.

If an employer inadvertently enters a wrong digit on a social security number, an incorrect , or misspelled name it can create quite the hassle for the payroll office and your new employee. Once entered into the system, SSN and DOB information cannot be corrected by the employer. Proof must be submitted from the employee that proves what the correct information is before PSERS will make the change.

Moving forward, it is important to remind employees to update their PSERS demographics (address, email, phone number) if they change. You are PSERS first line of contact, if an employee changes their name, address or email, PSERS may have no way to contact the member and provide important membership information.

Importance of Understanding the Journey

Your new hire may have started their journey earlier!

One of the great things about being a PSERS member is that employees can move from district to district and continue to contribute to the same retirement account, provided they continue working for a PSERS participating employer. Just because an employee is new to your school, not every new hire will start their journey with your district at the same place. Employers need to determine which class is the correct class for their new hire through verification on the Roster page of ESS. We will discuss how to do this a little later. Employers can avoid confusion for the member, the collection of an incorrect contribution amounts, and additional administrative work for the business office.

Entering an employee's enrollment including their demographics and contract record, begins the employee's work story. Demographics and contracts should be entered before the employee begins to work or as quickly as administratively possible to avoid your employee beginning their journey on the wrong path.

Member Demographic Record Confirmation Letter

- Encourages member to create and log in to MSS account
- Informs member of Paperless Delivery option through MSS
- MSS Quick Start Guide explains registration process

New employees receive a demographic confirmation letter after PSERS receives the demographic information. This lets them know that PSERS has received demographic information about them, and it encourages them to create a Member Self-Service (MSS) account to verify this information. The MSS Quick Start Guide provides instruction on how to register for an MSS account. This letter is the first document that contains their PSERS ID which is part of the registration process.

This letter also informs employees that paperless delivery is an option and encourages members to select their document delivery method.. It is important members make a selection for paper documents if they do not want electronic delivery.

Just like how employers need to go through Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) after creating an account or changing a password, members must also MFA as part of the log in process making accurate emails and phone numbers essential. You should encourage new employees to review all of their demographic information as soon as possible to catch any fat finger errors that could cause problems later in their journey.

Contract Records Tell the Story

- **Job Title:** What position do they work?
- **FT or PT:** How often do they work?
- **Salaried, Hourly or Per Diem:** What wage type is used to pay them?
- **Job Title:** What position do they work?
- **Start Date**: When was their first day of work?
- **Expected Months and Units:** How many months and days/hours would be expected for the specific job for a standard school year?
- **Certified or Non-certified:** Do they need a certificate to perform the job?
- Is a new contract needed for a new position?

The next step of the journey is entering the member's contract record. If you use the Manual New Hire wizard in ESS, this is actually part of the member demographic submission to enroll the employee. This can also be done as a contract record file upload separate from loading the demographic information. The information within a member contract record tells the member's work history story. Each detail within the member's contract record tells PSERS a new part of their journey.

Together, the demographic and contract record information identify which membership class the member should belong in, based on whether they have worked for a PSERS participating school in the past. Key information within the contract records will assist PSERS in understanding what type of a job the member does, how they should be paid, and what time periods they were working. Over the next few slides, we will break down these details and why each plays a part in what happens next for the member's journey.

Job Title: What position do they work?

Job Titles give context to the type of position that someone works.

It also describes the progression of their career.

The job title listed in a member's contract record gives context to the type of position that someone works. Job titles are used to determine if the position is certified or non-certified, which affects their voting status for PSERS Board of Trustee elections. Over time, it also describes the progression of their career and establishes an understanding for the wages reported and if wages match the position duties. For instance, it isn't likely that a superintendent is earning $20,000. It could be that the job title is incorrect, or it could be that the reporting has an error. Either way, the job title and money earned do not seem to match.

A job title must be entered for each contract record, but it does not have to be so specific as to tell PSERS what building, subject or grade a teacher teaches. Misspellings for common titles like substitute and instructor often clutter our system. When possible, please use standard job titles within your school. For example: Administrator, Teacher, Aide, Transportation

Finally, while we don't need the school building included in the job title, PSERS is looking to gain some insight into what the employee was hired to do. Job titles such as miscellaneous, extra duty, or floater aren't very helpful. For this reason PSERS requests a simple title that provides a little direction.

FT or PT: How often do they work?	**Full-Time criteria:** • **Salaried** = 5 full days per week • **Hourly** = 25 hrs/wk not including overtime hours • **Per Diem** = 5 full days per week and is hired and paid on a daily basis	**Part Time criteria:** • **Salaried** = < 5 full days/wk ,or 5 or more hrs/day but fewer than 5 days/wk • **Hourly** = < 25 hrs/wk • **Per Diem** = < 5 full days/wk (5 hours = full day)

Next is whether the member is considered full-time or part-time? PSERS and the district may define this differently, so to ensure proper enrollment and crediting service, employers must use PSERS definition.

Note: *review the criteria for each from the screen*
A full day equals five hours needs to be communicated

Why does it matter? This is one of the most critical parts of the contract record. A full-time employee is qualified for membership from day 1 of service. This means that contributions are withheld from their very first day of employment. Part-time employees, with the exception of salaried positions need to reach a qualifying threshold of 500 hours or 80 days to qualify. **For part-time employees that need to qualify, DC contributions should not be withheld until after you've been notified (or the withholding notice indicates to withhold on the member's record) that the employee has qualified for membership.**

Salaried, Hourly or Per Diem: What wage type is used to pay them?

- Qualification from day 1 for Salaried and FT positions
- PT hourly or per diem members must qualify for membership (500 hours or 80 days)

Next your contract record entry tells PSERS how your new hire is paid. There are three options Salary, or Stipend, Hourly and Per Diem.

The wage type can determine if your employee is qualified immediately or if they need to qualify before beginning the yellow brick road. All salaried employees start their journey immediately because they qualify from day one. Hourly and per diem employees may have to reach a service threshold before beginning the journey. Qualification begins after 500 hours in a FY for hourly employees while per diem employees need to work 80 days to start the trek down the yellow brick road.

Beginning your employee's journey correctly by entering the correct wage type eliminates reversing reporting and starting all over! For example: if you have a part-time employee who is hired on a stipend and you enter hourly or per diem as their wage type, this keeps them from day one qualification and can cause membership class errors. Keep in mind, all part-time employees may request a waiver of membership and stop their journey, once they qualify. So, the sooner they are entered correctly the sooner they can choose to continue their journey and the less work the employer has correcting issues.

Only qualified members are sent to VOYA and are eligible to have DC contributions withheld, so entering the correct wage type enables correct DC reporting immediately or when required once the member qualifies.

Start Date: When was the first day of work?

- Start Date is their first day of work
    OR
- for additional contracts, the first day in a new position.

Employers start a member's chapter with a contract record. The start date is the date the employee first began to work, not the date the employee was hired. Additionally, if they do seasonal work, like a coach or drama teacher, it is important for the start date to align with when they actually begin working rather than when they were appointed to the position. For example, a coach may be hired for a spring season on August 1st but the first day of work isn't until March 15th. March 15th is the start date of the contract.

A new contract record should be created with a new start date – the date that the new position began.

Expected Units: What is the expected number of months/days for that position?

Expected Units help determine proper service credit, especially for part-time members.

Expected Months and Units sets the expectation for how many months and days the position/not the individual would be expected to work if they were full time. These fields are not meant to be filled in with how many days you THINK the employee will work. PSERS will get that Information from the monthly work report or service reporting on the June work report.

The number of expected months is usually either 10 or 12 months. Employees who have the summer off and are not expected to be working in their position during July and August are considered 10-month positions, even if they continue receiving BOC money over the summer. Positions that work year-round, from July to June, are considered 12-month positions. And although there aren't many, it is possible to have a position that runs 11 months, perhaps a secretary.

If you leave the default values in place, the system will assume 180 days for salaried and per diem contracts, and 1,100 hours for hourly contracts. These values should be updated for full-time employees to display the actually number of days or hours the position is expected to work for your school. Most schools work 188 or 190 days in their school year, for example. Or a school secretary may be expected to work 1,680 hours per year.

For 12-month contracts, the expected units are typically 260 days or 2080 hours. It is important to note that these employees still only need to reach 180 days or 1100 hours (based on wage type) to reach one service credit.

For part-time positions, please leave the default units as 180 days or 1,100 hours. Part-

time employees will receive incremental credit for the amount of service rendered out of 180 days or 1,100 hours.

Whether full-time or part-time, our system uses the expected months and units in conjunction with the salary reported to determine what a member would have earned if they had worked the entire year.

Certified vs. Non-Certified: What does this mean?

Certification is based on the employee's position, not the employee

Does the position require certification from PDE?

If yes, the position is certified.

If no, the position is non-certified.

Certification is determined based on the position and not the individual holding the position. Is the position certified or non-certified through the Pennsylvania Department of Education? This classification is used to determine in which election the employee will vote to fill a seat of the PSERS Board.

Please remember when completing the certified/non-certified field on the contract record that it is for the position, not the individual. For example, you may have a teacher who also coaches. That member will have two contract records. The teaching contract requires a certificate and should be marked as certified. The coaching contract does not require a certificate and should be marked as non-certified.

If you are not sure which positions require certification, you can find the list in the Employer Reference Manual or on the PA Department of Education's website.

When to Withhold Contributions

Members must qualify before contributing to the DC Plan

All Salaried (PT or FT) and all FT members qualify from day 1

For PT Hourly or PT Per Diem employees, the employer may choose to withhold DB contributions OR report employee under Wages No Contributions (WNC)

FT members and member who are PT salaried are qualified from day one of service and both DB and DC contributions should be withheld from the beginning of employment. For PT hourly or per diem employers, DC contributions may not be withheld or reported until after a member qualifies. This is why entering the wrong work type or wage type can create a basket of troubles. If the member was incorrectly identified as qualified, they may receive information to make class elections or quickly elect a class when they still are not qualified! Making corrections for these types of situations can be messy because you may have to return money or recoup money to satisfy correct contribution rates/classes.

The choice to withhold DB contributions from the beginning of PT employment or waiting until a member qualifies is still up to the employer.

There is a benefit to withholding DB contributions from the beginning; if a member qualifies mid-year, all DB contributions and credit are already reported in the system. If the employer waits till the part-time employee qualifies and the member doesn't have the resources to pay back DB contributions all at once, now the employer must do an additional POS withholding and keep track of those payments in addition to regular payroll. Not to mention there are additional lump sum POS payments now showing due in the transaction page which may be overlooked when submitting payment.

A good rule of thumb to decide is if you feel the PT hourly or per diem member will reach 1100 hours or 80 days of work by the end of the fiscal year. If the answer is yes, it may be best to withhold the DB contributions from the beginning. If no, reporting the wages under WNC may be more beneficial.

If you withhold DB contributions from a member who does not qualify in that fiscal year, PSERS will return the non-qualifying contributions to the employee and the corresponding employer share to the employer around February for the prior fiscal year.
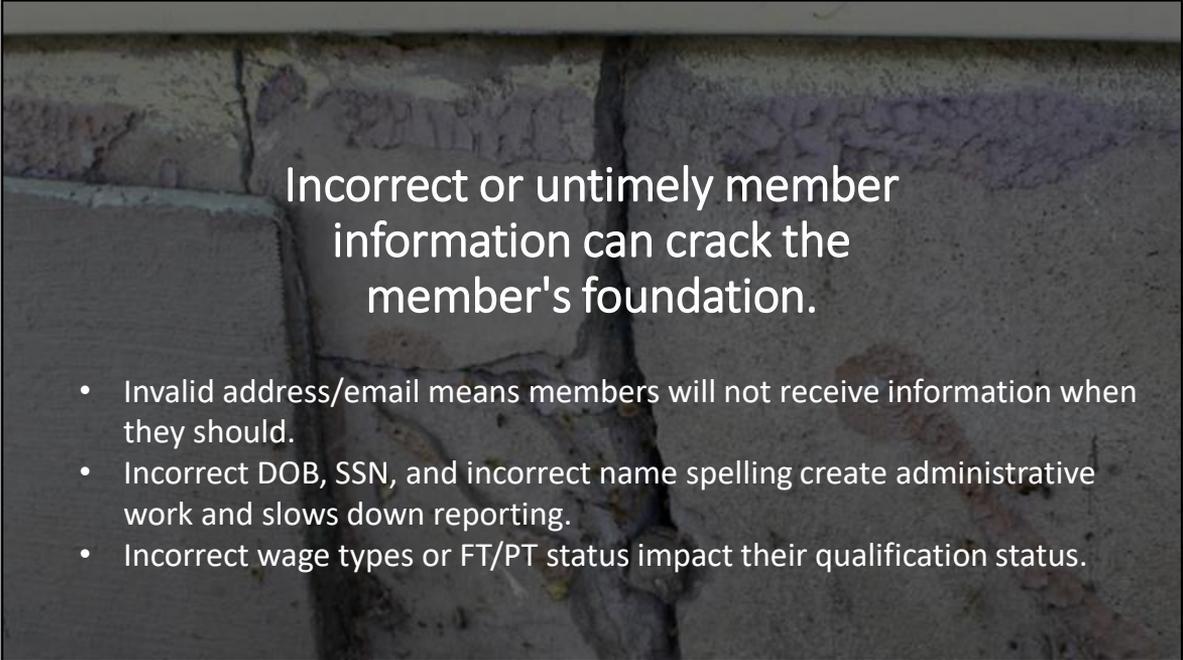
Incorrect or untimely member information can crack the member's foundation.

