

EMPLOYER SELF-SERVICE (ESS) PORTAL MANUAL FOR TRS EMPLOYERS

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The RSA Employer Services Division is pleased to provide you with this ESS Portal Manual.

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a guide to assist you with navigation through the ESS Portal and the processes for reporting in the ESS Portal. We hope this manual will significantly help in performing your reporting responsibilities in the ESS Portal as the employer of a retirement plan administered by the TRS.

This manual will be updated periodically to reflect any changes in ESS Portal procedures. We encourage you to contact our office if you have any questions related to the ESS Portal or if you need our assistance.

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The information provided in this manual is meant to be a resource to assist employers with ESS Portal reporting processes. This manual will not address every scenario that employers may have. For assistance, or ESS Portal related questions, please contact an Employer Services Representative.

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ESS Portal Administrator

For an employer to have access to the ESS Portal, they must first designate someone to be an ESS Portal Administrator. The ESS Portal Administrator is a person who is assigned by an authorized official of the employer to conduct business with the RSA. They will have full access to the ESS Portal. When possible, this person should not be the same individual who performs payroll or HR duties for the employer.

Responsibilities of an ESS Portal Administrator

The ESS Portal Administrator will be responsible for determining what other employees need to be set up as contact persons in the ESS Portal and what access these employees will need. The Administrator will be responsible for setting up and maintaining accounts for the other ESS Portal users. This includes resetting passwords, PINs, and inactivating user accounts. They will also be responsible for entering the employer addresses and bank account information in the ESS Portal. This is done from the Administrator tab in the ESS Portal, and only the ESS Portal Administrator(s) will have access to this tab. If the primary Administrator needs to be updated, an authorized official will need to notify Employer Services of this change.

Designating an ESS Portal Administrator

To establish an ESS Portal Administrator, an authorized official of the employer must complete an ESS Portal Administrator User Registration form (link to form [here](#)) and email it to essadminreg@rsa-al.gov. An employer can have multiple Administrators, however, the Administrator set up by Employer Services will be the primary Administrator.

Once Employer Services has set up the Administrator in the ESS Portal the Administrator will be sent a security certificate to access the ESS portal, as well as three separate emails. One email contains their ESS Portal Administrator ID, which will be permanent, one email contains a temporary password, and one email contains a temporary personal identification number (PIN). The temporary password and PIN will expire after 72 hours of the email being sent so it is imperative that the Administrator create their own permanent password and PIN within the 72 hours. If the 72 hours expires before the Administrator has created a permanent password and PIN, the Administrator will need to notify Employer Services who will validate and reset the account.

If the security certificate fails to load due to blocks the employer has in place, the Administrator can access the ESS Portal by using the F5 security login. The F5 security login credentials will be provided to the ESS Administrator in the Welcome Email sent from Employer Services.

Changing an ESS Portal Administrator

To change the primary ESS Portal Administrator the employer will need to complete and submit two ESS Portal Administrator User Registration forms (link to form [here](#)). The first form should be marked “Remove User” to remove the previous Administrator and the second form should be marked “Add User” to name a new primary Administrator.

Once Employer Services has set up the new primary Administrator in the ESS Portal, the Administrator will be sent a security certificate to access the ESS Portal with their Administrator ID, and then receive two additional emails. One email contains a temporary password and one email contains a temporary personal identification number (PIN). The temporary password and PIN will expire after 72 hours of the email being sent so it is imperative that the Administrator create their own permanent password and PIN within the 72 hours. If the 72 hours expires before the Administrator has created a permanent password and PIN, the Administrator will need to notify Employer Services who will validate and reset the account.

If the security certificate fails to load due to blocks the employer has in place, the Administrator can access the ESS Portal by using the F5 security login. The F5 security login credentials will be provided to the ESS Administrator in the Welcome Email sent from Employer Services.

How to Log into the ESS Portal

- The ESS portal Administrator and users who have been given access to the ESS Portal by their Administrator, will need to follow the instructions listed to log into the ESS Portal. Here is a link to the ESS Portal: <https://ess.rsa-al.gov>. This link is also available on the Employer page of the RSA website at www.rsa-al.gov, under Employer Services.
- This will take the user to the F5 security screen. If the user has been able to download the security certificate, they can bypass the F5 security screen.
 - To obtain the security certificate or the F5 security login information, please contact Employer Services.
- The user will enter the User ID that was assigned to them and the temporary password they received.
- The user will be required to check the box indicating they agree with the terms & conditions.
- The user will be directed to change their password first, then their 4-digit PIN, and then select and answer two security questions. Once this is done the user will be officially logged in.

Overview of the ESS Portal Tabs

Report Tab

Submit Report

The **Submit Report** screen is where users will upload Enrollment and Contribution files. Users also have the capability of making manual changes to enrollments by selecting Enter Online under Enrollments. They can also manually enter contribution submissions by selecting Enter Online under Contributions. Users can view submissions in progress, void, or suspend submissions as needed.

View History

The **View History** screen allows ESS users to view current and previous Enrollment and Contribution submissions. This screen defaults to show you the last three (3) months of submissions. In the upper left-hand corner of the screen you can select to view all prior submissions. To view previously submitted Enrollment or Contribution submissions, select the Submission ID number in blue. ESS Users can view, suspend, or void submissions that are in progress.

- Users can Void an Enrollment or Contribution submission from this screen. For example: if users have a lot of errors that need to be corrected in their payroll system prior to submitting payment, the report can be voided.
- Users can also Suspend a Contribution submission from this screen. For example: if a change is needed on an employee's enrollment, the Contribution submission can be suspended rather than voided. Once the necessary changes have been made to the employee's enrollment, the user can navigate back to the Report tab > View History > Unsuspend the submission.
- Once the submission is Unsuspected, the system will go through the validation process again to identify any errors due to enrollment changes. The user will then be able to proceed with any additional corrections prior to submitting payment.

View Reporting Packets

The **View Reporting Packets** screen displays reports that are system generated after each contribution submission has posted. These reports cover various topics, such as Leave Without Pay, Non-Participating Part-Time Status, Post-Retirement Employment, and Overtime Limit. These reports are to be used as tools to track various information.

Download PIDs

The **Download PIDs** screen allows employers to download all PIDs for their active employees.

Invoices

The **Invoices** screen is where RSA sends invoices for various reasons, including, but not limited to, Employer Penalty, Service Purchases, Manual Corrections, and PEEHIP invoices. These invoices can be credit or debit invoices. PEEHIP invoices are to be submitted under the invoice screen. Other invoices can be applied to the contribution submission on the Summary screen.

- Users can view paid and unpaid invoices in the ESS Portal.
 - To view unpaid invoices, go to Report > Invoices. This screen will automatically show any unpaid invoices the employer may have. Employers are also able to pay invoices from this screen.
 - To view any paid invoices, go to Report > Invoices > Show Paid Invoices.
- Users can pay debit invoices, such as Employer Penalty or PEEHIP invoices.
 - To do this, select the check box next to the invoice(s) to be paid.
 - Select Pay Invoice.
 - Select Action > Edit to enter the total amount due, select Action > Apply.
 - Select Continue to Step 2, where the user will review the invoices being paid and the amount. Enter the PIN > Submit.

Payroll Schedules

The **Payroll Schedule** screen allows employers to set up their payroll schedule(s) based on their payroll frequency(ies). This is to notify the RSA when wages are earned and paid by the employer. More information on Payroll Schedules can be found on pages 23 – 24.

Error Correction

The **Error Correction** screen is where uncorrected enrollment errors are displayed when an employer submits and publishes an enrollment file with errors that have not yet been cleared.

- If a user receives an error message on the contribution report stating this enrollment is in Error Correction, navigate to Services > Error Correction and edit the enrollment as needed.

Contract Schedules

The **Contract Schedule** screen allows employers to set up their contract schedule(s) based on their employees' contracts. This is to notify RSA when the employees' contracts begin and end. More information on Contract Schedules can be found on pages 25 – 28.

Services Tab

Death Notice

The **Death Notice** screen allows employers to submit a Death Notice to the Retirement Systems electronically for active and retired employees who have worked for their agency.

Submitting a Death Notice is a two-part process for active employees.

- Select Services > Death Notice.
- Enter a valid SSN, PID, or Last Name to retrieve the employee's information.
- Complete the death notice information and select Submit.
- Terminate the active employee's enrollment with the date of death and the enrollment end reason of Death.

Note: The Application for Survivor Benefit is available on the Death Notice screen, if needed.

For retired employees, the user will only need to fill out the death notice information.

Employer Certification

The **Employer Certification** screen allows employers to certify Employee Retirement Requests. Employers can also view any previous retirement requests. More information on Employer Certification can be found on pages 68 – 70.

Employee Information

The **Employee Information** screen allows employers to view previous service credit awarded to an employee based on each plan year.

- This screen does not show any previous service credit from any other retirement systems (ERS or JRF), or any service that may have been purchased.
- This screen also shows the Pensionable Wages and Employee Contributions for the logged in employer.

Search Demographics

The **Search Demographics** screen allows employers to make demographic changes to their active employees, as well as create and update enrollments for new and current employees. Users can also view the employees who are currently and/or previously employed by the logged in employer.

Employer Information

The **Employer Information** screen displays the Current Rates, Historical Rates, Plan Provisions, and Actuarial Information for the employer.

- To view Historical Rates, select Employer Information > Current Rates and select Display Historical Rates.
- To view Plan Provisions, select the Plan Provision Information.
- To generate Actuarial Documents, navigate to the Actuarial Information section at the bottom of the screen and select the appropriate document.
- Employer Contribution Rate changes take effect in the first pay period in which the pay period ends on or after October 1st.

Reports

The **Reports** screen displays different reports that provide various information for employers to use. Information on the different reports can be found on pages 71 – 73.

Message Center

The **Message Center** allows the RSA to send communications through the ESS Portal, so employers can keep their RSA communications in one place. When RSA sends a communication, users will be notified by email of a new message in their Message Center.

- Users can view deleted messages by selecting View Deleted Messages in the bottom left-hand corner.
- Users can submit a question to the RSA by selecting Submit a Question in the bottom left-hand corner.

Question Center

The **Question Center** allows users to view Frequently Asked Questions. Employers are also able to submit a question through the Question Center to Employer Services. Employer Services monitors this daily and responds to the questions in the order in which they are received.

- To submit a question, enter your question in the box at the bottom of the screen titled “Question not answered? Submit it below”, then select Submit.
- An Employer Services Representative may be reached by phone at 334.517.7005, option 2 or by email at Employer.Services@rsa-al.gov.

Account Tab

Change Password

ESS Users are required to change their password every 90 days. The ESS Portal will notify the user 14 days in advance of their password expiring and prompt them to update their password. It is important that users update their password when prompted to avoid being locked out of the ESS Portal.

- To change your password, select the Account tab > Change Password. Enter your Current password > New password > Retype New Password > Your ESS PIN > Update.

Change PIN

The PIN is the user's electronic signature in the ESS Portal. No one else should know or have access to another user's PIN. This PIN is used when paying Employer Contributions and downloading employer reports. ESS Users are not required to update their four-digit PIN after it has initially been set up. However, if users would like to update their PIN, they can do so as needed.

- To change your PIN, select the Account tab > Change PIN. Enter your Current PIN > New PIN > Retype New PIN > Update.

Change Security Questions

ESS Users are not required to update their security questions after they have initially been set up. However, if users do not remember the answers to their security questions, they can update these at any time. The answers to your security questions are case sensitive.

- To change your Security Questions, select the Account tab > Change Security Questions. Select a Security Question > Enter your answer > Retype your answer > Enter your ESS PIN > Update.
- Repeat the steps above for security question number 2.