- Invalid address/email means members will not receive information when they should.
- Incorrect DOB, SSN, and incorrect name spelling create administrative work and slows down reporting.
- Incorrect wage types or FT/PT status impact their qualification status.

Entering an incorrect contract record will have consequences. In PSERS' system, this simple record drives most of the account—everything from the membership class to communication to you, the member, and even Voya who is our DC plan record-keeper.

Anyone who has made this mistake once, can tell you it is a lot of additional work to get incorrect information fixed. With Class T-G, Class T-H, and Class DC members, the information is also shared with Voya so it takes twice the effort to correct.

The incorrect demographic information needs corrected by completing an 1870 form and submitting it with proof of the right information. Next, any incorrect reporting must be reversed by PSERS staff, then the information needs re-entered correctly. If the member had a previous account, both accounts must be merged together. If the member was erroneously reported to Voya but is now ineligible, Voya needs to process that correction as well. This all equates to a lot of time and usually frustration for both the office and the new member.

This can be further complicated if the error is not discovered until after the employee has already left the district or doesn't come back to work until next season.

Contracts and DC reporting

No participant on file

Timing, start dates, and correct wage and work type are critical.

The proper time to enter member demographic and contract records is as soon as possible after the employee has been hired. This allows time for a qualified member to be submitted to VOYA in time for DC reporting for their first payroll. It also allows you time to verify you have entered the correct class and rate for your new employee before deducting an incorrect contribution rate. As the Welcome Packet and Election Packet are reaching homes or MSS accounts for these new members, a file containing new member updates including qualification, election or waiver updates, and other class changes is sent to Voya. The Demographic File to Voya is transmitted each Monday and this is how new accounts are created or updated in Voya's system.

If you wait to enter the new hire's contract record until after their start date, you may have withheld at the wrong class or you may receive an error message on the screen because you have not given PSERS enough time to transfer participant information to VOYA. This means if an employer waits till the Monday they intend to report to add a new hire contract record, it will not be available for DC reporting until the next week.

Additionally, if an employer has not verified if a new hire is required or optional prior to withholding and reporting to VOYA, they may not be withholding and/or reporting for a qualified member. Entering a new hire's contract record prior to their first paycheck saves confusion and additional reconciliation and errors for incorrect withholding of DC contributions.

New School Employee Handout

Introduce PSERS to your new employees with this handout.

We will now review the various member enrollment resources PSERS has available. If your employee is new to PSERS, you should provide them with the PSERS Information for New School Employees handout. If your school has an orientation packet or other materials that you give to new employees, we'd like you to tuck this one page handout in those packets. It is available on the PSERS website in the Employer Tab under Employer Reporting Resources>New Employee Resources and should be included in your new hire's packet along with other HR materials.

The handout gives your new employee an introduction to PSERS and provides general membership information, such as the formula used to calculate a member's benefit and qualification thresholds. It also includes the current membership class your employee is first enrolled in and the contributions that will be withheld from the employee's paycheck. While the formulas for both DB and DC are on the front page, since this will apply to most new employees, there is other information that is pertinent to all employees, like the Active Member Handbook that is found online.

The New Employee Resources link on our website has this handout available in pdf format. There's even a QR code on the document that will send members to the Active Member portion of our website so they can learn more about PSERS.

Employers Help By Introducing PSERS and Providing Background

- *Introducing PSERS to Your New Hires* was sent to all employers in November 2022
- Shows where to find resources on the PSERS website
  - Employers>PSERS Reporting Resources>New Employee Resources

Recognizing that the packet of information given to a newly hired employee can get immense, PSERS Communications division put together an email blast that instructs employees where to find new hire resources. This email blast went out for the first time last November but is intended to be shared annually as the school year begins. While some of it is geared to a newly qualifying member of PSERS, there is also helpful information and reminders for someone who has been a member for some time. Links are included in the blast to make it easy for employees to learn more about each topic.

Welcome Packet

- Received when members qualify
- Introduces Class T-G and election opportunity
- Explains Shared Risk/Shared Gain
- Provides timeframe for purchasing non-qualifying service and apply for Multiple Service election
- Encourages beneficiary nomination

The Welcome Packet consists of a cover letter and an additional three-page letter that welcomes the member into PSERS once they have qualified for membership. It explains that the member has been placed in Class T-G and that there will be an irrevocable election opportunity to elect into Classes T-H or DC in the near future. A chart showing the differences in member and employer contribution rates appears in the letter.

Classes T-G and T-H are subject to Shared Risk/Shared Gain, which is when the member's DB member contribution rate is subject to change every three years, based on the investment performance of the DB Retirement Fund. The rate may change by .75%, but will never increase or decrease by more than 3%. PSERS asks members to look at the Active Member Handbook online for more details.

The Welcome Packet explains that there are time frames for other items as well, such as purchasing non-qualifying time that was earned prior to the member qualifying and electing Multiple Service membership. Members can become a multiple service (MS) member if they have also worked for a state agency in the commonwealth. Both the purchase window and MS election has a one-year timeframe.

Finally, the letter encourages members to nominate beneficiaries. A member may nominate separate beneficiaries for the DB and DC components of the plan. All beneficiaries are designated in MSS.

In case the member has questions, a Field Division insert is included so the member knows which office is closest to them.

A map is sent-
The Election Packet Inserts

- Benefit explanations
- Points to consider
- Class differences
- $25K and $40K salary examples
- DC investment choices
- Waiving membership

The Election Packet is usually generated the same day as the welcome packet but is separately mailed or electronically received, depending on if the member has already selected a preference through MSS.

It includes a complete explanation of their benefit and things to think about. The packet includes information about the differences in elective classes, benefit calculation examples, DC investment options and finally the ability to contribute additional money in after-tax contributions.

The Election Packet

Here is an example of what the letter provides. A member may take no action and stay in Class T-G or the member may elect Class T-H or Class DC. The insert explains the different classes and provides a comparison chart to assist the member in identifying the differences in the classes. An additional insert is included to explain who is eligible to waive membership. Although included for everyone, the waiving option is only available to part-time employees AFTER they have qualified for membership. The timeframe to elect waiving membership is the same as electing a different membership class and is also made through the election page on the member's MSS account.

If the member wishes to take action, the above letter explains how they can make their election through an MSS account or in situations where the member does not have access to a computer, may request a paper form. The member is given 90 days to make their election and that due date is listed above these options.

Member assumptions: $40,000 starting salary with 3% annual increases, working for 35 years (normal retirement)

PSERS DB Plan factors: Final average salary of $103,093 and earns a guaranteed 4% on contributions and interest. Member leaves these in for maximum pension benefit. The base DB contribution rate is 5.50% for Class T-G and 4.50% for Class T-H. Shared Risk/Shared Gain rate is not applied. Visit *psers.pa.gov* for the most current contribution rates.

PSERS DC Plan assumptions*: 26 pay periods per year and 6% rate of return.

	Your Default Option	Your Other Elective Options	
	Class T-G *Highest guaranteed retirement benefit*	Class T-H *Reduced guaranteed retirement benefit*	Class DC *Value of account at time of distribution*
Total Retirement Benefit	$944,399	$824,388	$654,177
Retirement Benefit Breakdown	$45,103 Annual Pension for life + DC Plan Account of $344,304 at retirement	$36,083 Annual Pension for life + DC Plan Account of $344,304 at retirement	No Annual Pension (You assume all investment risk) + DC Plan Account of $654,177 at retirement
First Year Member Contributions (based on a $40,000 starting salary)	$3,300 or $126.92 from bi-weekly pay	$3,000 or $115.38 from bi-weekly pay	
Total Member Contributions	$199,525	$181,386	
Total Employer DC Contributions	$54,416	$48,370	

If you take a look at the handouts, you will see that there are examples that show what the overall benefit may look like between the different classes. This is an example from the election packet for a $40K benefit comparison. There are also additional comparisons available on the PSERS website.

The chart provides a comprehensive review of the different parts of their benefit. But if the chart and reading the details is confusing, we have another tool that may help members determine what is the right fit for them.

PSERS Resources for New Members

- Active Member Handbook

- Informational videos

- Online class election calculator

- Active Member web page

In addition to the New Employees handout, the welcome packet, and election packet, members have other resources that can help them learn more about their PSERS membership. The Active Member Handbook gives an explanation on a variety of topics, including election timeframes. Videos explaining Class T-G compared to Classes T-H and DC are only a few minutes long but give a great visual representation of what their benefit structure is. Employers are welcome to access the videos on PSERS website to use during their own new employee orientation. The online class election calculator allows the member to enter in salary and service year data to provide a picture of what their benefit may look like in each class, depending on how long they intend to work for a participating PSERS employer. For learning more about specific topics, members can search the Active Member tab on the website.

Plot the course with the Class Election Calculator

New, is a class election calculator. Members can do their own inputs and see how promotions and added service time affects their benefit between classes. The calculator includes a default of 3% for salary and 6% for investment returns. This can be a great tool for goal setting.

The calculator has instructions on the webpage and allows for some assumptions, like the percentage of salary growth and the percentage of return on investment. These values are able to be changed and the member can play with the calculator for as many scenarios as they like.

To find the Class Election Calculator, members should go to the Active Member tab on the PSERS website, then down to Class Election. The link for the calculator is farther down the page.

Stay on Course – Access and Use PSERS Member Self-Service (MSS)

- Through MSS, members can:
  - Manage and update personal information—phone numbers, email address, and mailing address.
  - Nominate or update beneficiary(ies) (if eligible).
  - Elect a membership class (if eligible).
  - Elect multiple service membership (if eligible).
  - Receive PSERS correspondence through Paperless Delivery.
  - View a summary of their account.
  - Create retirement estimates.
  - Track the status of their Retirement Application, Request for Estimate, or Refund Application.
  - Stay current with PSERS-related news.
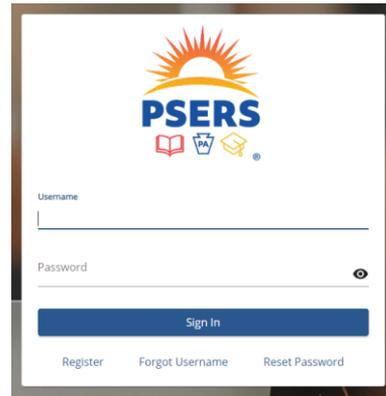
PSERS encourages members to create an MSS account. Here they can make class elections, manage personal information, such as address changes, nominate or update beneficiary information, see account balances, and more! PSERS ID is required for registration for MSS and the site uses Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) to maintain security accessing the personal information within the account.