Note: The RSA does not retain any log in credentials except for the User ID.

Admin Tab

The **Admin** tab only appears on the ESS Portal menu bar for employees who have been assigned the role of ESS Administrator. Under the Admin Tab the Administrator(s) will be able to maintain the employer's demographics and bank information, as well as establish and maintain contact persons and ESS users.

Payment Account

ESS Administrator(s) can add, delete, or edit the employer's bank account(s) information. Multiple bank accounts can be set up. (Debit blocks need to be removed from these accounts.)

If your employer has changed financial institutions, remember to provide the financial institution(s) with the below ACH Company IDs:

- For Retirement: F636045055
- For RSA-1: H636045055
- PEEHIP: G63045055

How to Add a Payment Account:

- Under the Admin tab, select Payment Account.
- Select Add a Payment Account.
- Select the receipt type as EFT, then enter a nickname, the ABA routing number, the account number and re-enter the account number.
- Select Continue.
- Enter your ESS PIN and select Submit.

How to Edit a Payment Account:

- Under the Admin tab, select Payment Account.
- Select Edit next to the payment account you want to edit.
- Select Edit.
- You can update the Payment Account name.
- Enter your ESS PIN and select Update.

How to Delete a Payment Account:

- Under the Admin tab, select Payment Account.
- Select Edit next to the account you want to delete.
- Select Delete.
- Enter your ESS PIN and select Delete.

Office Location

Administrators should maintain the office location addresses. Multiple office locations can be added if the employer has ESS users in different departments or buildings, or if the employer uses a third-party preparer to submit contributions.

How to Add an Office Location:

- Under the Admin tab, select Manage Office Locations.
- Select Add Office Location.
- Enter the effective date, select the status, select the location type, enter the description and the address information.
- Select Submit.

How to Update an Office Location:

- Under the Admin tab, select Manage Office Locations.
- Select Edit next to the Office Location that needs to be updated.
- Make changes as necessary and select Update.

Manage Contact Persons

Administrators will update and add contact persons as needed. The Contact Persons information informs the RSA who the appropriate contact person is for each type and it will eliminate the need for agencies to notify different divisions of RSA when they have contact changes. When setting up additional contact persons, a contact type must be assigned to them. An employee must first be set up as a contact person before becoming an ESS User.

How to Create ESS Contact Persons:

To **add** an ESS Contact Person the ESS Portal Administrator will select the Admin tab > Manage Contact Persons > Add a Contact Person. Note: If the contact person being entered needs to have access to the ESS Portal, the ESS Portal Administrator will also need to add them under Manage Users.

The following information is required to create a Contact Person:

- First Name
- Last Name
- Job Title
- Office Location
- Email Address
- Work Phone Number

An employee should be set as Primary if they are the “primary contact” for your agency for that specific job duty. There can only be one primary contact for each Contact Type.

How to Edit ESS Contact Persons:

- To **edit** a Contact Person, an ESS Administrator will select the Admin tab > Manage Contact Persons > Edit > Edit.
- To **edit** a Contact Person’s Contact Type who is not a “primary contact”, select the Admin tab > Manage Contact Persons > Edit > Edit and update the information and Contact Type(s) as needed.
- To **edit** a Contact Person’s Contact Type who is a “primary contact”, the ESS Administrator will first need to designate or add another employee and set them as “primary contact”.

How to Delete ESS Contact Persons:

- To **delete** a Contact Person that is not an ESS User, the ESS Administrator will select the Admin tab > Manage Contact Persons > Edit > Delete.
- To **delete** a Contact Person who is an ESS User, the ESS Administrator will select the Admin tab > Manage Users > Edit > and uncheck Active on their ESS User account. Then select the Admin tab > Manage Contact Persons > Edit > Delete.
- To **delete** a Contact Person who is an ESS User and is a “primary contact”, the ESS Administrator will first need to designate or add another employee as “primary contact” for that Contact Type before inactivating the employee. Select the Admin tab > Manage Users > Edit > Edit > and uncheck Active. Then select the Admin tab > Manage Contact Persons > Edit > Delete.

ESS Contact Types

Agency Head	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
Disability Contact	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
Enrollment Coordinator	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
Human Resource Director	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
IT	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
Office Coordinator	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
PEEHIP Clerk	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
Reporting Official	Receives all system generated communications related to the submission of enrollment and contribution reports. This includes balance, post, and Employer Reporting Packets.
Retirement Certification	ESS Users must be assigned this contact type to receive emails regarding Retirement Certifications. The user must have the role of ESS Administrator or ESS Staff to access the Employer Certification screen in the ESS Portal.
RSA-1	Receives ad-hoc correspondence from RSA.
Service Purchases	ESS Users must be assigned this contact type to receive emails regarding Service Purchases. The user must have the role of ESS Administrator or ESS Staff to access the Employer Certification screen in the ESS Portal.
Withdrawal Certification	ESS Users must be assigned this contact type to receive emails regarding Withdrawal Certifications. The user must have the role of ESS Administrator or ESS Staff to access the Employer Certification screen in the ESS Portal.

Manage Users

Administrators can set up other employees as ESS Users. When setting up additional ESS Users a role(s) must be assigned to them based on what Portal access they will need.

How to Create ESS Portal Users and Assign Roles:

- The individual must be set up as a contact person before they can be added as an ESS User.
- Under the Admin tab select Manage Users.
- Select Add User.
- Select the Contact Person that was just entered and assign a User ID unique to them.
- Select the appropriate role(s) for this individual from the following options: ESS Administrator, ESS File Validation, ESS Employer Reporting, ESS Staff, and PEEHIP.
- Select Submit and the information will be saved.
- The system will automatically send three emails to this user, which will include their ESS User ID, temporary password, and temporary PIN. These emails will expire after 72 hours. Therefore, it is imperative for the ESS user to establish their permanent password and permanent PIN within 72 hours of receiving these emails.
 - If the 72 hours expires before the ESS user has created a permanent password and PIN, the ESS Portal Administrator will need to validate and reset these records in ESS for the individual.
- Security Certificate and F5 Security Login.
 - To obtain the security certificate or F5 security login information, please contact Employer Services.

ESS User Roles

ESS Administrator	Access to all screens including Employer Certification, updating bank account information, add other users, and reset passwords. The primary Administrator can add other Administrators.
ESS File Validation	Can set up payroll schedules, upload/submit enrollment and contribution files, view and resolve errors.
ESS Employer Reporting	Access to everything listed under ESS File Validation and can submit contribution and invoice payments.
ESS Staff	Access to the Services tab, including Employer Certification and some functionality under the Report tab.
PEEHIP	This user role is specific to only Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) employers.

Payroll Schedules

Payroll Schedules must be set up prior to the beginning of each plan year, for each type of payroll frequency. These should be generated in March of each year. **Note: TRS cannot process retirement applications or member withdrawals until your agency has entered this information for the next plan year (July 1st – June 30th).**

- A payroll schedule is a schedule created based on an employer's pay frequency and is used to identify when employees are paid and inform the RSA of when contributions are to be expected.
- Payroll frequency is how often the employees receive compensation. Separate payroll schedules should be added for each payroll frequency your agency has.
- A supplemental payroll does not need to be created in the portal but should be reported with the next scheduled contribution submission.
- **Employer Contribution Rate** changes take effect in the first pay period in which the pay period ends on or after October 1st.

How to Create Payroll Schedules:

- Under the Report Tab select Payroll Schedule.
- In the open boxes below, select the following:
 - Plan Year.
 - Payroll Frequency.
 - The initial pay date will be the first pay date of the new scholastic year.
 - Days in Arrears are the number of days between when the pay period ends and the pay date.
 - Select Generate.
 - **Note:** When generating your payroll schedule, you may see a few dates highlighted in yellow. This is to let you know that the date either fell on the weekend or holiday and the system moved the pay date to the previous business day.
- Some agencies may require a custom payroll schedule.
- Users can make any changes needed to payroll schedules if no wages or contributions have been posted for the date in question. However, changes cannot be made when an enrollment or contribution file is in progress.
- Be sure to review each payroll and make any edits that are needed.

How to Edit Payroll Schedules:

- Steps to edit the criteria used to generate the payroll schedule, like the initial pay date or the number of days in arrears:
 - Select Action > Edit.
 - Make any edits that you need and select Generate to create the new payroll schedule based on the criteria that was changed.

- Steps to edit the payroll information after schedule is created:
 - Open the payroll schedule by selecting the plus sign.
 - Select Action > Edit next to the pay period needing updates. You can also skip a pay period if needed.
 - After changes are made, select Action > Save. You also have options to Delete a pay period or Cancel making any changes.

Contract Schedules

- Before setting up your contract schedules, you should know the different types of payroll contracts in your system and the beginning and ending dates for those contracts. (e.g. 182 days, 366 shifts, 2080 hours, etc.)
- Select Report.
- Select Contract Schedule.
 - Note that there are 4 grids:

1

Employer Contracts					
	Plan Year *	Contract Description *	Begin Date *	End Date *	
⊙	Action ▾	2021 - 2022	9 Month	08/10/2021	05/16/2022
⊙	Action ▾	2021 - 2022	10 month	07/28/2021	05/16/2022
⊙	Action ▾	2021 - 2022	12 month	07/01/2021	06/30/2022
⊙	Action ▾	2020 - 2021	12 month	07/01/2020	06/30/2021
⊙	Action ▾	2019 - 2020	12 month	07/01/2019	06/30/2020
⊙	Action ▾	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

2

Employer Contract and Payroll Schedule		
Payroll Schedule *	First Pay Period End Date *	
Action ▾	Monthly, Initial Pay Date 07/31/2021, 0 days in arrears.	08/31/2021
Action ▾	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

3




Employer Contract Units		
Type of Units Worked *	Units Contracted *	
Action ▾	Days	229
Action ▾	Days	260
Action ▾	Hours	2,080

4

Full Time Units per Pay Period				
	Plan Year	Contract Description	Payroll Schedule	Contract Length
+	2021 - 2022	12 month	Monthly, Initial Pay Date 07/31/2021, 0 days in arrears	229 Days
+	2021 - 2022	12 month	Monthly, Initial Pay Date 07/31/2021, 0 days in arrears	260 Days
+	2021 - 2022	12 month	Monthly, Initial Pay Date 07/31/2021, 0 days in arrears	2,080 Hours

Contract Schedule - First Grid:

- In the first grid, set up the plan year, individual contract descriptions, and provide the dates for your contracts.
 - Select the Plan Year.
 - Name each contract something such as “9-Month Employees”.
- Set up a 9-month contract and indicate the dates the work will be performed for that contract.
 - Note: You cannot have overlapping dates for your contracts.
 - Do not set up a contract schedule for summer school. Summer school wages would be marked as summer wages on the contribution file.
- Set up separate contracts that have different begin and end dates.
 - Example: If your agency has multiple contracts under “9-month contracts” with different begin and end dates, and different contract units, you will need to set up separate contract schedules.
- If your agency has employees with the same number of contract units but have different begin and end dates, you will need to give the largest date frame for your Contract Schedule from beginning to end.
 - Example: Two groups of employees who are contracted to work 182 days but have different begin and end dates. The date range will need to be the largest date frame.
- These dates will not be able to be changed once contributions have been posted to that particular contract schedule.
- Select Save on the Action Button to the left of the plan year.

Employer Contracts					
		Plan Year *	Contract Description *	Begin Date *	End Date *
<input checked="" type="radio"/>	 Action	2021 - 2022	9 Month Employees	08/24/2021	06/04/2022
<input type="radio"/>	 Action	2021 - 2022	10 Month Employees	08/03/2021	06/04/2022
<input type="radio"/>	 Action	2021 - 2022	12 Month Employees	07/01/2021	06/30/2022

Contract Schedule - Second Grid:

- In the 2nd grid, you will connect the contract to the payroll schedule.
A Drop-down box is provided.
 - If your agency has only one payroll schedule, only 1 drop-down option will be displayed.
 - In the below example: The first pay period end date is 8/31/2021 because the Contract Schedule begins on 8/03/2021.
 - Select Save on the Action button.

Employer Contract and Payroll Schedule		
	Payroll Schedule *	First Pay Period End Date *
⚙️ Action ▾	Monthly, Initial Pay Date 07/31/2021, 0 days in arrears.	08/31/2021

Contract Schedule - Third Grid:

- In the 3rd grid, enter your agency’s contract types for that particular contract schedule.
 - Units contracted should be full-time.
 - For example: Your agency may have employees on this 9-month contract type who would be considered full-time if they work 182 days or 364 shifts.

Employer Contract Units		
	Type of Units Worked *	Units Contracted *
⚙️ Action ▾	Days	182
⚙️ Action ▾	Days	187
⚙️ Action ▾	Hours	1,092
⚙️ Action ▾	Hours	1,456
⚙️ Action ▾	Shifts	364

Contract Schedule - Fourth Grid:

- If your agency’s software provides the number of Full-Time units worked per month on your contribution file, you will not need to use the 4th grid. If it does not provide that information, enter it here. We are unaware of any TRS agencies that need to utilize the 4th grid. Please contact Employer Services if you think it may apply to your agency.
- In this example: The employees began work on August 15, so they would have no Full-Time units for July.

Full Time Units per Pay Period						
Plan Year	Contract Description	Payroll Schedule	Contract Length			
2021 - 2022	9 Month Employees	Monthly, Initial Pay Date 07/31/2021, 0 days in arrears	182 Days			
			Pay Date	Pay Period Begin Date	Pay Period End Date	Full Time Units
			07/30/2021	07/01/2021	07/31/2021	
			08/31/2021	08/01/2021	08/31/2021	10.00 Days
			09/30/2021	09/01/2021	09/30/2021	20.00 Days
			10/29/2021	10/01/2021	10/31/2021	21.00 Days

Enrollments

An enrollment informs the Retirement Systems that an employee is working for your agency, their position status, their contribution group, and how much they are expected to work. Enrollments in the ESS Portal have taken the place of the Form 100 that was previously used.

Enrollments, especially new hires, need to be entered in a timely manner as employees have 30 days from their date of hire to enroll in coverage(s) through MOS (Member Online Services) so they are eligible for PEEHIP. The employer can provide the employee with their PID so the employee doesn't have to wait for the welcome packet by mail to get the PID to enroll in PEEHIP. After enrollment, an employee can request their PID through the RSA website (MOS).

Tier Status

Tier status can be determined by entering an employee's PID or SSN and selecting Search on the Search Demographics screen. Once the employee is located, select Maintain > Enrollments. The employee's tier status will now be displayed on the right-hand side of the screen.

Tier 1 Employees

Any member of the Retirement Systems who had service for which they received credit in the Employees' Retirement System or in the Teachers' Retirement System prior to January 1, 2013.

Tier 2 Employees

Any member of the Retirement Systems who first began eligible employment with an Employees' Retirement System or a Teachers' Retirement System participating employer on or after January 1, 2013, and who had no eligible service in the Employees' Retirement System or the Teachers' Retirement System prior to January 1, 2013.

File Vs Manual Submission

Enrollments can be submitted by uploading an enrollment file or by manually entering an employee's information into the ESS Portal.

File Submission

- Your agency must be file certified before uploading enrollment files into the ESS Portal. If an employer wants to learn more about enrollment file uploads, please contact the Employer Services Division.
- An Enrollment file can be generated from your agency's software system and uploaded into the ESS Portal notifying the RSA of new hires or changes to existing employees.
 - To upload an Enrollment File, select Report > Submit Report. Select Upload File under the Enrollment section.
- Once you submit your initial full enrollment file you will only need to submit an enrollment file when you have changes or enroll new employees. This is called a partial enrollment submission.
- After the business and load validations run and the file is accepted, select Continue.
- Select your employer's name in blue text, from there you will be able to work and clear any remaining errors you may have.

Examples of when to make an enrollment change via file submission:

- Hiring a new employee.
- Existing employee changes contribution groups or position statuses.
- Existing employee goes on or returns from Unpaid Leave.
- Updating an Employee's Scheduled Work Units.
- Terminating an employee.

Manual Submission

Employers who submit their enrollments manually will enter each enrollment via Search Demographics for a new employee or edit an existing employee.

Examples of when to make enrollment changes via manual entry:

- Hiring a new employee.
- Existing employee changes contribution groups or position statuses.
- Existing employee goes on or returns from Unpaid Leave.
- Updating an Employee's Scheduled Work Units.
- Terminating an employee.

How to add a New Employee (No Prior RSA Participation):

- If the new employee has never contributed to the RSA previously, this employee will automatically be a Tier 2 employee.
- First the user will need to select Add New Employee on the Search Demographics screen.
- Follow the steps to enter the demographic information, select Save Changes > Go To Enrollments.
- Select Add New Enrollment. The enrollment information screen will appear. The user will enter the enrollment information needed to create the new enrollment.
 - Note: If the employee works less than half time with no prior RSA participation they will need to be enrolled as Non-Participating.
 - Note: If the employee works at least half time in a permanent position, they will need to be enrolled as Contributing.

How to add a New Employee (Prior RSA Participation):

- If the new employee has prior RSA participation, they will contribute at their established tier rate.
- The user will search the new employee's SSN or PID in Search Demographics. Next to the employee's name, you will select Maintain > Enrollments.
- This brings up the enrollment screen where their enrollment history can be viewed. Select Add New Enrollment.
- The enrollment information screen will appear. The user will enter the enrollment information needed to create the new enrollment, select Save Changes.

How to update a Contribution Group or Position Status:

- If an employee has a change in their Contribution Group or Position Status, a new enrollment is required for the employee.
 - ***When adding a new enrollment for a current employee the new enrollment must be created first, then end the previous enrollment by adding an End Date and an Enrollment End Reason.***
- Create the new enrollment prior to terminating the previous enrollment.
- Select Add New Enrollment to enter the information for the new enrollment.
- End the previous enrollment with the last day the employee worked under this contribution group or position status, with the Enrollment End Reason of Change in Contribution Group or Change in Position Status.

Examples:

- If a Non-Participating Teacher changes to a Contributing Teacher, this would be a change in Contribution Group.
- If a Regular Teacher changes to a Seasonal/Irregular Teacher, this would be a change in Position Status.

How to correct an enrollment with the wrong Position Status or Contribution Group (No contributions linked to the enrollment):

- This can be done via an enrollment file or manual entry.
- The user will search the employee's SSN or PID in Search Demographics. Select Maintain > Enrollments next to the employee's name.
- Create the new enrollment prior to ending the old/incorrect enrollment by selecting Add New Enrollment. Enter the information for the new enrollment and select Save Changes > Exit.
- Select Edit by the incorrect enrollment and enter an End Date that matches the Enrollment Begin Date. Enter an End Reason of Hired in Error > Save Changes > Exit.

How to correct an enrollment with the wrong Position Status or Contribution Group (With contributions linked to the enrollment):

- This can be done via an enrollment file or manual entry.
- The user will search the employee's SSN or PID in Search Demographics. Select Maintain > Enrollments next to the employee's name.

- Create the new enrollment prior to ending the old/incorrect enrollment by selecting Add New Enrollment. Enter the information for the new enrollment. Select Save Changes > Exit.
- Select Edit next to the incorrect enrollment. End the enrollment with the Enrollment End Date as the previous pay period end date, with the Enrollment End Reason of Change in Contribution Group or Change in Position Status. Select Save Changes > Exit.

Employees That Need to be Enrolled in the ESS Portal

All employees, including non-participating contract employees, need to be enrolled and reported, except for substitutes and board members, unless they are retirees.

When a new participating employee is enrolled in the ESS Portal the employee will receive a Welcome Packet containing a beneficiary form from the Teachers' Retirement System.

The employing agency can provide the beneficiary form and notarize the beneficiary form if they wish to do so. The employing agency can also provide the employee's PID to the employee so they can enroll in PEEHIP through MOS.

Information that is needed for an Enrollment

- **Retirement Plan** tells the RSA which plan an employee will be a part of. This will also help determine the Tier Status of an employee.

Below are the options for Retirement Plans:

- TRS Tier 1 Regular
- TRS Tier 1 FLC
- TRS Tier 2 Regular
- TRS Tier 2 FLC
- TRS Nonparticipating Regular
- TRS Nonparticipating FLC

- **Contribution Group** tells the RSA what kind of job this person will be doing for your agency. Please use the below table to help determine what Contribution Group should be used when you are enrolling an employee.

Contribution Group Codes

Alphanumeric Code	PEEHIP Employment Designation
010 - Other-Professional/Admin	Professional/Admin
011 - Teacher	Professional/Admin
012 - Principal	Professional/Admin
013 - Superintendent	Professional/Admin
014 - Administrative	Professional/Admin
015 - Clerical	Support
016 - Lunchroom	Support
017 - Maintenance	Support
018 - Bus Driver	Bus Driver
019 - Mechanic	Support
020 - Other-Support Worker	Support
021 - Firefighter	Professional/Admin
022 - Law Enforcement Officer	Professional/Admin
023 - Nurse	Professional/Admin
024 - Physician's Assistant	Professional/Admin
025 - Physician	Professional/Admin
099 - FLC Dual	Professional/Admin

PEEHIP Employment Designation Professional/Administrative Employee vs Support Worker Employee

	Entitlement if Enrolled in Hospital Medical or HMO Plan	Entitlement if Enrolled in Optional Coverage Plans
Professional/Administrative Employee Works		
Less than ¼ time	0	0
At least ¼ time but < ½ time	¼ insurance coverage	1 Plan
At least ½ time but < ¾ time	½ insurance coverage	2 Plans
At least ¾ time but < Full-time	¾ insurance coverage	3 Plans
Full-time	Full coverage	4 Plans
	(Each additional Optional Plan can be purchased for \$38/month or \$50/month for the family dental plan.)	
Support Worker Works		
0 to 4.9 hours/week	0	0
5.0 to 9.9 hours/week	¼ insurance coverage	1 Plan
10.0 to 14.9 hours/week	½ insurance coverage	2 Plans
15.0 to 19.9 hours/week	¾ insurance coverage	3 Plans
20 or more hours/week	Full coverage	4 Plans
	(Each additional Optional Plan can be purchased for \$38/month or \$50/month for the family dental plan.)	

- **Position Status** tells the RSA in what capacity an employee will be working for your agency. Please use the below table to help determine what Position Status should be used when you are enrolling an employee.

Position Status Codes and Descriptions

Alphanumeric Code	Description
01 – Regular**	Should be used for employees who have a regular work schedule. Can be used for both full-time and part-time employees.
03 – Seasonal/Irregular	Should be used for employees who do not have a regular work schedule. This should be used for retirees who have returned to work part-time.
04 – Temporary	Should be used for employees who are hired with a pre-determined termination date that is less than one year from their start date.
05 – Adjunct	Should be used for employees who are paid per course by universities and community colleges only.
08 – Ineligible to Contribute**	Should be used for employees that are hired in a position that is never eligible for participation regardless of any previous eligibility or full-time/part-time status.
09 – Ineligible to Contribute to TRS and Ineligible for PEEHIP**	Same as position status 08 but should be used by agencies that offer PEEHIP when the employee is ineligible for both TRS participation and PEEHIP benefits.