Members in Classes T-G, T-H, and DC can use MSS to access information related to their DC accounts with single-sign on verification that links into Voya's system without the participant needing to reauthenticate themselves.
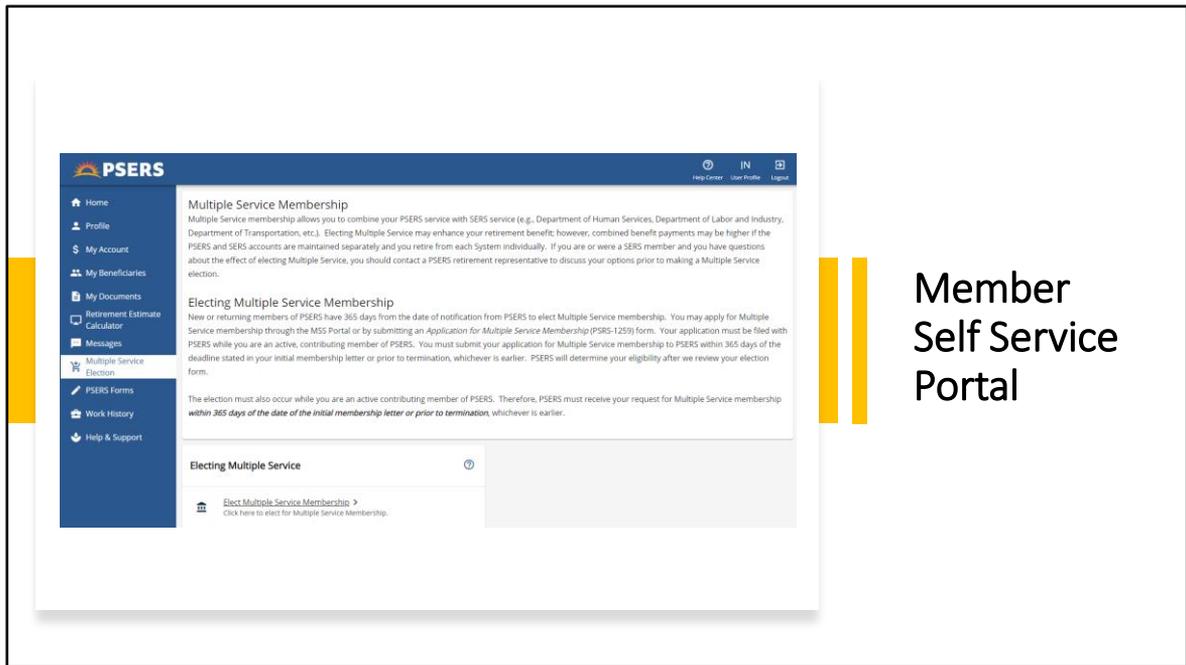
Member Self Service Portal

Sending employees to the MSS Portal also helps you, the employer, because the portal gives members more control over their own benefit planning and provides answers to most of their PSERS questions. Once registered on the MSS portal, members who hate to call or have difficulty calling when phone lines are slow can use secure messaging to reach out.

The portal has pages dedicated to different topics designed to assist members

Class Election Page: If the member is Class T-G and is within their T-H or DC Election window, this page can be used to elect Class T-H or DC.
If the member is Class T-G and is eligible to waive PSERS membership, this page can be used to waive membership.
This page does not display for members with a status of Retired.

Multiple Service Election Page: This page allows the member to apply for Multiple Service, if Multiple Service has not already been granted and if a Multiple Service application is not already in progress. This page does not display for members with a status of Retired.

My Beneficiaries Page
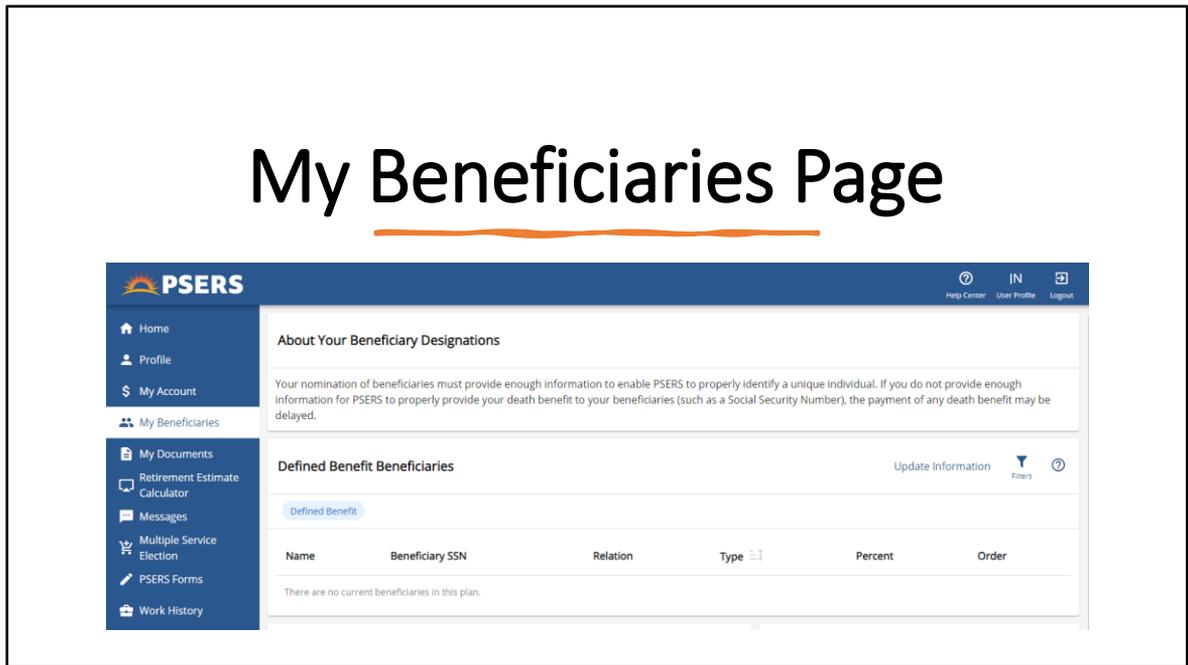
An important page to point out to employees is the **My Beneficiaries Page:** Here most members can view and update their Defined Benefit (DB) and Defined Contributions (DC) Beneficiaries. There are some limitations for retirees, and other limited exclusions where a written request for change must be submitted.

It is important to remind your employees to keep this information up to date. We never know when tragedy strikes. Member services has spoken to spouses who thought they were the beneficiary only to find out later their spouse never updated the information. The ex-spouse was still listed! No one likes those surprises at such a terrible time.
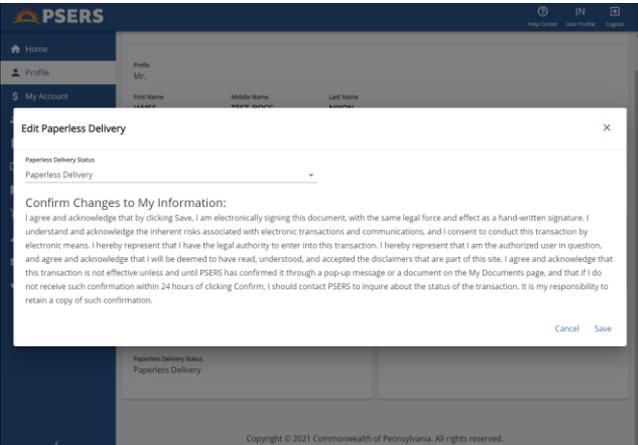
Paperless Options

Members should not use their school email address to create their MSS account.

Upon registering for MSS, members can choose how they want to receive correspondence from PSERS – through Paperless Delivery or Mail Only.

Members may edit their Paperless Delivery settings and their member-provided email address on the Profile page in their MSS account at any time.

It is important for members to maintain their email addresses with PSERS. For example: If members use their school address and switch employers but forget to update their email address in their MSS account, they won't receive notice of our correspondence.

If an employee comes into your office stating they did not receive a document, ask them if they have an MSS account and did they opt for paper delivery?

Accessing DC Account

On the MSS landing page and on their My Account page, members can click the blue link to access their DC account without having to log in again through Voya. Here DC participating members can access both components of their retirement accounts.

It is convenient now for your employees to see up to date salary, service and contribution reporting through MSS for both their DB and DC contributions. If you are receiving questions about contribution totals, send your employees to the member portal. It's all there!

Confirmation of Class Notice

- Confirms membership class and contribution rate
- Provides appeal rights
- Investment insert
  - Shares investment options again
  - Introduces after-tax contribution opportunity

Members have a 90-day window to make a class election if they wish. All members receive a confirmation of class notice, either after an election for membership class occurs or the election time period ends, and they stay in class TG.

The notice includes confirmation of their contribution rates, appeal rights, a DC investment options sheet and an introduction to voluntary after-tax contributions. In the DC world, members are called participants.

What do I need to do when a member makes a class election?

PSERS will transfer money to Voya and directly refund to the member any excess contributions.

Members make class elections through the Member Self Service Portal. The only way an employer knows this has happened is reviewing the weekly CROQ report that we will review shortly.

PSERS will make all the necessary transfer of funds so that the member's DB and DC accounts are made whole based on their class election contribution rates. Employers need not do anything except change their payroll system to reflect the new class withholding moving forward.

PSERS will refund any excess DB contributions by paper check directly to the member. Other than reporting what has already been withheld and updating the rate in your system for the next payroll after you've been notified, **no adjustments or actions are needed from the employer.**

Because this is a member driven process, timing can get a little sticky. A member may elect a new class immediately before there are contributions even reported, or a member elects in the middle of the pay cycle. What does the employer do? Please report the first monthly work report as TG. Even if an employee makes an election their first week of working, the first paycheck will be at the TG rates. Then, the best solution is to make changes in your next full pay period according to the CROQ report with the new class/rate.. If you find you are receiving an error for DB reporting reach out to your ESC Rep, it is probably a timing issue. If you are having difficulty reporting DC contributions reach out to Voya's Email address for payroll issues.

This all points to the importance of checking that CROQ report weekly! One missed

CROQ report could cause hours of additional work correcting, refunding and reconciling.

Use the CROQ Report

SSN	Name	Updated On	Current Membership Class	DB Contribution Rate	DC Contribution Rate	Voluntary After Tax DC %	Reason For Change
123-45-6789	Cowardly Lion	01/4/2023	TD	7.5	0		Account Update
124-56-7891	Heartless Tinman	01/7/2023	TG	6.25	2.75		Member Qualified this fiscal
125-67-8912	Brainless Scarecrow	01/06/2023	TG	6.25	2.75		Membership Waived
126-78-9123	Dorothy of Kansas	01/06/2023	TG	6.25	2.75		Member Reported to DC Admin
127-89-1234	Wicked Witch	01/08/2023	TG	6.25	2.75	5.00	Change in After Tax Def%
128-91-2345	Toto the Dog	01/05/2023	TH	5.25	3		TH Election
129-12-4567	Glenda the Good Witch	01/06/2023	DC	0	7.5		DC Election

The CROQ report is a valuable tool for employers. PSERS keeps track of changes and updates employers when a member's path alters. The CROQ report is produced every Monday if the employer has any updates. The system drops the report into the Documents Page in ESS. The reason for a member showing up on the Report is listed in the last column.

Once notified of the changes, particularly for updating contribution rates, the expectation is that the following payroll after notification will reflect withholding at the new rates.

Account Update – No action for employer (informational step)
Member Qualified this Fiscal year – Mandatory to begin withholding both DB and DC contributions on the next payroll
Membership Waived – Report what was withheld for the member but stop reporting member on future payrolls. PSERS will do adjustments to return employer and member contributions – employer will need to refund DB member contributions. You will see this as a transaction on the Transaction Page when the money is with you to return to the member.
Member Reported to DC Admin – Information sent to Voya to create/update DC participant record for DC reporting to begin.
Voluntary After Tax DC % - Employer should begin/update to withhold after tax contributions at that percentage. Calculate percentage of net check after contributions and all required withholdings have been taken. See slide 63 for example.
TH Election – Member has elected to move from TG to TH class – Change should be effective for the next new payroll. PSERS will do all adjustments and refund any excess

member savings directly to member.

DC Election – Member elected to move from TG to DC class – Change should be effective for the next new payroll. PSERS will do all adjustments and refund any excess member savings directly to member. Employer should begin to withhold at the DC class rate to Voya and report wages on the DB work report to PSERS with 0% DB rate.

Waiver Approval Letter

The Public School Employees' Retirement System (PSERS) recently received and approved your request to waive membership.

Your membership waiver will remain in effect unless you accept a position for which membership is mandatory or elect to enroll in PSERS. Service credit for any school year for which you waived membership can never be purchased or credited towards a future PSERS benefit.

For more information, please refer to the *Active Member Handbook* and the PSERS website.

If you have questions, contact PSERS by calling *1.888.773.7748 (1.888.PSERS4U)* or by sending a secure message from your Member Self-Service (MSS) account. Harrisburg local callers use 717.787.8540. The call center is open on business days from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. *Note: Class T-G, T-H, or DC members can go to PSERSDC.voya.com or contact 833.432.6627 (833.4DC.MMBR) for more information about their defined contribution account.* You can manage many aspects of your account, obtain information, or view documents through your MSS account with PSERS. To set up or access your MSS account, you may visit PSERS online at *www.psers.pa.gov*.

Sincerely,

Public School Employees' Retirement System

Part-time members who are eligible and do elect a membership waiver instead of a membership class will receive a waiver approval letter instead of a confirmation of class letter. The letter is brief but does state that the membership waiver will remain in effect unless the member accepts a position for which membership is mandatory (full-time employment) or the member chooses to end their waiver by voluntarily enrolling in PSERS. Service credit for any school year for which the member waived membership can never be purchased or credited towards a future PSERS benefit.