**** Impacts PEEHIP eligibility**

- **Scheduled Units to Work and Full-Time Units**
 - **Scheduled Units to Work per Week** represents the number of units the employee is scheduled to work per week.
 - **Scheduled Full-Time Units per Week** represents the number of units an employee would have to work per week to be considered a full-time employee regardless of whether that employee works full-time or not.
- **Scheduled Type of Units Worked** represents the type of units worked for the employee in this position (Days, Shifts, Hours, or Courses).
 - Participating employers must report TRS positions labeled as Adjunct in Courses.
 - Courses are specifically for universities and community colleges who pay adjuncts per course.
 - Participating employers must report TRS positions labeled as Bus Driver in Shifts.
 - PEEHIP participating employers must report TRS positions labeled as Support Worker in Hours.
- **Payroll Frequency** identifies the frequency by which an employee receives compensation for wages earned (Monthly, Semi-Monthly, Bi-Weekly, Weekly).
- **Units Annually Contracted to Work** represents the number of units the employee is contracted to work per year.
 - The number of days, shifts, hours, or courses the employee has been hired to work.
 - This number is based on a full-time contract for that position even if the employee is part-time.
- **Number of Months Paid** represents the number of months the employee is to be paid per year (9, 10, 11, or 12).
- **Enrollment Begin Date** represents the date an employee began working for your agency or began working under a new contribution group or position status.
- **Enrollment End Date** represents the date an employee terminated employment with your agency or stopped working under a specific contribution group or position status.
 - Enrollment end dates can be future dated and ended prior to an employee receiving their final paycheck. The ESS Portal will accept contributions on a TRS employee 90 days after the enrollment has been ended.

- **Enrollment End Reason** represents the reason an employee’s enrollment is terminated. Refer to the below definitions to help determine what enrollment end reason should be used when terminating an enrollment.

Enrollment End Reasons and Descriptions

Alphanumeric Code	Description
00 – Change in Contribution Group	Is used when an employee changes Contribution Groups, such as going from a Support Worker to a Teacher.
01 – Retirement	Is used when an employee is retiring.
02 – Death	Is used when an active employee passes away.
03 – Change in Position Status	Is used when an employee changes Position Status, such as going from Seasonal/Irregular to Regular.
04 – Transfer	Is primarily used for PEEHIP; if an employee works in a PEEHIP participating system and they move to another PEEHIP participating system, this would be considered a transfer.
05 – Hired in Error	Is used when an enrollment was created in error. To use Hired in Error the Enrollment End Date must match the Enrollment Begin Date. If the enrollment has an End Reason of Hired in Error, the system will not map any wages/contributions to that enrollment.
06 – Voluntary Termination	Is used when an employee leaves employment of his or her own volition.
07 – Involuntary Termination	Is used when an employee is dismissed from the agency. This would include any employee whose contract ended or expired and was not renewed – if the employee was willing and able to return to work.
08 – Gross Misconduct	Is used when an agency determines an offense by an employee is deemed “gross misconduct”.
Merged Employer	Is only used by the RSA when a current agency merges with another existing agency.
Split Employer	Is only used by the RSA when an agency splits into multiple agencies.
Withdrawn Employer	Is only used by the RSA when an agency withdraws participation from the RSA.

LOA Status History

A Leave of Absence (LOA) is when an employee goes on **unpaid leave** that lasts longer than a pay period. This includes, but is not limited to, Unpaid Maternity Leave, Medical Leave, and Military Leave.

In this section, a new line should be created each time an employee goes on or comes off LOA. This allows the employer and RSA to maintain a history of an employee’s LOA.

- To place an employee on LOA, navigate to the Services tab > Search Demographics. Select the employee’s name > Maintain > Enrollments.
- In the section titled LOA Status History enter the effective date, LOA Status, and select Save > Save.
 - The effective date is the date the employee went on LOA and/or when the employee came off LOA. This informs the RSA when wages and contributions should/should not be expected for an employee.
 - Once the employee returns to work or changes LOA status, create a new line with the new effective date and status.

LOA Status Codes

Alphanumeric Code	Description
00 – Not on Unpaid Leave	Is used when an employee returns from an unpaid leave of absence.
01 – Unpaid FMLA	Is used for employees who are approved for Unpaid FMLA. This LOA status should be updated to Unpaid Medical, Unpaid Workman’s Comp, or Other Unpaid Leave when FMLA expires, if the employee is still on unpaid leave.
02 – Unpaid Maternity Leave	Is used for employees who are approved for Unpaid Maternity Leave.
03 – Unpaid Medical Leave	Is used for employees who are approved for Unpaid Medical Leave.
04 – Unpaid Military Leave	Is used for employees who are approved for Unpaid Military Leave.
05 – Unpaid Workman’s Comp	Is used for employees who are approved for Unpaid Workman’s Comp.
06 – Other Unpaid Leave	Is used for employees who are approved for Other Unpaid Leave.
07 – Maternity FMLA	Maternity FMLA should be used for employees who are approved for Unpaid FMLA Maternity. This LOA Status should be updated to Unpaid Maternity when FMLA expires, if the employee is still on unpaid leave.

Enrollment Work Units History

The Enrollment Work Units History keeps a record of when an employee has a permanent change in their work schedule. This history shows how many units (days, hours, courses, or shifts) an employee is expected to work and the full-time units (days, hours, courses, or shifts) an employee is expected to work per week to be considered full-time.

- A new enrollment is **NOT** necessary to update an employee's work schedule.
- Use Search Demographics > Maintain > Enrollments to find the employee's work units history.

For file submitters:

- This information can be updated in your agency's software system and will be updated in ESS when an enrollment file is published.

For manual entry:

- Navigate to the Services tab > Search Demographics. Locate the employee's name, select Maintain > Enrollments.
 - Fill in the empty boxes below the current scheduled units effective date.
 - Enter the date their new work schedule became effective with their units to work per week, full-time units per week, etc.
 - Units Annually Contracted to Work are always based on a full-time contract.
- Select Save > Save.

What is Considered Full-Time

- Each agency determines how many hours an employee must work to be considered full-time for each job position.
- This is based on the job position, not the individual employee.
- Two people who are in the same position cannot work a different number of hours and both be considered full-time.
- For example: If custodians work 8 hours per day but a few custodians work 6 hours per day, the ones who work 6 hours cannot be considered full-time for that job type.

Temporary TRS Employees

A temporary employee is someone who is employed for a specific time period, not exceeding one year. If that employee is working at least half time, they must begin participation in the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) at the beginning of the second year of employment.

“Participation in the Teachers' Retirement System is mandatory per the *Code of Alabama, 1975* Section 16-25-3 as a condition of employment with a TRS-participating employer. If someone is hired as a Temporary employee or an employee who works less than half time, and they do not have an existing TRS account, the law prohibits that person from entering TRS. Once an employee begins participation in the TRS, he or she is required to continue contributing on future employment even if the employment is of Temporary, Seasonal/Irregular, or Part Time status. If a member terminates their participation with the TRS, any future employment would be the same as “starting over.” In other words, if someone withdraws their account or it closes after 5 years of inactivity, that person would not be required to submit contributions on future employment that is less than half time or that is Temporary.”

[TRS and PEEHIP are two separate entities which have different eligibility requirements established by law. Laws governing TRS can be found under Title 16 Chapter 25 and laws governing PEEHIP are available under Title 16 Chapter 25A of the *Code of Alabama, 1975*.]

Postretirement Employment

Retirees who are receiving retirement benefits from the TRS and are employed with an agency that participates in the TRS or ERS, are subject to limitations on the compensation they can receive without an adverse impact on their retirement benefits.

A retiree of the TRS who is restored to active service with a TRS or ERS member agency may continue to receive a full retirement benefit provided that the retired member meets both of the following conditions:

- Retiree must not be employed in a permanent, full-time capacity.
- Retiree's compensation cannot exceed the annual earnings limitation, which is based on a calendar year.
 - Compensation is defined as, but not limited to, wages, salary, consulting fees, or contract payments or expenses, other than reimbursement for expenses which are normally reimbursable employee expenses.
 - Retiree annual earnings limitation for the 2022 calendar year cannot exceed **\$34,000**.

(The limit may increase during subsequent calendar years depending on increases in the Consumer Price Index.)

NOTE: FAILURE TO ADHERE TO BOTH OF THE ABOVE RESTRICTIONS WILL RESULT IN THE SUSPENSION OF RETIREMENT BENEFITS.

If a TRS retiree plans to return to work on a part-time basis with a TRS participating employer, they must wait at least 30 days before returning to work.

Retirees are to be enrolled with non-participating contribution groups and reported with pensionable payment reasons (Regular Pay, Lump Sum/Longevity) so they show on the Postretirement Employment Report.

If you have retirees that are paid through accounts payable, retirees who have not been reported, or retirees who were not reported correctly, you will still need to complete the Postretirement Employment Employing Agency Initial Notice and Annual Certification forms.

Retirees Who Return to Work Full-Time

If the TRS retiree works in a full-time position for a period of two consecutive years as Non-Participating, the retiree may petition the TRS Board of Control to permit the resumption of participation in the TRS. Upon approval, the member would pay the contributions of the two-year period of non-contributing service and begin contributing on future compensation.

If an ERS retiree returns to work for a TRS participating employer in a full-time capacity, they must begin contributing to TRS immediately.

How to Create New Enrollments for Retirees Who Return to Work

If an incorrect active enrollment currently exists, you will need to create a new enrollment effective immediately. End the incorrect enrollment using the Enrollment End Reason of “Change in Position Status”.

If a TRS retiree begins working **full-time** with a TRS employer:

- Contribution Group: Must be Non-Participating (due to the two-year waiting period for reinstatement).
- Position Status: **Regular**.
- Enter all of the scheduled work unit information as what the full-time requirements are for that position.
- **RSA ACTION: TRS retirement benefits will be suspended as of the Enrollment Begin Date.** You will not submit retirement contributions for two years; however, earnings are still required to be reported in ESS.

If this is a **Post-DROP** member:

- Contribution Group: Must be Participating.
- Position Status: **Regular**.
- Enter all of the scheduled work unit information as what the full-time requirements are for that position.
- **RSA ACTION: Retirement benefits will be suspended as of the Enrollment Begin Date.** Retirement contributions are required to be submitted IMMEDIATELY. There is no two-year waiting period for Post-DROP members.

If an ERS retiree begins working full-time with a TRS employer:

- Contribution Group: Must be Participating.
- Position Status: **Regular.**
- Enter all of the scheduled work unit information as what the full-time requirements are for that position.
- **RSA ACTION: ERS retirement benefits will be suspended as of the Enrollment Begin Date.** TRS retirement contributions are required to be submitted IMMEDIATELY. There is no two-year waiting period for members who retire in ERS and return to full-time work in TRS. This information also applies to TRS members who return to full-time work with ERS.

If a TRS or ERS retiree begins working part-time with a TRS employer:

- Contribution Group: Must be Non-Participating.
- Position Status: **** See below ****
- Scheduled Units to Work must be less than the Scheduled Full-Time Units Per Week. (For example: If a full-time clerical position requires 40 hours per week and a retiree returns to work at 20 hours per week, the units scheduled will be 20 while the full-time units will be 40.)
- **RSA ACTION: Retirement benefits will continue unless Post-Retirement Restrictions are violated.** You will not submit retirement contributions; however, earnings are still required to be reported in ESS. This information also applies to **Post-DROP and ERS Retirees.**

****In determining the correct Position Status, you will need to consider the retiree's current PEEHIP eligibility as well as your agency's eligibility for PEEHIP Insurance****

Position Status of Regular will allow for active PEEHIP eligibility. (ERS Retirees)

Position Status of Seasonal/Irregular will not allow for active PEEHIP eligibility.

Note: All earnings paid to a retiree must be reported in ESS using the payment reason of Regular or Lump-Sum. This includes wages paid by a third-party employer. For instance, Kelly Services and Soliant would be considered third-party employers.

If you have retirees that are paid through accounts payable, retirees who have not been reported, retirees who are paid by third party employers and are unable to be reported, or retirees who were not reported correctly, you will still need to complete the Postretirement Employment Employing Agency Initial Notice and Annual Certification forms.

FLC Employees

FLC stands for Firefighter, Law Enforcement, or Correctional Officer.

Those working in a Firefighter, Law Enforcement, or Correctional Officer position (FLC) must be:

- Certified.
- Working in a position that **requires certification**.
- Working **full-time** with at least one employer in that capacity in order to qualify to contribute at the FLC Rate.
- Employees who are certified but working less than full-time must contribute at the Regular Employee tier rate and not FLC.
- **Working in a part-time FLC capacity:** Employees who are certified, working less than full-time, in a FLC capacity and have a full-time FLC job with another RSA participating employer must contribute at the FLC rate. These employees should be enrolled as either Firefighter or Law Enforcement.
- **Working part-time in a non-FLC capacity:** Employees who are certified and working full-time with another agency and are working with your agency in a non-FLC capacity, must contribute at the FLC rate under the contribution group FLC Dual.

TRS Substitutes

TRS substitutes of any type are only reported **if** they are a retiree so that Post-Retirement earnings can be tracked by the RSA.

Demographic Changes

How to Update an Address in the ESS Portal:

- This information can be updated by an enrollment file or manual entry.
- Navigate to Services, then select Search Demographics.
- Search for the employee by entering their SSN, PID, or search through your list of active employees.
- Locate the employee's name > select Maintain > Demographics.
- Under Address Information, select Display Future Addresses > Add New.
- This populates the Add Address box where you will add the new address information and enter the Effective Date as today's date or a future date, select Save Changes.
 - If you submit an address for an employee that RSA has marked invalid (mail has been returned from that address), you will receive a warning and the address will not be updated. Validate the address with your employee, and if correct, the employee will need to submit an updated change of address form to the RSA.

How to Update a Name in the ESS Portal:

- This information can be updated by an enrollment file or manual entry.
- Navigate to Services, select Search Demographics.
- Search for the employee by entering their SSN, PID, or search through your list of active employees.
- Locate the employee's name, select Maintain > Demographics.
- Under the Personal Information section, you will see the employee's name. This is where you will be able to update the employee's last name, select Save Changes.

Note: Only employees who have a name change due to marriage or divorce can be changed in the ESS Portal. Please contact Employer Services if there is another reason you are making a name change or if this is a full name change.

For changes to an employee's Date of Birth, Gender, or Social Security Number, please contact the Employer Services Division as proper documentation will be required to make these changes.

Severity of Errors on Enrollments

- An **Error** notification will require the agency to fix the problem in the file and re-upload or edit this record via manual entry within the ESS Portal.
- A **Warning** notification will require the agency to review the entry, then override the warning within the ESS Portal if the information displayed is correct.
- An **Informational** notification requires no action from the agency to continue to load the file in the ESS Portal. However, the user should review the information to determine if any changes are necessary.

Most Common Enrollment Errors and How to Correct Them

ER0211: “Employee has already established eligibility to participate with the RSA: contributions must be deducted.”

This error message occurs when a user enrolls a new employee as Non-Participating when they previously established eligibility to contribute.

To correct this a contributing enrollment must be created in order to be able to report contributions.

ER0212: “Employee is participating in another System. Please either update the employee as Non-Participating or contact the RSA to confirm the end date with the other employer.”

This error message occurs when a user tries to enroll a new employee that recently worked under a different Retirement System and the previous employer has not terminated their enrollment yet.

To correct this:

- If the employee has terminated with their previous employer under another retirement system, send Employer Services an email requesting confirmation on the enrollment end date.
- If the employee is still employed under another retirement system other than TRS, they will need to be enrolled as a Non-Participating employee with your agency.

ER0244: “The employee has an Enrollment End Reason which requires a new enrollment. Please verify the Enrollment End Reason; if it is valid, please create a new enrollment for the employee.”

This warning message occurs when a user attempts to terminate an enrollment with the Enrollment End Reason of Change in Contribution Group or Change in Position Status.

If the Enrollment End Reason is correct, the user may proceed with overriding the warning message, save the changes and create the new enrollment.

If the Enrollment End Reason is incorrect, the user will need to update or remove the Enrollment End Reason.

ER0267: “The Enrollment Begin Date cannot be more than 11 months in the past or more than 12 months in the future. If the date is in the past, it cannot overlap with a period of time when the employee was Retired, T-Sectioned, or received a refund for previous contributions.”

This error message occurs under the two following scenarios:

- When a new employee was not enrolled within 11 months of their start date.
- If the Enrollment Begin Date provided on the enrollment is incorrect. The user will need to send a statement on letterhead defining the enrollment details and email this information to Employer Services.

ER0312: “The RSA has processed a retirement or refund application for this employee, so this Enrollment End Date cannot be changed. Please contact the RSA if the member is canceling their termination.”

This error message only occurs when a user uploads an enrollment file and the record in error does not have the Enrollment End Date or Enrollment End Reason listed on the file.

To correct this: Manually enter the Enrollment End Date and the Enrollment End Reason that was entered previously, or delete the enrollment record from the enrollment file, as we already have the Enrollment End Date or Enrollment End Reason on file.

Contributions

Contributions must equal the wages multiplied by the applicable contribution rate based on the contribution group reported. Contributions should not be deducted if the employee is in a non-participating contribution group. However, non-participating employees will still have their wages and work information reported.

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 16-25-21(g), *Code of Alabama 1975*, as a TRS employer, your organization is required to submit its employer contributions together with member contributions to the TRS on the first day of the month following the month in which the related member salary was paid (the due date).

Contributions not submitted within 30 days of the due date are considered to be delinquent and shall accrue interest on a per annum basis at the actuarial assumed investment rate.

For example: Member contributions deducted from members paychecks in July along with the employer contributions for July are due August 1. If the TRS does not receive the required contributions by August 31, interest at a per annum rate will be levied upon the delinquent balance after the monies are received following August 31.

File Vs Manual Submission

Contributions can be submitted by uploading a contribution file or by manually entering employees' wages and work information.

File Submission

- Your agency must be file certified before uploading contribution files into the ESS Portal. If an employer wants to learn more about contribution file uploads, please contact the Employer Services Division.
- A contribution file can be generated from your agency's software system and uploaded into the ESS Portal notifying the RSA of your employees' wages and contributions for that pay period.
 - To upload a contribution file, select Report > Submit Report.
 - Select Upload File under the Contributions section.
- After the business and load validations run and the file is accepted, select Continue.
- Select your employer's name in blue text; from there you will be able to work and clear any remaining errors you may have.

Manual Submission

Employers who submit their contributions manually will do this through Enter Online under Contributions by navigating to the Report tab > Submit Report.

Examples of what can be done through a manual contribution submission:

- Reporting employees' wages and contributions by pay period.
- Prior pay period adjustments (Retro pay or correction).
- Adding missing employees.

How to Submit Contributions Manually:

- Navigate to the Report tab > Submit Report > Enter Online under Contributions.
- Select your employer's name.
- Select the Reporting Frequency.
- Select the Pay Period.
- Select the Pay Date.
- Once the screen refreshes, select the previous pay period to copy the Regular Payment Line.
- After the business validations run, select Continue.
- Select your employer's name in blue text; from there you will be able to work and clear any remaining errors you may have.

Global Changes:

- Wages Multiplier: This multiplier will be used to increase the wages of all employees from the prior contribution submission by a set percentage. (For example: A 2 percent raise awarded to all employees would be entered as 1.02)
- Rate of Pay Multiplier: This multiplier will be used to increase the Rate of Pay for all employees from the prior contribution submission by a set percentage. (For example: A 2 percent raise awarded to all employees would be entered as 1.02)

Note: When submitting contributions manually, users can copy over the Regular Pay payment reasons. All other payment reasons (i.e. Overtime, Lump Sum/Longevity, etc.) will need to be entered for each employee as needed.

Information that is needed on a Contribution Record

- **Payment Reasons:** Use the below table to determine which Payment Reason should be used when reporting wages and contributions.

Payment Reasons and Descriptions	
Alphanumeric Code	Description
00 – Regular Pay	Includes straight time pay, shift differential pay, call-back pay, vacation and sick leave (not paid as a lump sum). Only the employee’s base salary should be included in Regular Pay.
01 – Lump Sum/Longevity and Other Pensionable	Includes pensionable bonuses and other one-time payments, as well as pensionable longevity pay for an employee. For TRS employees, this would include pay for coaching, labs, or any time worked outside a normal contract, but does not include National Board Certification wages. Also includes time spent in adjunct, overload or interim term positions, as well as additional time spent working (for example, in after school care, or coaching) outside of the normal position that the enrollment is tied to.
02 – Overtime	Includes wages for time worked over and above the normal full-time work schedule in accordance with the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). It would not include overtime wages which have exceeded the overtime limit. The overtime limit is applied on a scholastic year basis.
03 – Contract Payoff	Is to be used when an employee receives a contract payoff.
04 – National Board Certification	Wages only apply to employees reported under TRS and should only be used to report wages paid in relation to National Board Certification.
97 – Non-Pensionable Overtime	Once an employee exceeds the overtime limit, those earnings in excess of the overtime limit should be reported as Non-Pensionable Overtime The overtime limit is applied on a scholastic year basis.

98 – Non-Pensionable Lump Sum/Longevity	Includes non-pensionable lump sum comp time pay, bonuses, or other one-time payments.
99 – Other Non-Pensionable	Once an employee exceeds the earnable compensation limit, those earnings in excess of the earnable compensation limit should be reported as (Non-Pensionable Overtime) [recommended] or (Other Non-Pensionable Wages) because they are no longer pensionable.

- **Actual Units Worked** represents how much the employee actually worked for the pay period being reported.
 - How many hours, days, shifts, or courses a particular employee worked in the pay period being reported. (Including sick and vacation leave being used in the place of working hours.)
 - The ratio between the Actual Units Worked and Full-Time Units is what calculates the service credit an employee earns. It is imperative that the Actual Units Worked and the Full-Time Units are reported correctly for the employee to earn the appropriate amount of service credit.

- **Type of Units Worked** represents the type of units worked for the employee in this position (Days, Shifts, Hours, or Courses).
 - Participating employers must report TRS positions labeled as Adjunct in Courses.
 - Courses are specifically for universities and community colleges who pay adjuncts per course.
 - Participating employers must report TRS positions labeled as Bus Driver in Shifts.
 - PEEHIP participating employers must report TRS positions labeled as Support Worker in Hours.