You will be alerted that a member has waived membership on the CROQ Report in the same week that the member receives their waiver approval letter.

Who returns contributions when a PT member is approved for a waiver?

Both the employer and VOYA

Once notified by the CROQ report, employers should report the current payroll but discontinue reporting and withholding moving forward. Voya will refund the DC contributions to the participant. This happens quickly after Voya learns about the membership waiver for that participant. For the DB reporting, PSERS systems waits for the final reporting to be submitted. Then they will do the adjustments to the member's account by reversing the reporting. This creates a transaction in the employer's account on the Transaction page where the employer will see the contributions they need to refund to the member.

The Middle: Follow the Yellow Brick Road

Member Resources
Employer Reporting

During the middle of the PSERS member's journey, your employees, our PSERS members, settle into their positions and contribute per pay to build their retirement. PSERS will continue to guide our membership in several ways.

Communications To Everyone

- Three newsletters a year
- Annual PSERS Statement of Account
  - Estimate is only as of now. To project to retirement, members need to use generic or personalized PSERS retirement estimate calculators
  - Mailed or available in the My Documents tab in MSS
- Open or targeted email blasts
  - Seasonal reminders
  - Change in demographics
  - Beneficiary reminder
  - Nearing retirement, etc.

PSERS and Voya stay with your employees as their journey continues throughout their career. Newsletters are sent to all members three times a year and provide valuable information about a variety of topics. Annually, each employee who was active and contributing through the prior fiscal year will receive a year end DB statement of account (member SOA) in the fall. If a member also has a DC component, they will receive quarterly statements from Voya that follow the growth of their DC account. SOAs are sent based on a member's mail delivery preference. For members who have an MSS account, their preference is likely paperless delivery so to see this and other documents, they must log into their account. An email notifying them that there is something to be viewed is sent to the email account on file for their account. PSERS also sends out email blasts to members on a variety of topics to help them prepare for retirement.

Member Statement of Account (SOA)

**Page 1:
Employer
Reported
Defined Benefit
(DB) Information**

Personal Data	
PSERS ID	■■■■■■
Date of Birth	06/04/1996
Gender	Female
Membership Class	TG
Contribution Rate	6.25 %

Reported for 2021 - 2022 by Employer					
Employer(s)	Wages Without Contributions Withheld	Wages With Contributions Withheld	Contributions	Days Worked	Hours Worked
PHILADELPHIA CITY SD	$0.00	$53,670.72	$3,354.43	213.00	26
Total	$0.00	$53,670.72	$3,354.43	213.00	26

Every fall, PSERS provides member statements to members who have a balance in the PSERS DB account. These statements are the key to a member knowing if they are on the right track, and how much longer they have to go until they reach their goal.

Let's take a look at some of the information contained within the statement.
The first page of a member's SOA has demographic information (name, DOB, membership class and contribution rate, as well as their beneficiaries, if they choose to display them). In addition, the bottom portion of the SOA shows the wages, DB contributions, and service that you reported for your employees for that fiscal year (FY). If a member worked for multiple employers during the year, they would each be labeled in this table with the details of the wages reported, contributions withheld, and the service earned. We hope that member's take time to review this section carefully and ask questions of you if something doesn't seem to be correct.

Member Statement of Account (SOA)

Page 2: Breakdown of the Member's Account

Breakdown of Your Account				
	Contributions	**Interest**	**Contributions & Interest**	**Service**
Beginning Balance July 1, 2021	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	0.00
2021 - 2022 Information	$3,354.43	$67.09	$3,421.52	1.00
Adjustments	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	0.00
Purchase of Service	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	0.00
Purchase of Service Adjustments	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	0.00
Ending Balance June 30, 2022	$3,354.43	$67.09	$3,421.52	

Total Service Credits by Class as of June 30, 2022	
TG	
1.00	

Page two (2) of the Member SOA shows a breakdown of the details in the member's account. This provides the previous year beginning balance, what was reported for that fiscal year, and the overall totals within their account as of June 30th for the defined benefit plan.

You'll see there is a line item for Adjustments. If corrections are made to an account, the cumulative value will display in this section.

Member Statement of Account (SOA)

Page 3: Estimated Retirement Benefits

Listed below are your basic options. Under the basic options, you may name one or more beneficiaries and may change beneficiaries at any time. Additional options are available upon request. Contact PSERS at 1.888.773.7748 or check the Online Estimate Calculator at www.psers.pa.gov.	As of June 30, 2022
Death Prior to Retirement This amount is equal to the total value of your retirement account and will be paid to your beneficiary(ies) should you die before you retire.	$34,281
Disability Retirement This disability retirement option provides you with the maximum monthly benefit payable to you while you meet the disability eligibility requirements. If you die before receiving payments equal to the total value of your retirement account, any remaining balance will be paid to your beneficiary(ies).	$0
Regular Retirement Options - Monthly Benefit with NO Withdrawal of Your Contributions and Interest	
Maximum Single Life Annuity This regular retirement option provides you with the maximum monthly benefit for life. If you die before receiving payments equal to your contributions and interest, any remaining balance will be paid to your beneficiary(ies).	$0
Option 1 This regular retirement option provides you with the maximum monthly benefit for life, reduced to protect a death benefit based on the total value of your account. If you die before receiving payments equal to the total value of your retirement account, any remaining balance will be paid to your beneficiary(ies).	$0
Regular Retirement Options – Monthly Benefit with a TOTAL Withdrawal of Your Contributions and Interest	
Contributions and Interest Eligible for Withdrawal	$0
Maximum Single Life Annuity Reduced for Withdrawal of Your Contributions and Interest This regular retirement option provides you with the maximum monthly benefit for life, reduced by the withdrawal of your contributions and interest. If you die before receiving payments equal to the total of your contributions and interest, any remaining balance will be paid to your beneficiary(ies).	$0
Option 1 Reduced for Withdrawal of Your Contributions and Interest This regular retirement option provides you with a monthly benefit for life, reduced by the withdrawal of your contributions and interest and to protect a death benefit based on the total value of your account. If you die before receiving payments equal to the total value of your retirement account, any remaining balance will be paid to your beneficiary(ies).	$0

Page 3 offers a breakdown of retirement options based on the present value of the account, if the member is vested. For members who are part of Classes T-C, T-D, T-E and T-F the final average salary is the three highest years of salary. For Classes T-G and T-H, the final average salary will use the five highest years of salary.

The present value of the account is ever-changing as new reporting comes in and as time marches forward but this is one of the most effective tools that a member can use to determine if their retirement savings are on track for their goals.

The estimated benefit section provides numbers for a death benefit, disability benefit, and options for withdrawing contributions and interest. These figures are based on the end of the fiscal year for the statement.

Page 4 displays a debt summary, if the member has a purchase of service debt. If they do not have a debt, there is no page 4.

Defined Contribution Participant Summary

- Provided to Class T-G and T-H members in addition to the main SOA statement.
- To be vested to receive employer's contributions a participant must have three (3) eligibility points.

Defined Contribution Participant Summary on June 30, 2022

Defined Contribution Primary Beneficiary(ies)
No Beneficiary on File

Defined Contribution Primary Beneficiary(ies): This section shows the person(s) or entity(ies) you currently have designated to receive a benefit in the event of your death.

- If your beneficiary is shown on this statement, please check to make sure the information is up to date.
- If your statement reads "Beneficiary Not Shown at Your Request" and you want this information listed on future statements, you can opt to display your beneficiary information through the Member Self Service (MSS) Portal or complete a new Nomination of Beneficiaries (PSRS-187) form.
- If "No Beneficiary on File" is shown in the block above, PSERS encourages you to name a beneficiary via our Member Self Service (MSS) module, which can be accessed from the PSERS website at www.psers.pa.gov.

PSERS selected Voya Financial® as the service provider of PSERS Defined Contribution (DC) Plan. For more information about your PSERS Defined Contribution (DC) account, please contact Voya at PSERSDC.voya.com or 833.432.6627 (833.4DC.MMBR). The Voya call center is staffed each business day from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

DC Eligibility Points as of June 30, 2022:	1.00

A participant earns one eligibility point for each fiscal year (12-month period beginning July 1) in which school service is rendered and the participant makes a DC participant contribution to the PSERS DC Plan.

Non-Vested Balance as of June 30, 2022:	$840.26
Vested Balance as of June 30, 2022:	$1,318.93

The DC account balance displayed is as of June 30, 2022. For the most up-to-date balance, visit your DC account through PSERS MSS Portal.

Class T-G and T-H members also receive a summary from PSERS of what they have contributed to the Defined Contribution account, as of June 30. Participants are always vested in their own contributions. To be eligible for the employer contributions, participants must reach three (3) eligibility points. An eligibility point is different in that they are not incrementally earned like service credits. An eligibility point is earned for each fiscal year in which contributions are made to the DC account.

**Please note that Voya provides quarterly statements to participants. This DC Participant Summary provides them with an overall picture of both parts of their retirement benefit as of the end of the fiscal year. Participants will receive a quarterly statement from Voya and can access their DC account at any time for more current numbers.

Member Statement of Account (SOA)
Why is it so important?

Engagement-Members can see their retirement account growing each year.

Accuracy- If there is a mistake in reporting, it is easier to fix right away.

Planning-Members use their SOA to make retirement decisions.

As you just saw, the Member SOA provides a snapshot at the end of each fiscal year, which is June 30, of the salary and service members have earned for the previous fiscal year. It also provides the total service reported to PSERS from the beginning of their career. We encourage members to review this document carefully to be sure that all the information is true and accurate. Members use these statements to help them plan realistically for their future.

SOA is important because it provides a statement of wages and service reported to PSERS on behalf of the employee so they can track their progress and work toward their retirement goals.

Additional Member Resources:
Financial Wellness Education Articles

Articles on:
- Account Management
- Investing
- Financial Education
- Financial Literacy

On-demand videos on:
- Budgeting
- Investing Concepts
- Overviews
- Target Date Investments

The PSERS website also offers a library of informational pieces on a variety of topics to help get members thinking about ways they can stay in tune or improve their financial outlook. Financial Wellness, for example, is a hot topic right now with the rise in cost of goods and services. PSERS and Voya's communications are always encouraging members to take an active role in being prepared for retirement. This information is available on PSERS website to all members regardless of membership class. PSERS hopes that members take time to review the information provided and plan for financial wellness in the future.

Intermission

Our Journey will continue in 15 minutes

Next, we'll shift gears to employer reporting.

Your employee is on their way……with you providing accurate and timely reporting!

Employer Reporting

Employers report each of their employees on the PSERS (DB) monthly work report which is due by the 20th of the following month. (Example—April work report is due by May 20th) Per payroll, employers report to Voya for any members who have qualified to participate in the DC plan. It is the employer's responsibility to make sure that records are accurate and timely when reporting to PSERS and Voya.

The overall wages reported per member should match in both systems, even thought the frequency of the reporting is different in both systems. It is important to ensure the wage reported to Voya and PSERS for each member is consistent for total-to-date reporting. If errors are found, where money has incorrectly been reported to one system or the other, please correct them as soon as you can. Frequent reconciliation is recommended. More importantly, employers must make sure no one was omitted from being reported to Voya or PSERS. If you did miss someone, correcting it quickly is much easier than trying to fix something from several months ago.

Work Reports move members along

- Member Savings and POS payments are **Due by the 10th** of each Month

- Monthly work report must be **submitted by the 20th** of the following month

Work reports are uploaded or entered manually via the **Employer Web by the 10th of each month** and then **approved by the 20th of the month** for the prior month's activity. Work Reports submitted prior to the 10th of each month will allow the employer time to reconcile prior to making payments of the Member (Employee) Contributions and Member (Employee) Purchase of Service Installment due date. This way, PSERS calculates the amounts due, and this knowledge will aid in the timely and accurate submission of payments.

Remember, your employees are now able to see reporting up to and including released work reports and adjustments. You can avoid frustrated employee visits by making sure reporting is timely.

Reviewing your work report for accuracy may cut down on informational requests sent by PSERS processing units which can take away some of your valuable time. It is much easier to fix incorrect data before it's uploaded, rather than trying to fill in the gaps years later. In addition, PSERS can process benefit applications faster for your employees if information is accurate and timely.

Monitoring an employee's progress and keeping it current and accurate makes the journey easier

☁ Import Files

ID	Description	Header Status	Process Flag	Import Start Date	Import Type	Rows Imported	Rows Processed
560434 >	DECEMBER 2022 WORK REPORT	Processed Successfully	Completed	12/19/2022 11:50:23 AM	Work Report	150	149

So, what are some things you can do in making the long trek to the Emerald City easier for everyone? Reconcile your monthly work report each month. Before processing your work report, review the number of rows imported with the number of rows processed on the Imports Page. Does the number of rows processed equal the number of rows your payroll system's file contained? If not you need to investigate why. Additionally, does this match what was reported for that month to Voya for that member also?

The number of rows processed should equal the number of rows imported less the header row, this means all your employees will be accepted and processed in PSERS system. If the rows processed does not equal the rows imported less the header, some of your employees will not have their reporting updated which may cause questions from an employee who verifies their account on a regular basis. It can also create additional work in reconciliation of payroll versus work reports later on down the road and then there is the year end reconciliations for member statements.

Checking financial information after a work report has been released helps avoid financial surprises along the way

Work Reports

Work Reports / Work Report Details

Work Report Details   Work Report Summary   Work Report Transaction Details

Financial Summary

Fund	Due Calculated	Amount Paid	Amount Owed
Mem Saving	$54,108.10	$54,108.10	$0.00
Mem POS	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00
Emp Share	$247,012.94	$1,179.34	$245,833.60
Emp Prem	$5,368.33	$25.63	$5,342.70
Total in current view	$306,489.37	$55,313.07	$251,176.30
Total of all records	$306,489.37	$55,313.07	$251,176.30

Once you have verified there are no errors, no members missing on your report and it has been submitted, review your financial totals of the released work report found on the Work Reports Page. Work Reports are released over lunch and overnight.

First tab is Work report details, this is the page most of you are familiar with as it shows each individual row for each employee on the report.

Second tab is Work Report Summary – this is a great tab! It gives you all the information you need in one place. The first box gives the employer, the report status, transaction number, who uploaded the report, the total currently due and the date released.

Pictured in the slide is the Financial Summary box found next to the Work History Summary.
This information helps you reconcile your work report to your payroll system. The member savings amount due and the employer share amounts should be the same as the amount due on your payroll file. If they are not, NOW is the time to find out why they do not match! In this example we see the employer share amount calculated is different from the amount due. To find out why you will want to go to the third tab, Work Report Transaction Tab

Checking work report transaction tab supplies details of why your totals may be different

Checking the transaction details will give you the opportunity to see why your totals don't match on the summary, or if it looks like part of your balance has already been paid?

In this example we see 2 transactions that credit the employer share for DC credits from reporting to VOYA. This has partially paid the employer share. Transaction # 2596748 paid $624.37 towards employer share and transaction # 2599373 paid $580.60 in employer share. This explains the difference in calculated amount and amount due. Also notice in this example the member savings amount is being credited by two different transactions #2590496 is crediting the account with $6,856.50 and trans # 2597769 is crediting the account with $47,251.60. Is this something the employer expected? If not, investigating it now by reviewing the transaction page or calling your ESC rep for help is a good idea!

Part of the 2022 ESC Spring Workshop was an explanation of how to review the transaction page. Past workshops are posted to the website under the Employer tab.

Have there been any changes?

ACTIVE but new/additional positions

Contributing Leave

Non-Contributing Leave

Military Service

Jury Duty

At the start of the member's journey, class elections and waivers must be updated quickly in your payroll software. But over a long work history there are other periodic changes that may need to be made to a member's record, like updating contract records.

As the journey continues throughout their career there may be a change in an employee's work status. For most of the journey they will be reported in an ACTIVE employee status. Perhaps they are still an active member but they have been promoted to a different job position. If this is a significant change, a new contract record may need to be entered to explain an increase in salary. Or perhaps there is a supplemental position that they have been hired to do.

Maybe there is actually an interruption in the member working such as a period of leave. It is up to you to determine if the member is on a non-contributing or contributing leave. When a contract record is received for a period of leave, the member receives a letter informing them that PSERS recognizes that have been placed on a leave.

When members return to work, it is equally important to enter an updated contract record to end the leave, either by creating an Active record, or, if they did not return, a termination record. We will discuss termination records in more detail toward the end of the program. The important thing to remember is that the work report status must always match the member's contract record status to be successfully accepted on the work report.

Verify you have entered the right contract record

Start Date	Stop Date	Work Status	Job Title
06/30/2021	06/30/2021	TRMNTN	TEACHER
07/01/2019	07/01/2019	LEAVEN	TEACHER
09/20/2010		ACTIVE	TEACHER
09/12/2014	09/12/2014	ACTIVE	SUBSTITUTE-TEACHER
08/19/2009	09/19/2010	ACTIVE	SUBSTITUTE-Teacher
06/30/2008	08/18/2009	TRMNTN	Substitute
10/23/2007	06/30/2008	ACTIVE	SUBSTITUTE-Teacher

- Full Time or Part Time
- Correct Wage Type (Salaried, Hourly, Per Diem)
- Accurate Start/End Date

On the screen is a contract record depiction of a member's path. In this example the employee should only have three contract records but… there are 7.

The member was strolling along fine until suddenly the employer noticed an incorrect start date for a contract record. Seeing that, the employer voided the contract record from 9/12/2014 and added a new contract record with a start date of 9/20/2010. But, none of that was necessary because the member already had an open contract that began 8/19/2009.

The new contract had no reporting because the previous reporting was associated with the closed and voided contracts, this meant when the system did it's updates it created a LEAVEN contract and a Termination contract to fill the gaps. Now the member will receive a letter stating they were on LEAVEN which will be a surprise because they were not! And when the employer went to do their next work report they too received a surprise, the member was showing terminated.

If this is a TG, TH or DC member, Voya would have been notified the member terminated, but in reality, they are still working. This causes errors in your DC reporting and may even lead to the member being advised they can refund, when in fact they are not eligible to do so.

Why did this happen? The system will automatically add a LEAVEN followed by a TRMNTN after two years of non reporting on a FT contract record.

Leave Letters are Sent to Members for:

SSLWCN
SSLSSN
WKCMPN
LEAVEN

If the employer has entered a non-contributing leave code, a leave code letter is generated automatically by the system and is sent to the member.
(Exception: Activated Military Leave (ACTMLN) which has its own more specific letter.)

These leave code letters generate questions and calls from members to both PSERS and employers because they are somewhat generic and may include verbiage regarding disability that may not apply to the member's reason for being on leave. If a member is truly on a noncontributing leave, then PSERS notifies the member that they must apply for a Disability Retirement Benefit within two school years of the last day for which the employer paid them. This letter will go out **even if the employer enters a leave in error** or waits to enter the contract until after the leave has already begun or is over. This can result in member confusion.

It is important to tell the member's story in order and correctly through using the right contract codes and correct errors as quickly as possible.
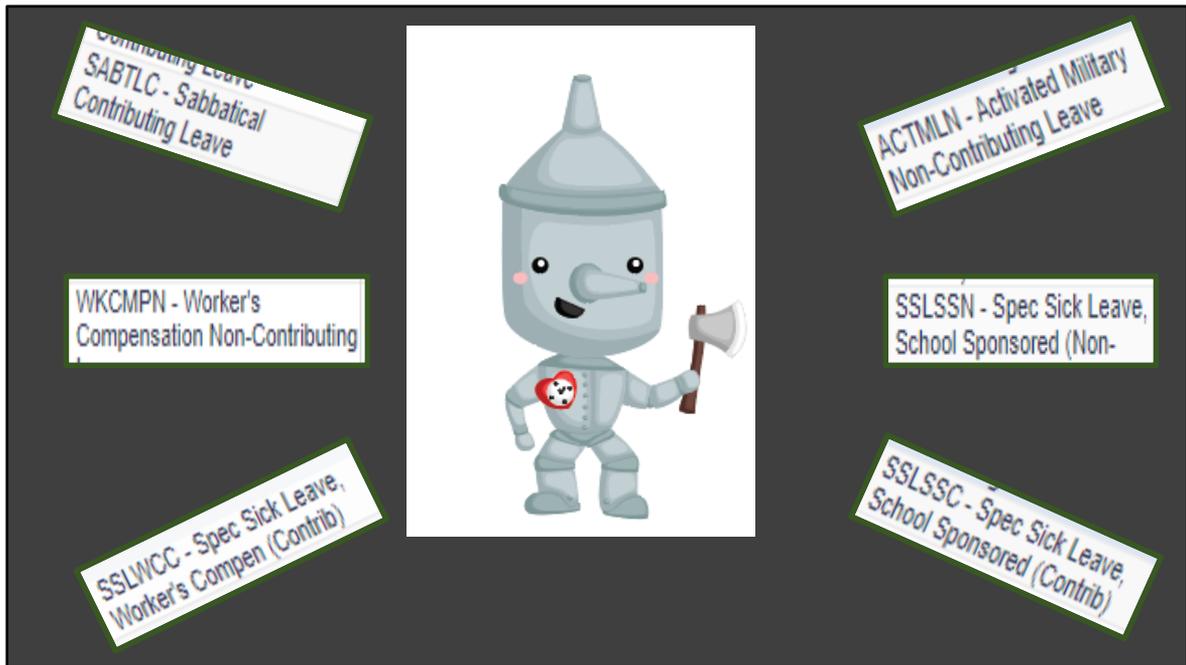
How do you know when to enter a new contract record? Anytime a member is not working for more than a single pay period (normally 2 weeks), a new contract record should be entered to advise PSERS of the new work status. This contract should start the day the member's work status changed.

It is the employer's responsibility to enter the correct leave type. Employers should select the work status that best describes the reason for the member's absence from work. The new contract advises both PSERS and VOYA of the member's new work status. Reason codes may be found in the Employer Reference Manual under Leaves. Make sure you have read how to report for that leave type to know the correct placement of wages and service, or if reporting should be occurring at all during the leave time frame.. Understand the requirements of a leave and if it is contributing or noncontributing leave is an important element. Entering leave periods and updating contracts back to active when they have returned tells PSERS what is happening along the member's yellow brick road to retirement.

Estimated work reports and Delinquency interest

- Estimated Work Report Transaction will post to your account if you are late.
  - It will use WR total from the prior year in the same month + 5.00%
- Transaction will be reversed when actual reporting comes in. The totals will reflect the balances on the actual work report.
- Interest will still be charged for late reporting.

What are estimated work report transactions? If you do not report on time, or forget to submit your work report the first business day after the PSERS work report is due (usually the 21st, but could be a few days later if the 20th lands on a Friday or Saturday), the system will look for missing work reports and trigger a transaction for an estimated work report in its place. You will not see any estimated work report transactions if you report your work report to PSERS prior to the 20th of the month.

The system doesn't know what the actual totals of your work report are, so it will look back to the previous year's reporting for the same month to find totals. The system will then add 5.00% to account for salary growth and additional staff. This estimated work report transaction will be visible with the system-calculated total on the ESS Transaction Page, and on the Employer Statement of Account, if late reporting has not been resolved prior to the statements running.

No details will be available if you click on the estimated work report. This means you will not be able to see a member-by-member breakdown—the estimated work report does not replace the need for you to submit an actual work report with the specific member work history. It's just a place holder to account for the billing. **When the actual work report is submitted, the estimated work report will be reversed to zero and the totals from the actual work report will replace the estimated totals.**

If the actual work report is not loaded before payment is needed for the work report, the estimated totals will be what is expected to be paid to PSERS. Additionally, interest will still be charged against your account for the late reporting. PSERS goal is for timely reporting to ensure accurate information is provided to the member.

Employer Impacts of Late Reporting

- Interest charges applied to your account that could have been avoided
- Earnings assessed for late DC Reporting
- Subsidy loss
- Complexity of correction may increase as time passes
- Member status changes or elections may have taken place that were missed being marked in your system

Many impacts related to late reporting are financial in nature. You may find unexpected interest charged to your account that could have been avoided, or in the DC plan, you may be responsible for lost earnings on money that should have been reported and invested. Even after a member terminates from employment, the account must be correct, which may leave you on the hook for covering the cost of the missing contributions if you cannot recoup that value from the member.

Another financial consequence of late reporting or payments is when they happen later than the quarter end. In this instance you create a situation where your subsidy is delayed and not granted until a later date. These are funds the district may be relying on for a positive cash flow.