- **Full-Time Units** represents the amount of hours, days, or shifts an employee is required to work to be considered full-time in the pay period being reported. (The amount of possible working days excluding holidays in a pay period)
 - The ratio between the Actual Units Worked and Full-Time Units is what calculates the service credit an employee earns. It is imperative that the Actual Units Worked and the Full-Time Units are reported correctly for the employee to earn the appropriate amount of service credit.
- **Excess of IRS** represents the portion of wages that is in excess of the IRS limit.
 - The portion of the wages that exceed the IRS limit in a certain month must be calculated by adding up all the wages reported on a plan year basis and comparing against the IRS limit for that plan year.
- **Employee Contributions** represents the portion of the employee contribution based on the employee's wages for the pay period.
 - Contributions must equal the wages multiplied by the applicable contribution rate based on the employee's tier status and contribution group.
- **Employer Contributions** are calculated by the ESS Portal based on the wages reported for that particular employee.
- **RSA-1** represents the employee's RSA-1 deferral amount.
 - If the employee has elected to participate in the optional RSA-1 deferred compensation plan, the amount deducted from the wages reported in this record should be reported here. An RSA-1 deferral is allowed even if the employee is in a non-participating contribution group or if the payment reason is non-pensionable. Only positive numbers can be reported in this field.
- **Rate of Pay** represents the employee's current pay rate.
 - Report only an employee's base rate of pay.
 - Do NOT include any additional pay such as overtime, lump sums, overload, coaching supplements, National Board Certification wages, etc. in this field.
 - The Rate of Pay should always be reported as the full-time equivalent, even if the employee is working less than full-time. (For example, assume an employee works 20 hours per week and earns \$20,000 in base earnings per year. If a full-time equivalent would work 40 hours per week, the Rate of Pay amount should be \$40,000.)
- **Type of Rate of Pay** identifies the employee's Rate of Pay as Hourly, Monthly, or Yearly.
 - The Type of Rate of Pay should be reported as Yearly (03) for contributing TRS employees.

RSA-1 Deferred Compensation Plan

RSA-1 is an eligible deferred compensation plan as defined by Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States. Under this deferred compensation plan, a public employee may elect to defer receipt of a portion of his or her salary until a later determined date, usually at retirement or termination of service. The RSA-1 Enrollment Packet can be found [here](#).

If you have any questions regarding RSA-1 participation, please call 334.517.7000 and ask to speak with an RSA-1 Representative. RSA-1 Representatives are available Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Currently, RSA-1 contributions are reported in the ESS Portal with your regular Employee and Employer contributions via a contribution file or manual entry.

If you need to manually add RSA-1 contributions for a specific employee, follow the steps below:

- In an active contribution submission, select Edit next to the employee's name.
- Once the employee's contribution information displays under the section titled RSA-1 Contributions, the user will enter the amount of RSA-1 contributions in the total line under this heading.
- Select Save Changes.
- After all contribution information has been verified, select Submit Details. A new section will display on the Summary screen which shows the total RSA-1 contributions for all employees.
- There will be a separate section to pay for RSA-1 contributions on the Payment screen. The user will enter the amount of RSA-1 contributions that are to be paid from the employer's bank account before entering their PIN to pay.

Information on how to do a prior period adjustment for RSA-1 contributions can be found on page 59.

Summer Hires

- Regular contract wages and summer position wages should never be rolled up. Doing so may cause issues with the Salary Credit calculation.
- Summer position wages must always be reported separately from regular contract wages, and the Summer Position Indicator must be “Yes” for ESS to understand that the wages are tied to work being performed during the summer (i.e., outside the regular contract).
- Type of Units Worked cannot be mixed. (For example: If an employee’s Type of Units Worked for their regular job is paid in days, then their summer job(s) needs to be paid in days also).
- If an employee’s summer position requires a new enrollment, there is no need to add a new contract schedule, pick one of the existing 9-month contracts that pertains to that job position.

A new enrollment is not required for summer hires for the following scenarios:

- Employee working 9 months and paid over 9 months with no summer position.
- Employee working 9 months and paid over 10, 11, or 12 months with no summer position.
- Employee working 9 months and paid over 9 months, but has a summer position with the same employer, contribution group, and position status.
- Employee working 9 months and paid over 10, 11, or 12 months, but has a summer position with the same employer, contribution group, and position status.

A new enrollment is required for summer hires for the following scenarios:

- Employee working 9 months and paid over 9 months and has a summer position with either a different employer, contribution group, or position status.
- Employee working 9 months and paid over 10, 11, or 12 months and has a summer position with either a different employer, contribution group, or position status.

How to report contributions for summer hires:

- Working 9 months and paid over 10, 11, or 12 months with no summer position:
 - The employer should continue to report the wages as they have been.
- Working 9 months and paid over 9 months with a summer position (no new enrollment):
 - No wages reported for the regular contract, but summer wages should be reported as Regular Pay with the Summer Position Indicator set to “Yes”.
- Working 9 months and paid over 10, 11, or 12 months with a summer position (no new enrollment):
 - The employer should continue to report the regular contract wages as they have been but should also report a second Regular Pay Line with the Summer Position Indicator as “Yes”.
- Working 9 months and paid over 9 months with summer position (new enrollment):
 - No wages reported for regular contract, but the employer should report summer wages as regular pay with Summer Position Indicator as “Yes”.
- Working 9 months and paid over 10, 11, or 12 months with summer position (new enrollment):
 - The employer should continue to report the regular contract wages as they have been but also report summer wages as regular pay with a Summer Position Indicator of “Yes”.

Prior Pay Period Adjustments

Prior Pay Period Adjustments are made in the portal when necessary to correct what was previously reported or left off of a prior pay period's submission.

Users can only process prior pay period adjustments when a contribution submission is actively in progress. It is best practice to process these adjustments as soon as possible.

How to Enter a Prior Pay Period Adjustment

What to do when an employee has been left off a prior pay period:

- With an active contribution submission, select Add Contribution.
- Enter either the SSN, PID, or Last Name for the employee that needs to be corrected.
- Select the Plan Year and Payroll Period in which the contributions were earned, select Search.
- Select Add a New Record with the Information I Entered, select Continue.
- This will bring up a blank contribution record to add the pay information that is being reported, select Submit.

What to do when wages were reported in error:

- With an active contribution submission in progress, select Add Contribution.
- Enter either the SSN, PID, or Last Name for the employee that needs to be corrected.
- Select the Plan Year and Payroll Period the adjustment occurs on, select Search.
- Select the radio button next to the payment record that needs to be adjusted, select Continue.
 - If there are multiple records that need to be corrected, users will follow this process for each payment record.
- This will bring up the payment record screen. Correct the contribution information to what should have been reported, select Submit.

Option for File Submitters:

- If File Submitters would like to process a Prior Pay Period Adjustment in their contribution file, the file will need to have a separate record for each pay period and payment reason they are trying to correct.
 - The file needs to contain the **DIFFERENCE** (variance) in what they are trying to adjust.
 - Example: If the user submitted wages of \$500 and they should have submitted \$400 in wages, the file needs to contain the difference which is -\$100.
 - The screen will display the new net amount of \$400.

Prior Pay Period Adjustments for RSA-1

How to enter a prior pay period adjustment for RSA-1 contributions that were left off:

- With an active contribution submission in progress, select Add Contribution.
- Enter either the SSN, PID, or Last Name for the employee that needs to be corrected.
- Select the Plan Year and Payroll Period in which the RSA-1 contributions should have been submitted, select Search.
- Select the radio button next to the Regular Pay line, select Continue.
- This will bring up the contribution record for the Regular Pay. The user will add the RSA-1 contribution amount in the Total line under the RSA-1 contribution header.
- Select Save Changes.

How to correct RSA-1 contributions that were submitted in error:

The user will need to email a statement on the employer's letterhead requesting a refund for the amount reported. This statement should include the employee's name, PID (or last four of SSN), the pay period(s) the contribution was reported on, and an explanation of the error that occurred. This can be emailed to RSA-1.Info@rsa-al.gov.

How to report sick/vacation leave payouts as RSA-1 contributions:

If you are reporting these wages after the employee has retired or the employee has terminated, you will need to add these wages by following the steps below:

- In an active contribution submission, select Add Contribution.
- Enter the employee's SSN, PID, or Last Name. Select the Plan Year and the Pay Period the employee was/will be considered active.
- Select Add a New Record with the Information I Entered, select Continue.
- This will bring up a blank contribution record. Select the Payment Reason of Non-Pensionable Lump Sum/Longevity, then select the Type of Units Worked. Enter the amount they were paid out in the Wages section and then enter the amount they want to contribute under the RSA-1 section, select Submit.

Overtime Limits

Tier 1 employees' overtime limit is 120% of their base pay. Tier 2 employees' overtime limit is 125% of their base pay. Once an employee goes over their overtime limit, these overtime wages must still be reported. These overtime wages will be reported as Non-Pensionable Overtime. If there are wages and contributions submitted over the Overtime Limit, you may need to do Prior Pay Period Adjustments to remove these wages and contributions or update the payment reason. **The only salary that counts against the overtime limit is the salary that is paid at the rate of time and a half in compliance with FLSA.**

Examples:

- A Tier 1 employee earns \$50,000/year. Their limit on pensionable overtime wages is \$10,000.
- A Tier 2 employee earns \$50,000/year. Their limit on pensionable overtime wages is \$12,500.

Missing Employees

To view the **Missing Employee(s)**, under the section titled View Contribution Container Details, users will see a table that shows various information regarding the contribution submission. There is a section in this table titled Number of Missing Employees. Underneath this section there will be a number in the form of a hyperlink. Once the user selects the hyperlink, it will download a PDF document showing the employee(s) who are missing.

Reasons an employee might be missing:

- The employee is a new employee and did not copy over from the previous submission.
- LOA Status has not been updated.
- The employee's enrollment has not been terminated.
 - Note: You do not have to void your file to enter a termination date.
- The data on the enrollment record does not match the data on the contribution submission so the system is unable to map to the matching enrollment.
 - Users may see ER0086 as a result of this.
 - For example: The employee is enrolled as a teacher but is listed on the contribution submission as a professional administrator.

How to Correct a Missing Employee

If the missing employee is a new hire:

- In the contribution submission, select Add Contribution.
- Enter the missing employee's SSN, PID, or Last Name.
- Select the current Plan Year and Payroll Period, select Search.
- Select Add a New Record with the Information I Entered, select Continue.
- This will bring up a blank contribution record to add the pay information for the missing employee, select Submit.

If the missing employee's LOA Status has not been updated:

- Navigate to the Services tab > Search Demographics.
- Locate the employee's name or search with the SSN or PID, select Maintain > Enrollments.
- The employee's enrollment information will display. Navigate to the LOA Status History section. In the blank boxes towards the bottom of the LOA section, enter the date the employee went on unpaid leave and the LOA Status. Select Save > Save.
- Go back to the contribution submission, the employee will no longer be listed as missing.

If the missing employee's enrollment has not been terminated:

- Navigate to the Services tab > Search Demographics.
- Locate the employee's name or search with the SSN or PID, select Maintain > Enrollments.
- The employee's enrollment information will display. Select Edit next to the employee's enrollment with the agency, enter the Enrollment End Date and Enrollment End Reason, select Save Changes.
- Go back to the contribution submission, the employee will no longer be listed as missing.

If you are receiving ER0086 due to a mismatch between enrollment and contribution data:

- Example: If the employee is truly a contributing teacher, but they are on the contribution file as a support worker, follow the below steps to correct:
 - Select Edit next to the employee's contribution record.