Other impacts may cost you more time than money. For example, if someone has made a class election, waived membership, or has been out or returned from a period of leave, it may take longer to correct and process reporting. And if you failed to withhold the correct amount of contributions.
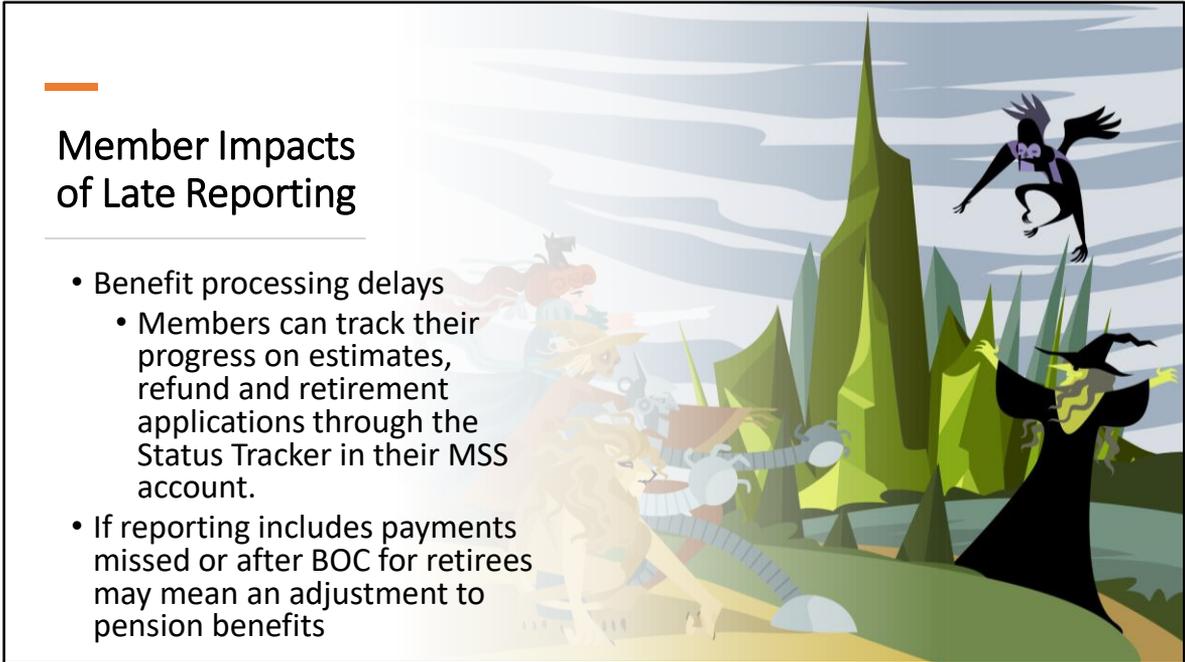
Member Impacts of Late Reporting

- Benefit processing delays
  - Members can track their progress on estimates, refund and retirement applications through the Status Tracker in their MSS account.
- If reporting includes payments missed or after BOC for retirees may mean an adjustment to pension benefits

There are individual impacts to the member too. Members should not have to wait for benefits to be processed because of untimely or inaccurate employer reporting.

And now, members with an MSS account can use the Status Tracker to check the status of an application, so if the account is pending information from you, they may be knocking on your door to ask why.

For the business office staff, you may feel overwhelmed by emails or phone calls encouraging a response or looking for you to take action when you're already swamped with other work.

The other unfortunate piece is that if you are loading information late, you are in a hurry meaning you're less likely to have reviewed the data for errors and may be costing yourself more work in the long run.

Reconcile reporting
and payments
often to avoid
common reporting
errors that make
Toto bark a warning

Dare we say it again! Reconciliation and review of information entered in ESS is important, this is an individual's journey to retirement. Validations are in both ESS and Voya's reporting systems, but it is up to you to make sure what was reported is accurate and complete.

Reporting Errors

- Forgetting to report service when an employee terminates mid-year.

- Reporting supplemental wages without having corresponding service or contract record

- Incorrect BOC flags & dates
- Over-reporting or under-reporting to DC plan

- Forgetting to correct errors

Here are some of the common reporting mishaps that will cause unnecessary delays and challenges for a member along their journey and added work for you, in correcting and researching issues.

-Neglecting to report final days/hours when an employee leaves mid year may delay a benefit and create additional work in researching the member's service. Adding service on the member's final work report will avoid the delayed benefit and your additional work.
-To avoid questions on Supplemental wages, a corresponding contract record should be added, and service should be reported with the additional wages.
-Correctly setting BOC flags and knowing how they work will make the transition for retiring employees a smooth process. When reporting is done after the benefit is finalized, a retiree's benefit may be affected. We will discuss this in more depth later in the presentation.
-Over-reporting DC contributions after the participant's termination may result in the participant receiving those contributions in a distribution. If the funds were distributed to the participant, they are no longer available for refunding to the employer which is an additional cost to the district.
-Allowing member information to fall off work reports due to reporting errors will cause important information to be missing from a member's account. Some of these errors will be discussed in the next slide.

Common Work Report Errors

No valid member contract was found for the report period and/or fiscal year	WNC amount must be zero for Full-time members
Contributions Rate must be different	Duplicate records submitted for SSN, Wage type and fiscal year combination

Shown here are some of the most common errors on work reports. If your work report has errors, the rows must be corrected prior to processing the report. Having accurate monthly work reports eliminates the need for extensive end of year reconciliation. If your work report has warnings, these rows must be reviewed prior to processing. The warning rows will be processed but should be checked in case they contain an unintentional error that should be corrected.

What do those error messages mean? Let's decipher the most common ones.
-No valid member contract was found for the report period and/or fiscal year- This means that there is not a contract record in the PSERS system that corresponds with the wage type, employment type, or work status you are reporting on the work report. You are trying to report a member for the month and year in a wage type, work status or employment type that has no contract record for the time period of your work report. This is usually an employer reporting a terminated member as active or vice versa because they change the contract in one system but not the other. Both your payroll system and ESS should have the same contract records for the same time period.

-WNC amount must be zero for Full-time members- A Full-Time member is qualified and is required to have contributions withheld and reported. Wages No Contributions (WNC) cannot be reported. If the employer did not withhold contributions, report as though you did and recoup the contributions on your next payroll. (remember not to double deduct them!)

-Contributions Rate must be different- The contributions that are being reported do

not correspond to the contribution rate for the member. Verify you have all the wage types included for the contributions reported. Is there another row that may have supplemental wages but no contributions, sometimes payroll systems do not add these wages correctly.

-Duplicate records submitted for SSN, Wage type and fiscal year combination. Combination must be unique or combined into one record.- IF an employer has an adjustment uploaded into the system with a member contained on another report, either a work report or adjustment, it will recognize the possibility of the member being reported twice and display this error. If there are two rows on a work report or adjustment with the same member, wage type and work status for the same FY, ESS will do a final validation after the employer submits the report to check for duplicate rows. One of these rows will drop off the report and not be processed. It is important to make sure that there are not multiple rows for the same member using the same wage type for the same fiscal year. Employers should have their payroll system combine data into one row for each wage type.

A reconciliation and review of the work report should allow the employer to catch any errors that caused a member's data to drop from the work report. This should prompt the employer to do an adjustment to make sure the member's information is not missed.

Timing of Changes to Contract Records	Changes to contract records should not occur while a work report is still pending.
	Work reports release over lunch and overnight.

In case you have not received the message, PSERS system is driven by the contract records you enter. After processing a work report, it goes through one final validation before showing on the work reports page as released. If contract records are changed and your current work report is in pending status, your work report will bounce back to initial status with errors.

Many employers will upload their work report, make corrections, submit the work report, then immediately begin to change their contracts for next month. Contract records must be unchanged, until after the work report shows released on the work reports page. Then, new contract records may be added. Work reports release over lunch and over night.

DC Reporting Errors

- Participant not on file
- Processed terminated participant
- Division Code (Your Employer #) missing for participant
- Errors related to incorrect contribution rates
- Mis-matched or missing wages reported between systems.

Voya's system has validations to ensure that reporting is accurate as well. You may be familiar with Participant not on file, which is typically visible when you're trying to report a participant before a profile has been created for them in the system, or for someone who is not qualified or eligible for the DC plan.

Once Voya's system recognizes a termination date has been received, sometimes you will receive a Processed terminated participant error. This is asking you to double check that it is correct to be reporting money for this participant.

If the division code (AKA your employer reporting code) is missing when entering information, the system will also display an error message.

Mots commonly you will see errors related to the contribution rate being incorrect. This may be because of a recent class election, or some part of the wages or contributions do not mathematically work out to the correct contribution rates. Especially when entering information manually into the system, please be sure to double check your entries.

The most common reporting error is that more money is reported to one system than the other. Often, it is a greater amount of money reported to the DC plan. If you are reporting sick or vacation payouts or additional funds not considered to be retirement covered-compensation, these wages must be removed.

After-tax Contributions – (ATC)

• Only Classes TG, TH and DC have this option.

• Election is for a percentage, not dollar amount.

• Participants can change this as often as they like.

At any time along their journey, a member in class TG, TH or DC may voluntarily elect to have additional contributions withheld from their pay to invest in their DC account. ATC must be a percentage rather than a dollar amount per pay. This percentage will apply to all positions held by the participant.
A participant can opt to add, delete or change their after-tax percentage as often as they like. Changes are sent over weekly to PSERS, so the most recent change is what will display for you on the CROQ report. This is another reason why reviewing the CROQ report regularly is very important.

When you get notice of after-tax changes on a CROQ report, you will want to make the change in your payroll system so that the next pay date these contributions are withheld and reported to VOYA. Participants are informed their ATC election may take up to two pay cycles to begin being withheld or for changes to occur in their rate.
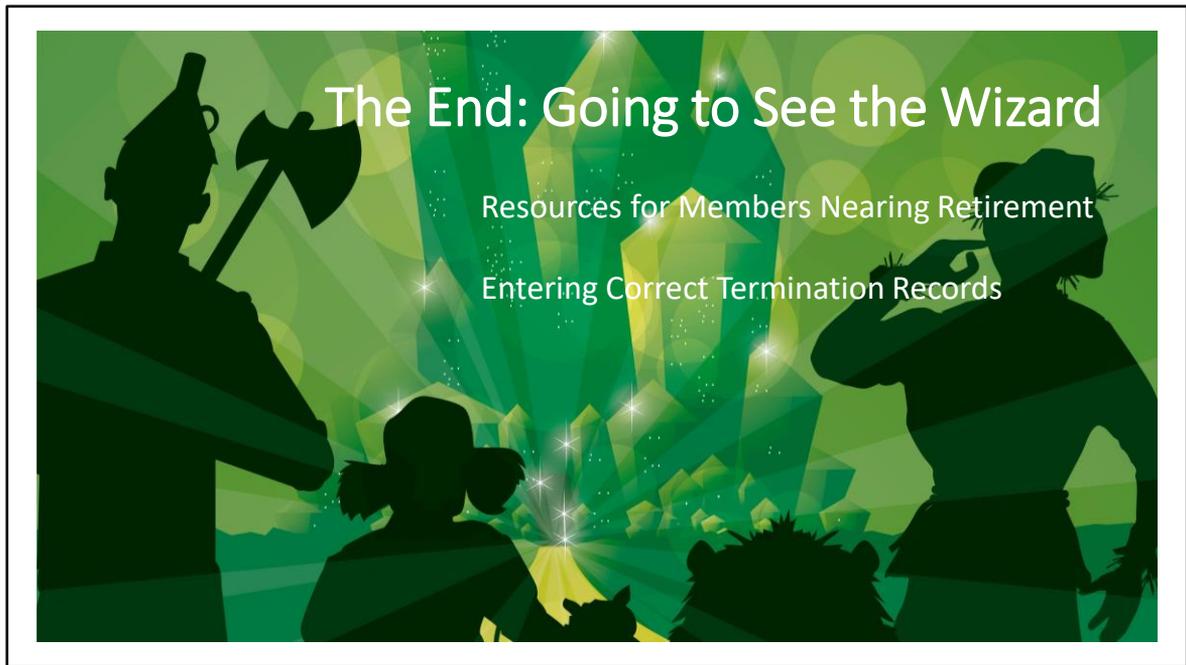
After Tax Contributions – (ATC)

Total Gross Earnings		$1,200.00	
Pick Up contributions		$ 108.00	
After Tax % =5	1092 X 5%	$53	Maximum Amount of ATC
additional required deductions		$320	
Net wages used for ATC calculation	1092-320	$772	
Final After Tax	772 X 5%	$38.60	Amount withheld and reported to VOYA

Employer payroll system calculates After Tax when all other deductions have been applied. The member elected ATC percentage is then multiplied by the remaining NET pay.

After tax election percentages are applied only after any required deductions are taken and subtracted from the RCC less pick ups. This total should be determined by your payroll system before withholding and reporting your employee's after-tax amount. These may be different for every district and according to municipality and other circumstances.

What happens if you realize that you haven't been withholding or reporting after-tax contributions? Just like any other part of reporting, it should be corrected. If the participant no longer wishes to contribute to after-tax, they must reset their election percentage to zero with Voya.