- Select the drop-down menu for the section titled Contribution Group, select Contributing Teacher > Save Changes.
- Example: If the employee works under a Seasonal/Irregular position status, but they are on the contribution file with a Regular position status, follow the below steps to correct:
 - Select Edit next to the employee's contribution record.
 - Select the drop-down menu for the section titled Position Status > select Seasonal/Irregular > Save Changes.
- Example: If the employee should be a Teacher, but they were enrolled as a Support Worker, follow the below steps to correct:
 - Suspend the contribution submission.
 - Navigate to the Services tab > Search Demographics.
 - Locate the employee's name or search with the SSN or PID, select Maintain > Enrollments.
 - The employee's enrollment information will display.
 - Select Add New Enrollment. Enter the information for the Teacher enrollment and select Save Changes > Exit.
 - The employee's enrollment information history will display.
 - If contributions are not linked to the old enrollment: Select Edit next to the employee's old enrollment with the agency, the Enrollment Begin and End dates need to match with the Enrollment End Reason of Hired in Error, select Save Changes.
 - If contributions are linked to the old enrollment: Select Edit next to the old enrollment. Terminate the enrollment with the Enrollment End Date being the end date for the previous pay period with the Enrollment End Reason of Change in Contribution Group, select Save Changes.
 - Go back to the contribution submission in progress by navigating to Report > View History > select Unsuspend Report and select the Submission Number.
- Example: If the employee should be enrolled with a Seasonal/Irregular position status, but they are enrolled with a Regular position status, follow the below steps to correct:
 - Suspend the contribution submission.
 - Navigate to the Services tab > Search Demographics.
 - Locate the employee's name or search with the SSN or PID, select Maintain > Enrollments.
 - The employee's enrollment information will display.

- The user will select Add New Enrollment. Enter the information for the employee's enrollment with a Seasonal/Irregular position status, select Save Changes > Exit.
- The employee's enrollment information history will display.
 - If contributions are not linked to the old enrollment: Select Edit next to the employee's old enrollment with the agency, the Enrollment Begin and End dates need to match with the Enrollment End Reason of Hired in Error, select Save Changes.
 - If contributions are linked to the old enrollment: Select Edit next to the old enrollment. Terminate the enrollment with the Enrollment End Date being the end date for the previous pay period with the Enrollment End Reason of Change in Position Status, select Save Changes.
- Go back to the contribution submission in progress by navigating to Report > View History > select Unsuspend Report and select the Submission Number.

How to Apply an Invoice to a Contribution Submission

Once the user has completed making all corrections, select Submit Details.

- Under the Invoices section, select the box(es) to the left of each invoice you would like to apply to the contribution submission.
 - Credit invoices will deduct the invoice amount from the total amount of Employee/Employer contributions owed.
 - Debit invoices will increase the total amount of Employee/Employer contributions owed.

Payment Screen

The Payment screen is the last screen users will see prior to submitting payment for contributions. On this screen, users will enter the total amount of Employee/Employer contributions owed. Users will also be able to enter the total amount of RSA-1 contributions, if they have any employees who contribute to RSA-1.

- Enter these amounts under the corresponding sections.
- The user will enter their ESS PIN > Submit Your Payment.
 - There will be a pop-up stating “Once you click OK, the submission will be finalized and no more edits can be made. Would you like to continue?” If you are ready to finalize the submission, select OK. If you are not ready to finalize the submission select Cancel to go back and make any corrections you may need to make.

Results Screen

Once the user has finalized their contribution submission, they will be taken to the Results screen. This screen will show users a table with a breakdown of contributions similar to the Summary screen on the contribution submission. Users are able to print this screen as is, or they can select **Remittance Advice** in the bottom right-hand corner of the table. Doing this will download the Remittance Advice in a PDF format.

Payment Variance

- The ESS Portal will accept a payment less than \$5.00 of the RSA-calculated contribution amount without generating an invoice for the remaining amount.
- There are two thresholds for the payment; the lesser of:
 - Within \$500 of the total TRS payment
 - OR
 - Within 1% of the total TRS payment

Severity of Errors on Contributions

- An **Error** notification will require the agency to fix the problem in the file and re-upload or edit this record via manual entry within the ESS Portal.
- A **Warning** notification will require the agency to review the entry, then override the warning within the ESS Portal if the information displayed is correct.
- An **Informational** notification requires no action from the agency to continue to load the file in the ESS Portal. However, the user should review the information to determine if any changes are necessary.

Most Common Contribution Errors and How to Correct Them

ER0039: “Actual Units Worked is not valid.”

This error message occurs when the actual units worked is blank or not valid based on the pay period and/or contract schedule dates.

To correct this:

- The Actual Units Worked needs to be the amount of days, hours, shifts, or courses that an employee worked based on the pay period dates being reported and when their contracts began in relation to the pay period.

This error can also occur if you provide units worked for an employee that is past their termination date.

To correct this:

- The Actual Units Worked would need to be changed to zero.

ER0086: “The employee was reported with contributions but either does not have an enrollment or the Pay Period End Date is earlier than the Enrollment Begin Date.”

This error message typically occurs on contribution files when an enrollment has not been created for this employee or the enrollment information does not match what was previously reported.

To correct this:

- The user will need to either create an enrollment under their employer for this employee or validate the enrollment information is correct. Refer to pages 62 – 64 for more information on ER0086.

ER0265: “The Type of Units Worked does not match the Type of Units Worked on the employee’s enrollment record.”

This error message occurs when the Type of Units Worked is blank or incorrect.

To correct this:

- The user must change the Type of Units Worked to reflect the Type of Units Worked on the employee’s enrollment.

ER0320: “The Actual Units Worked are more (or less) than expected based on the Scheduled Units Worked per Week.”

This warning message occurs when the Actual Units Worked is more or less than what is expected of the employee to work per their Enrollment. If the information reported is correct, the user can select Override Warnings and Save Changes.

Employer Certification

- TRS prefers that employers certify retirement information through ESS. As of January 1, 2022, TRS will no longer accept Employer Certifications on the *Application for Service Retirement* or the *Application for Disability Retirement*. The Employer Certification section has been removed from the forms and all employer certifications for retirement will be processed in the ESS Portal.
- Additionally, many TRS agencies contact TRS after a retirement has been certified to report that an employee's sick leave balance has changed. The preferred procedure is for the agency to send an email to TRS.Info@rsa-al.gov indicating the member's name, PID, and final sick leave balance. Providing certification through ESS tends to result in fewer errors.
- It is extremely important that the employer certification is accurate because this data is used to calculate a member's lifetime benefit.

Employer Certification in ESS

- The agency will be notified by email when an *Application for Retirement* needs employer certification. You can also view the message in the ESS Portal Message Center.
- For ESS Users to receive communications regarding Employer Certification in the ESS Portal an ESS User must have the role of either "Administrator" or "Staff" and the contact type of "Retirement Certification".
- To access certification requests, select Services > Employer Certification.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the ESS Portal with the following items: Employer Self-Service, Employer Home, Report, Services, Account, Admin, and Logout. A dropdown menu is open under 'Services', listing: Death Notice, Employer Certification (highlighted with a red box), Employee Information, Search Demographics, Employer Information, Reports, Message Center, and Question Center. Below the navigation bar, the main content area contains a welcome message: 'Welcome to The Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA) Employer Self-Service. From this site, employers are able to...' followed by a bulleted list of services: Reporting wages and contributions, Processing EFT Payments, Processing employee wage adjustments, Adding or updating employer information, Reviewing employer reports and invoices, and Verifying Personal Identification numbers (PIDs). To the right of the list, there is a partial sentence: 'employers with a number of ways, including:'.

- The Employer Certification screen then displays. The status of the request is Pending ESS Certification, which means you must take action to complete the certification.
- To view a history of certifications, select the Show All box. Any previous certifications will be displayed.
- Select the PID hyperlink to open the Retirement Certification screen.
- The first section asks for the Final Pay Period End Date of the employee’s final paycheck and the Enrollment End Date (the employee’s last work day).

Final Pay Period End Date (Pay period end date of the employee's final paycheck): <input type="text" value="08/31/2021"/>	Number of Units Worked During Current Scholastic Year: <input type="text" value="179"/> <input type="text" value="Days"/>
Enrollment End Date (Employee's last work day): <input type="text" value="05/31/2021"/>	Number of Units Contracted During Current Scholastic Year: <input type="text" value="187"/> <input type="text" value="Days"/>

- This member finished their contract on 5/31/2021. This agency does not pay in arrears, so the pay period end date is 8/31/2021.
- The number of units worked and contracted should match the certified salary so be sure to account for any docked days in this section.
- Example: A Teacher is contracted 187 days @ \$50,000.00 per year (\$267.38 per day). This teacher was docked for 8 days in May. So contracted units = 187 days and worked units = 179 days. The pay for the year should match that.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Payroll Frequency	Pay Period Begin Date	Pay Period End Date	Pay Date	Payment Reason	Wages	Employee Contribution
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	02/01/2021	02/28/2021	02/26/2021	Regular pay	\$4,166.67	\$312.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	03/01/2021	03/31/2021	03/31/2021	Regular pay	\$4,166.67	\$312.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	04/01/2021	04/30/2021	04/30/2021	Regular pay	\$4,166.67	\$312.50
<input type="checkbox"/>	Monthly	05/01/2021	05/31/2021	05/31/2021	Regular pay	\$2,027.63	\$152.07

<input type="text" value="Days"/>	<input type="text" value="11"/>	<input type="text" value="19"/>	<input type="text" value="\$50,000.00"/>
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- Contract Payoffs are common for employees whose pay is spread over 12 months. That pay should be included in the certification so TRS will calculate the correct service and salary credit. A Contract Payoff should reflect zero Units Worked, otherwise the employee will receive service credit when they are not working (such as summer months for a 9-month employee.)

<input type="checkbox"/>		Monthly	06/01/2021	06/30/2021	06/30/2021	Contract Payof	\$4,166.67	\$312.50
<input type="checkbox"/>		Monthly	07/01/2021	07/31/2021	07/31/2021	Contract Payof	\$4,166.67	\$312.50
<input type="checkbox"/>		Monthly	08/01/2021	08/31/2021	08/31/2021	Contract Payof	\$4,166.67	\$312.50

- Once you complete one contribution row, you can copy the information you entered for salary, units worked, full-time units, and annual salary. You can paste this information to another contribution row if the information is the same for that particular pay period.
- When certifying a retirement in ESS, keep in mind that you can Delete Rows that are not needed or add rows by clicking Add Line Item.
- Select Calculate for ESS to calculate the contributions.
- Select Save afterwards to see if any errors occur or if the salary breakdown was accepted successfully before adding in the unused sick.



- Certify any unused sick leave in Days, not hours.
- Provide any Notes that may help TRS with the processing of the application (such as an explanation of any unusual pay).
- Select Complete Certification to finalize the certification.

Final Sick Leave Certification:

Unused Sick Leave Days at Retirement :

Comments from the RSA:

Please certify for 6/1/2021 retirement

Notes or Comments To the RSA:

[← Back to Dashboard](#)
[✔ Complete Certification](#)

If you find that you have made an error on the certification after submitting it, please notify TRS in writing as soon as possible. You may fax a correction to 877-517-0021 or email it to TRS.Info@rsa-al.gov.

Benefit Recalculation After Retirement

- When the retirement contributions submitted for a member do not match the employer certification, TRS recalculates the benefits; any members who were overpaid must reimburse TRS for any ineligible benefits.
- When an employer becomes aware of a change to the certified information, they should notify TRS in writing (This includes sick leave changes or docked days of work.)

Reports

The ESS Portal offers many different reports that provide various information for employers to use. To generate a report, the user will go to the Services tab > Reports. They will then select the report name from the drop-down menu. Below are some of the most common reports used by employers.

Report Name	Description
Agency Retirement Eligibility	Displays retirement eligibility information for employees.
Annual Checklist Report for TRS	Generates a list of employees contributing under the previous plan year for a TRS employer. <u>Note:</u> Data displayed in the report is in real time. Any adjustments/changes made after the original report was run are reflected in this report.
Contribution Adjustment	Provides the users with a list of employees for whom an adjustment (positive or negative) was made between two dates. <u>Note:</u> Data displayed in the report is in real time. Any adjustments/changes made after the original report was run are reflected in this report.
Current Contribution Submission	Provides a list of employees in a selected contribution submission, along with the original amounts from the file, as well as the current/posted amounts for Wages, EECON, Wages that Exceeds IRS limit, and RSA-1, so the changes can be identified.