At termination of all public-school employment and after all associated payrolls have been reported, ATC is reset to 0%. This means if a participant returns to working for an employer, they will need to elect an after-tax amount again.

The End: Going to See the Wizard

Resources for Members Nearing Retirement

Entering Correct Termination Records

When a member is nearing retirement, they may need to be aware of what action is required of them for your district such as how to provide notice of termination, providing a resignation letter, turning in access cards or district equipment, and settling any debts or plans for post-retirement benefits through the school.

Human Resources and Business Office staff should refer members to their local PSERS regional office or the PSERS website for specific information regarding retirement. PSERS offers programs such as Foundations for Your Future (FFYF) seminar to help prepare members for retirement and holds Retirement Exit Counseling sessions to assist in explaining retirement options, time frames, and eligibility requirements when completing the retirement application.

As a member progresses closer to the end of their career, what resources are available?

PSERS Member Services

- Benefit Fairs and In-Service Days – Presentations (Foundations For Your Future) and Attendance
- Large group educational sessions – Foundations For your Future (promoted through website and email blasts, offered in person and virtually)
- Retirement Exit Counseling
- Staff prepared retirement estimates – two comparison estimates within 12 months of tentative date of retirement

Like the good witch, PSERS tries to help grant wishes, making sure members are educated and prepared for their retirement dreams to hopefully come true. PSERS provides many free educational opportunities which alleviates employer's HR offices from the responsibility of answering member-oriented questions that are better left to PSERS member services.

PSERS has trained Regional office staff who conduct localized Benefit Fairs and Foundations for Your Future where your employees can learn all about their pension plan and ask questions of the experts. Employers should recommend participation in these events for members at any stage of the journey, it's never too early to start planning, but particularly as they are nearing the end of their journey to make sure that they are meeting their goals.

Employers should direct your employees to these PSERS resources, especially for retirement exit counseling and retirement estimates. Members need to know and understand their PSERS choices, especially when there is so much help available to them free of charge.

PSERS suggests estimates be done within 12 months of the employee's target retirement date. You will not be aware of when an employee requests a benefit estimate but as an employer you may receive emails from PSERS technicians asking you questions about an employee's work history. This is generally due to a member request or PSERS has noticed an abnormality in an account. Understand, technicians are not suggesting reporting was done incorrectly, but merely attempting to verify data in the account is correct. PSERS wants to ensure your employees receive the benefit

they earned which requires accurate inputs. PSERS Staff will add items of note to a member cover letter should there be anything of interest. Estimates can take 4 – 6 weeks.

Counseling is Important

- Retirement Exit Counseling
  - Free, small group sessions by PSERS
  - Financial planners may attend with client
- Convenient regional live sessions or virtually online sessions are available
- Errors on retirement applications are almost non-existent for members who attend counseling
- About 30% of all members do not attend counseling

I mentioned employees should be directed to PSERS resources but unfortunately, not all members will come to retirement exit counseling. Many believe they can do it on their own or that their financial planner or your office knows enough to guide them to the right choice. ESC has received many calls from employers asking us to help guide members. ESC can help with reporting, but we cannot help you guide a member through retirement.

While we encourage members to work with their financial planner, they should still come to PSERS counseling. There are sad stories resulting in errors on applications, missing documents, members not understanding the process and submitting paperwork late or not at all. Causing members delayed benefits and in some cases missed opportunities for a more suitable benefit option that our staff may have been able to explain.

Then there are the other ancillary pieces of the puzzle a financial planner doesn't know. Information ranging from health insurance to return to service or extra curricular exceptions when retirees just want to help schools out in retirement. Attending a Retirement Exit Counseling session is statistically proven to avoid these pitfalls and any avoidable delays and errors in the processing your employee's retirement.

HOP and Premium Assistance

- **Notice**
  - Information is shared at Retirement Exit Counseling
  - In PSERS newsletters
  - HOP Age 65 mailings
- **HOP Eligibility – Must Enroll Within 180 Days after**:
  - Retirement or loss of coverage
  - Member or spouse reaches age 65 or Medicare eligibility
  - Change in family status (e.g.. death, divorce, marriage)
- **Premium Assistance**
  - Only available with HOP or school employer's group plan.
  - Eligible members* receive up to $100 a month for out-of-pocket premiums.
  - On average, that's a lifetime savings of $24,000

  Certain age and service requirements must be met to be eligible for premium assistance.

Once retired, members may have access to school district health insurance programs, but would they have access to the PSERS Health Options Program (HOP)?

One of the largest expenses for a retiree is often Health Care. Attending Retirement Exit Counseling gives members an opportunity to explore HOP and Premium Assistance options. While it may not mean a monthly payment it may mean a substantial savings in monthly costs for health care, something a financial planner would not be able to explain. Members who decide not to initially enroll or do not know it is available, are not able to later change their mind until a qualifying events occurs.

Information about these is communicated to members through their PSERS counseling session and once retired, directly from the administrator of the PSERS Health Options Program. Just another reason to steer your retiring employees to take advantage of PSERS counseling sessions.

Refanuds

Request after termination of
all public-school
employment

We focused quite a bit on the career and retirement, but we also should talk about those members who refund instead of reaching retirement. A refund is the member's only option if they terminate from all school service and are not vested.

A member may only request a refund of their contributions and interest if the member terminates all public-school employment. This is not an automatic process. the member must contact PSERS to acquire an application.

The application is not available on the PSERS website so staff may verify the member is not eligible for a retirement benefit or is simply waiving their right to the benefit.
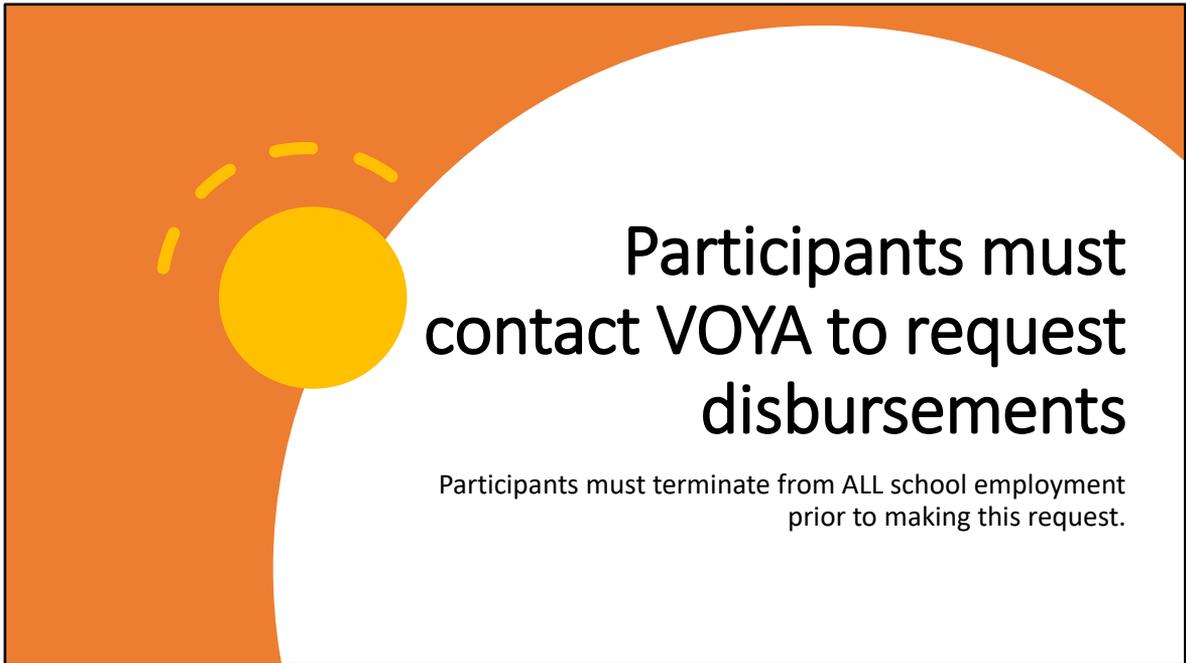
Participants must contact VOYA to request disbursements

Participants must terminate from ALL school employment prior to making this request.

Termination for all school employment is required before a participant may request a disbursement through Voya. They may do this by logging in through the website directly, using the link from MSS into their DC account, or by speaking to a customer service representative.

They may also choose to leave their money in the DC plan; the DB and DC benefits are separate..

Employer is the Coachman

Does your employee know what the district requires of them when retiring?

Is it clear to members of your district what the policy is to terminate employment? Do they need a formal resignation letter? What date should they use ? Have they settled any debts or plans for post-retirement benefits through the school? Returned any equipment?

All of these may not be situations that your office is aware of, or controls but it is essential information and processes should be in place to make sure the retiring employee benefits are not being delayed due to lack of communication. Some districts have created a district checklist for employees who plan to retire. This gives the employee ample information and deadlines so they are aware of district requirements that can delay their benefit.

Human Resources and Business Office staff should refer members to PSER Member Services or the PSERS website for specific information regarding PSERS retirement benefit. PSERS offers programs to help prepare members for retirement and holds Retirement Exit Counseling sessions to assist in explaining retirement options, time frames, and eligibility requirements when completing the retirement application.

Termination of Service Contracts

- Termination records should be entered only when member leaves all district employment.

- Wait to enter the record when a termination date is known, and you can identify when the last pay will be issued.

Now that the member has completed their journey, there are steps you need to take to bring it to conclusion for them. One of the most questioned aspects of a member journey is creating the termination records. It is important to add termination records for employees who no longer work in the district, whether they are pursuing retirement or not. Termination contracts should not be used for transitioning an employee from one position to another. Only a new active contract record need be created with the start date the same as the end date of the previous active contract record.

Termination records should only be entered when the last day of work is truly known and when you know when the last pay will be issued. This is because employers are not able to edit a termination contract once it has been entered. You do not need to wait until the final pay is issued before entering the termination record; in fact, PSERS will not know how to prioritize processing the account if we do not have a termination record. The BOC flags are what tells PSERS that there is additional money coming.

Incorrect termination dates can also cause benefits to be incorrectly processed requiring recalculations and possible delays. To request a disbursement from Voya, the system looks at the termination date + 30 days OR the last day of the BOC month to ensure that all reporting is received prior to the disbursement being sent out.

Termination of Service contracts

Start Date = Last Day worked

BOC Flag

BOC Svc Report

The termination and deceased contract records are different than other member contract records because there are additional pieces of information that need to be included. Fields from the previous contract record should be the same in the termination or deceased record.

The job title, employment type, wage type, expected months, expected units, voting status, will match the previous open contract. The start date of a termination or deceased contract should reflect the last day of work or the date of death. In some circumstances employers will enter a LEAVEN contract after a member leaves work to allow the employee to reach a milestone. In these cases, the Termination contract start date will be the day after the Leave end date (the member's milestone date).

Termination and Deceased contracts are the only contract records where the employer should complete the BOC Flag, BOC Svc Report and Service flag fields. ESC has seen times where employers have added a "NO" to the BOC field of an ACTIVE record which causes the system to do a hard stop error. It sees the BOC flag as no and thinks there is no additional reporting even though the contract is ACTIVE work status.

It is important to keep in mind for members who have a DC component to their class the eligibility date for when an employee can first request a distribution from Voya is based on the later of the termination date + 30 days **or** the BOC flag date. Entering a termination contract for a position change rather than a true separation from employment could cause a participant an opportunity for an early distribution from VOYA.

BOC & TRMNTN Contracts

Voting Status*	Contract Status*
Non-Certified	Eligible
BOC Flag	**Service Flag**
Yes	Yes
BOC Svc Report	
07/31/2023	

Why is it critical to enter the BOC and Service Flags properly? This information is used to identify if there is still outstanding reporting for the member beyond the month in which the member terminated employment. BOC dates help PSERS prioritize when benefits are processed and paid.

An easy way to remember when to use BOC flags is if they are being paid outside the month in which they terminate or in the case of a deceased employee when they pass away. Then a BOC flag is needed and should be set to "Y" for yes. You will be prompted to enter the month that the member's final pay will be **reported**. This date should be entered as the last date of that month. Example: If July will be the last reporting month for a member who terminated in June, the BOC flag would be set to "Y" and the date 7/31/2023 would be entered. This enables the employer to report wages after a member has terminated allowing the employer to enter the right part of the member's story at the right time. The BOC Svc Report date will tell PSERS technicians to expect more reporting after monthly report for the last day worked.

If all wages including any ancillary wages from extracurricular positions or part time earnings will be reported to PSERS within the same month as termination, the BOC flag can remain as "N" for no and there is no need to enter a date. PSERS technicians will know all reporting is completed with the monthly report of the term date.

Once the BOC and Service Flags are entered through the ESS, you will not be able to edit those fields. Please be sure to identify which pay month will be their last payroll before setting those fields. Or wait to enter the termination record until confirmation of final pay and service time is received.

If it is realized that the flags or dates you've set are incorrect, please contact your ESC rep so they may be corrected. Failure to do so may cause benefits to be calculated prior to all final reporting. This may result in incorrect benefits that will need to be reprocessed and a potentially angry member in your business office asking why their benefit is being recalculated.

Break in Service

- **Must be a Bona Fide break**
- Change more than technical/true severing of employment
- Any anticipation or prearrangement of return to service?
- How much time has elapsed since last employed
- Is the member continuing previous service with employer?

But most important is that we need to ensure that the member experiences an actual break in service.

What is a Break in Service? A lot of employers want to remember a 90-day rule.

The 90-day rule was just an internal guide to PSERS to know when to investigate whether a member experienced a bona fide break in service. By law, the following factors are to be used when determining whether there has been a bona fide break in service:

I.   Whether the change in the employment relationship is more than a technical change, requiring the true severing of the employment connection with the employer;

II. Whether there has been a reasonable anticipation or prearranged agreement between the member and the employer that a return to school service will occur;

III. The amount of time that has elapsed from the date the member becomes a retiree and the return to school service;

IV. Whether the services are a continuation of the retiree's previous service with the same employer; and

V.   Any other factors that PSERS deems appropriate.

Many times members will coach in addition to their full time position. There is an Extracurricular Exception. " A retiree can return to service after a bona fide break in service without loss of annuity if the retiree is employed under a separate contract in

an extracurricular position, which is performed primarily outside the regular instructional hours and not part of the mandated curriculum. This type of employment is permitted in all public school entities, including community colleges and public universities. There is no requirement that an "Emergency" exist to return under the Extracurricular exception. Unlike the Emergency exceptions, there is no limitation on the amount of time a retiree can return under the Extracurricular exception. To meet the Extracurricular exception, a retiree must: (1) Have a written, separate contract with the public school employer; and (2) perform the duties primarily outside regular instructional hours and not as part of the mandated educational curriculum

Return to Oz

Retirees who choose to Return to Service
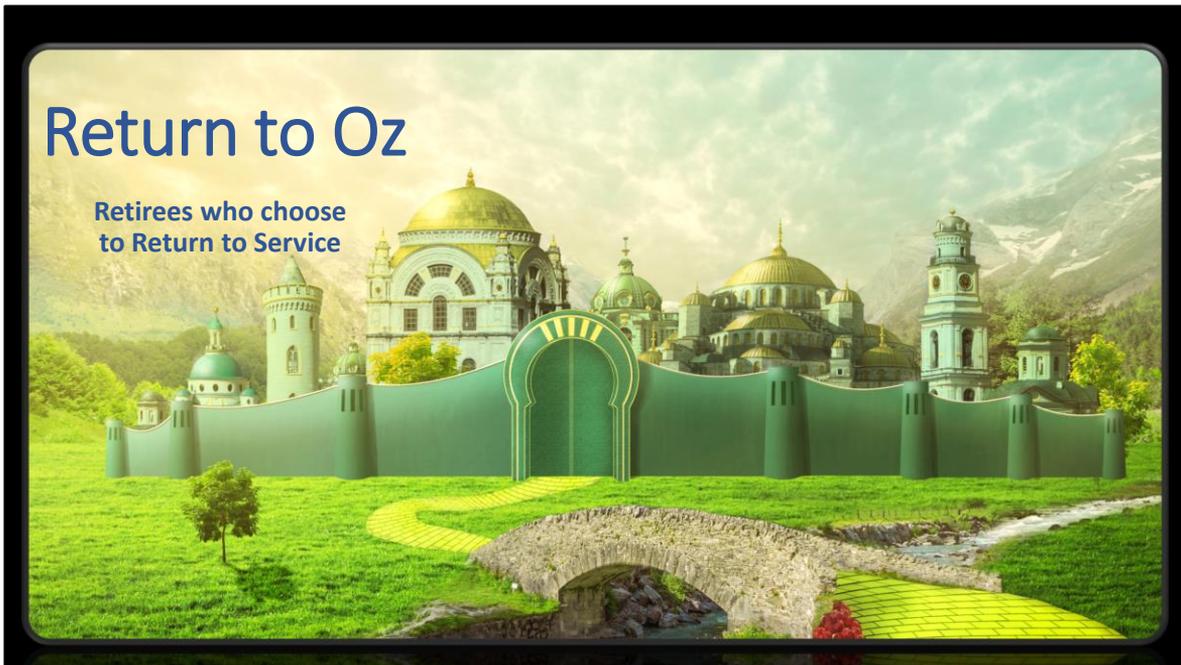
For a select few retiree's, returning to the working world is the right thing to do.

Return to Service

Retirees may be employed in PA public schools if:

- they return as an active service member & freeze their annuity
  or
- they return under an exception defined in PSERS *Return to Service Exceptions* Publication

If you have questions, contact your ESC representative.

We know that in today's world finding employees to fill positions has been very challenging. PSERS knows districts are reaching out to their Retirees and asking for help. There is a lot of confusion about retiree's returning to work and when they should be reported.

Retirees who are considering returning to work should review PSERS *Return to Service Exceptions* publication. This explains the difference between a true return to service which will freeze their pension, or returning to work for a school under an exception to the return to service rules. Most commonly, these exceptions are for substitute positions but can be for other positions provided the meet one of the exceptions. It is important employers are aware of under which circumstance a retiree is returning to work.

Act 91 was signed into law recognizing the current shortage of personnel in the classroom and making it easier for PSERS retirees to help in substitute positions through June 30, 2023. While Act 91 permits districts to hire retirees without offering positions to a non-retirees, it has NOT changed the process for receiving PSERS approval for hiring the retiree. It is still important for employers to help protect retiree's pensions by submitting requests for emergency exception approvals. PSERS has made it more convenient with the school year approval process.

If an employee is actually returning to work, not under an exception, you will not be able to enter a contract record for them. Instead, you will get an error message that asks you to contact your ESC Rep. The 1299 form is used by employers to tell PSERS that a particular retiree is beginning to work again. That form is processed by the

benefits team to freeze the member's pension. You will be contacted when the new active contracts have been entered and the account is ready for reporting,

Some retirees who returned under an emergency exception have had their pension frozen in error because the person entering contracts and setting up payroll was unaware of the emergency exception approval. This can be a huge inconvenience for the retiree and a mess to clean up reporting wise. It is best to know, understand and follow the RTS rules, especially in today's environment. It protects your retiree's benefit and saves you time correcting reporting. Retirees may return to work after a bona fide break in service without affecting their pension if they receive approval from PSERS. Otherwise, it is expected employers will complete a 1299 form to freeze the members pension and the retiree will begin to contribute to PSERS once again.

Pension Forfeiture

- **Employers are required to notify PSERS when they become aware an employee is charged with a forfeitable offense.**

I would be remiss if I did not mention Pension Forfeiture. The right of a person to receive any retirement benefit from PSERS is subject to forfeiture as provided by the Public Employee Pension Forfeiture Act ("Forfeiture Act"). The law mandates that all service and benefits payable to a PSERS member be forfeited if the member is found guilty of, or enters a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, any crime identified in the Forfeiture Act, when the crime is committed through the member's position as a public employee or official or when the member's public employment places the member in a position to commit the crime(s).

All Pennsylvania criminal offenses that are classified as felonies or punishable by a term of imprisonment exceeding five years are forfeitable offenses. Several misdemeanor crimes also are forfeitable offenses.

By way of example, the list of forfeitable Pennsylvania crimes includes, *but is not limited to*: theft by unlawful taking or disposition; theft by deception; theft of services; theft by failure to make required disposition of funds received; forgery; tampering with records; bribery; perjury; misapplication of entrusted property and property of government or financial institutions; tampering with public records or information; criminal attempt, solicitation and conspiracy; murder; voluntary manslaughter; involuntary manslaughter; aggravated assault; retail theft; identity theft; corruption of minors; unlawful contact with minor; distribution of computer virus; bomb threats; and the sexual offenses listed in Chapter 31, Subchapter B of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code.

In addition, any crime set forth in Federal law or the laws of any other state is a forfeitable offense, if the crime is substantially the same as any forfeitable Pennsylvania crime. **Employers, therefore, are required to notify PSERS when they become aware that one of their employees is charged with a forfeitable offense.**

WWW.PSERS.PA.GOV

Printable Forms Publications:
- Handbooks
- Newsletters
- Let's Talk Pamphlets

MSS Login

Generic Retirement Calculator

Class Election Resources

Financial Wellness Education

Here is a depiction of the PSERS website and how filled with information it is, including all available publications and forms.

Member Contact Info

Visit **www.psers.pa.gov** for general information and to access your retirement account through the Member Self-Service (MSS) Portal.

Account Information and General Questions:
1.888.773.7748   (Monday- Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.*)

Health Care:
1.800.773.7725
www.hopbenefits.com

Premium Assistance:
1.866.483.5509

Secure Message:
Access the PSERS MSS Portal and reach us by sending a secure message in your MSS account.

PSERS Mailing Address:
PSERS
5 N 5th Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1905

Voya Member Contact:
1.833.432.6627

*Call volumes increase towards the end of the day so calling earlier may decrease your wait and ensure that your concerns are promptly addressed.

Members may contact PSERS any time they have a concern or question.

If members contact PSERS in writing, they should include identifying information so PSERS can review your account.

Employer Contact Info

Assistance from PSERS

PSERS Employer Service Center

1.866.353.1844

Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. ET
Monday – Friday

Direct questions by email to your regional ESC representative

Voya Dedicated PSERS Payroll

Email Inbox: ID-PSERSS@voya.com

Reference your work order ID and 4-digit Employer Code in the subject line.

Provides detailed information or research for work order challenges

Emails to the Dedicated PSERS Payroll Email Inbox are sent an automatic reply that a response will be provided within 24 hours.

Assistance from Voya

VOYA Employer Help Line

1.877.806.5652

Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET Monday - Friday

• Answer general questions about work orders and the Voya Data Gateway.
• Assist in submitting a work order in the Voya Data Gateway.
• Delete work orders that have not posted.
• Assist an employer with submitting a manual negative contribution file to Voya's payroll team.
• Assist an employer with corrections to payrolls

PSERS Employer Accounting Unit Resource Account

Email Address: RA-PSERSEMPACCT@pa.gov

Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. ET Monday – Friday

Assists with general payment and account transaction questions and all questions about PNC's Cash Concentration system, including password resets and bank account updates

Follow on Twitter and Facebook for #retirement news and #investment updates.

@PA_PSERS

@PennPSERS

Using the right contact information will help speed your response time! Your ESC Representative is always your first line of contact. On this slide are other common contacts for employers.

The Voya help line can assist with general issues in submitting your work order. If you have challenges and need more detailed assistance with Voya reporting contact Voya by emailing the PSERS payroll in box

Employer accounting may be reached by email and is only able to assist with accounting issues not reporting. Any reporting questions should be directed to your ESC Representative.

Employer Service Center
Regional Map

Region 1-
DeAndre Albright

Region 2-
Deanna Brown

Region 3-
Daniel Tapia-Ortiz

Region 4-
Catherine (Kate) Nollau

Region 5-
Kathleen Pajtis

Region 6-
Rachael Riddle

Region 7-
Jeanette Riedel

Here is the Employer Service Center map. There are seven ESC regions within the state. All regions have a dedicated representative to ensure you receive the customer service and training assistance you may need.

Not sure who your representative is? When you log into your ESS account, your rep's name will be in the banner at the top of each page. Or if you have a quick question, feel free to call ESC's toll-free line so you can keep moving with the task at hand. (3 on previous slide)

School visits are welcome, webinars for specific training needs.

ESC is here to help!

In school and virtual training for employers new to PSERS Reporting

Cross training staff for emergency absences

The Employer Service Center (ESC) is your primary and first line of contact for questions or if you need help with reporting. As shown in the previous slide the state is divided into seven regions with one ESC representative acting as the liaison for the region. ESC representatives are available Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 4 PM, to assist employers either by email or by the Employer HELP LINE 1.866.353.1844.

ESC representatives are available for in-person or virtual trainings for new monthly reporting staff or for cross training any additional staff members. There are also many recorded trainings on the PSERS website.

ESC can assist with basic DC reporting questions but it is preferred employers reach out to VOYA for assistance with VOYA reporting.

Thank you!