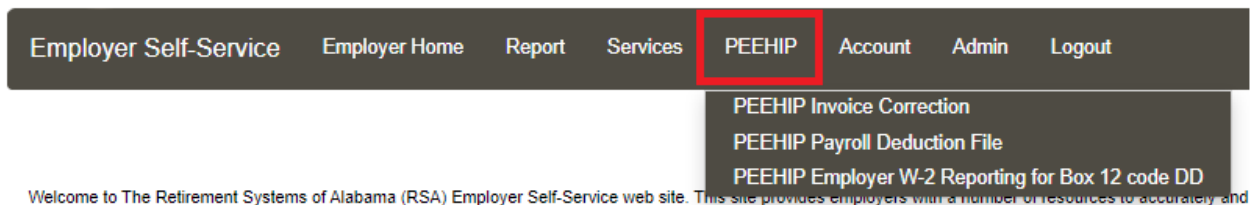
Current Enrollment Detail	Displays details of the enrollments for all current employees (having non-ended enrollments) for the selected employer.
Current Enrollment Summary	Displays a summary of the enrollments for all current employees (having non-ended enrollments) for the selected employer.
Demographic Errors	Lists all demographic errors for the selected period of an employer. Errors like address, name, etc.
Earnable Compensation Limit	Displays employees that are near, have met, or exceeded the IRS Wage Limit per the selected Plan Year.
Employer Invoice Report	This report allows users to view the list of credit and debit invoices available for the selected employer.
Employer Remittance	Allows users to view the contributions for Contribution Groups within a payroll date range for an employer.
Enrollment Submission Summary Report	Provides a breakdown of the number of new enrollments created by the Publish process, number of existing enrollments updated by the Publish process, and enrollment records pending the Publish process due to the number of errors.
Error Summary	This report shows a summary of errors within a specific report period.
Exception Report for TRS	Lists all TRS employees who have not received full-service credit for the plan year.
Leave Without Pay	Displays all employees for the selected employer who were on an approved unpaid leave of absence for at least one day between the selected begin and end dates.
Missing Employees from Contribution	This report displays contributing regular employees who are expected to be reported by an employer for a particular payroll frequency and pay period, but who are not included in that submission.
Non-Participating Part-Time Status	Displays all employees reported in a non-participating group reported under one employer, as well as all non-participating employees reported by more than one employer.
Outstanding Edit Errors	Provides the user with the list of outstanding Edit errors by employer code and submission ID.
Outstanding Load Errors	Provides the user with records that triggered a Load validation.
Overtime Limit	Provides a summary of employee wages for purposes of tracking the earnable compensation limit for employees of a specified employer.
PEEHIP Employer Invoice Comparison	PEEHIP Report
PEEHIP Monthly Coverage	PEEHIP Report
PEEHIP Monthly Invoice-Miscellaneous	PEEHIP Report

PEEHIP Monthly Invoice – Regular	PEEHIP Report
Post-Retirement Employment	Lists all working retirees for an employer and the limitations that apply to the retirees.
Retirees by Employer	List all retirees by employer.
Temporary Employment	Provides a list of Temporary employees who are being enrolled in multiple temporary enrollments (e.g., to avoid the 1-year Temporary employment limit).
TRS – Annual Statement Listing	This report provides employers with an overview of their employees Member Account Balances and Beneficiary Data as of the end of the previous fiscal year. If this information is incorrect then they would need to notify RSA as soon as possible to get this information updated.
Wages and Contribution	Provides wages and contributions broken down at an employee level in a submission.

PEEHIP

List of PEEHIP documents/reports and the location:

- **Employer Invoice Comparison Report**
 - Services tab > Reports.
- **Employer W-2 Reporting for Box 12 code DD**
 - PEEHIP tab > Employer W-2 Reporting for Box 12 code DD.
- **Monthly Coverage Report**
 - Services tab > Reports.
- **Monthly Invoice Report**
 - Services tab > Reports.
- **Pay Invoice Online**
 - Report tab > Invoices.
- **PEEHIP Invoice Corrections**
 - PEEHIP tab > PEEHIP Invoice Corrections.
- **PEEHIP Payroll Deduction File**
 - PEEHIP tab > PEEHIP Payroll Deduction File.



PEEHIP Invoice Correction

ESS Portal users will go here to make corrections to a PEEHIP Invoice. Usually this is used when the user needs to add a new hire that was not added before the invoice was generated but should be on the selected invoice, or to remove an employee that was terminated after the invoice was generated and should not be on the selected invoice, or any other invoice adjustments can be done here.

- Select the month the invoice was created.

PEEHIP Invoice Correction

Please Select Invoice Date.

Invoice Date:

Oct 2021 - Regular (PR2021THOV10F0011)

Sep 2021 - Miscellaneous (CD2021THOV09F0009)

Sep 2021 - Regular (PR2021THOV09F0010)

Aug 2021 - Miscellaneous (CD2021THOV08F0008)

Aug 2021 - Regular (PR2021THOV08F0009)

Jul 2021 - Regular (PR2021THOV07F0008)

The Retirement System: aban

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- This will bring users to a summary view of the selected invoice.
- Users can add corrections here.

PEEHIP Invoice Correction

October for November 2021 Regular Invoice (PR2021THOV10F0011)

Invoice Date: [View Corrections Report](#)

Name SSN PID	Original Total Allocation	Original Total Premium	Adjusted Total Allocation	Adjusted Total Premium	Allocation Difference	Premium Difference	Explanation for change	Effective Y/M
Originally billed:	1,510,000.00	385,061.47	0.00	0.00	1,510,000.00	385,061.47		
					1,510,000.00	385,061.47		
Expected Check Amount:					1,895,061.47			

SSN: Or PID:

Effective Year: Effective Month:

[Add Correction](#)

PEEHIP Payroll Deduction File

Users will go here to download the monthly Payroll Deduction file. This file is uploaded to ESS once every month and the users are notified when the latest file is available.

- Select the month the invoice is effective.
 - Invoices are generated for the following month.
 - For example: In September, the invoice effective for October is created. In October, the invoice effective for November is created, etc.
 - Users will enter their PIN > select Generate.

Payroll Deduction File

From:

ESS PIN: *

Employer W-2 Reporting for Box 12 code DD

Users will go here to download the Employer W-2 Reporting file. This is uploaded to ESS once every year and the Employers are notified when the file is available.

- Users will enter their PIN > Generate.

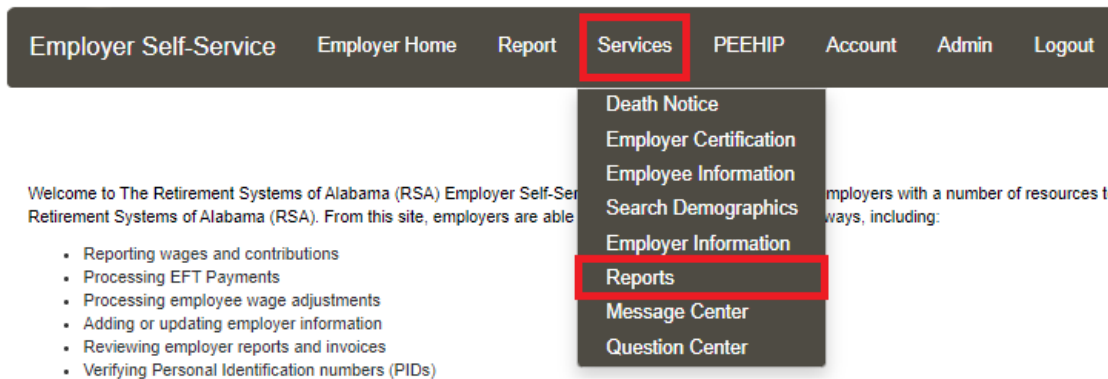
Employer W-2 Reporting for Box 12 code DD

ESS PIN: *

Services Tab

Some PEEHIP reports for Employers can be found under the Services Tab.

- **PEEHIP Employer Invoice Comparison**
 - This report allows the user to view a comparison list of the selected month's invoice and the previous month's invoice.
- **PEEHIP Monthly Invoice – Regular**
 - The user can download the itemized invoice for the selected month here.
- **PEEHIP Monthly Coverage**
 - The user can download the itemized list of their employees' active PEEHIP coverage for the selected month here.



View Reports

Report Name: *

Description:

Format:

ESS PIN: *

- Earnable Compensation Limit
- Employer Invoice Report
- Employer Remittance
- Enrollment Submission Summary Report
- Error Summary
- Exception Report for TRS
- Leave Without Pay
- Missing Employees from Contribution
- Non-Participating Part-Time Status
- Outstanding Edit Errors
- Outstanding Load Errors
- Overtime Limit
- PEEHIP Employer Invoice Comparison**
- PEEHIP Monthly Coverage**
- PEEHIP Monthly Invoice - Miscellaneous**
- PEEHIP Monthly Invoice - Regular**
- Post-Retirement Employment
- Temporary Employment
- TRS - Annual Statement Listing
- Wages and Contributions

The Retirement Systems of Alabama

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Reports Tab

The employer will pay their PEEHIP Invoices online under the Report tab in Invoices.

Employer Self-Service Employer Home **Report** Services PEEHIP Account Admin Logout

- Submit Report
- View History
- View Reporting Packets
- Download PIDs
- Invoices**
- Payroll Schedule
- Error Correction
- Contract Schedule

Welcome to The Retirement Systems of Alabama (RSA) Employer Self-Service. This site provides employers with a number of resources to manage their accounts. From this site, employers can manage their accounts in a number of ways, including:

- Reporting wages and contributions
- Processing EFT Payments
- Processing employee wage adjustments
- Adding or updating employer information
- Reviewing employer reports and invoices
- Verifying Personal Identification numbers (PIDs)

If the employer has any invoices in the unpaid status, they can make the payment online. The user will need to select the checkbox next to the unpaid invoice and then select Pay Invoice.

Invoices

The Invoices module allows employers to manage invoices. To pay an invoice, select the invoices and click **Pay Invoice**. To view an individual invoice, click the appropriate link and the invoice will open in a new browser window.

Invoices

Show all Employer: THOV - HOOVER CITY SCHOOLS
 Recent Invoices: --Select-- Type: Select Invoice Type
 Date Range: to Show Paid Invoices

Invoice	Employer	Invoice Type	Date	Due Date	Amount	Balance Due	Status
<input type="checkbox"/> PR2021THOV10F0011	THOV - HOOVER CITY SCHOOLS	PEEHIP-Regular	10/07/2021	11/10/2021	\$1,895,061.47	\$1,895,061.47	Unpaid

For questions regarding invoices, please contact the RSA at 334.517.7000 or 887.517.0020

If the user would like to view the invoice, click the invoice number hyperlink.

Invoice	Employer	Invoice Type	Date	Due Date
<input type="checkbox"/> PR2021THOV10F0011	THOV - HOOVER CITY SCHOOLS	PEEHIP-Regular	10/07/2021	11/10/2021

The information provided in this manual is meant to be a resource to assist employers with ESS Portal reporting processes. This manual will not address every scenario that employers may have. We also encourage Employers to periodically refer to the RSA website for important TRS information.

If you have any questions, please contact the Employer Services Division at 334.517.7005, option 2, or by email at Employer.Services@rsa-al.gov.