EMPLOYER SELF-SERVICE (ESS) PORTAL MANUAL FOR RSA-1

Retirement Systems of Alabama | P.O. Box 302150 Montgomery, AL 36130-2150

Employer Self-Service (ESS) Portal Manual for RSA-1

The RSA Employer Services Division is pleased to provide you with this ESS Portal Manual for RSA-1.

The purpose of this manual is to serve as a guide to assist ESS Users with navigation through the ESS Portal and the processes for reporting RSA-1 contributions in the ESS Portal. We hope this manual will significantly help in performing your reporting responsibilities in the ESS Portal.

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.

Employer Services Contact Information

Phone: 334.517.7005, option 1 for ERS or option 2 for TRS

Fax: 877.517.0021 or 334.517.7001

Email: Employer.Services@rsa-al.gov

RSA Website: www.rsa-al.gov

Business Hours: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Monday – Friday

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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What is RSA-1?

RSA-1 is an eligible deferred compensation plan as defined by Section 457 of the Internal Revenue Code that allows a public official or employee of the state of Alabama or any political subdivision thereof to voluntarily defer receipt of a portion of their salary until a later determined date, usually at retirement or termination of service. The plan is authorized by §36-27A-1, et. seq., Code of Alabama 1975. RSA-1 is administered by the Secretary-Treasurer of the ERS under the supervision and direction of the PEIRAF Board of Control, which is composed of members of the investment committees of the TRS and ERS Boards of Control.

Contributions are paid into RSA-1 and invested for the participant's benefit. Contributions and any investment earnings are held in the participant's account for the exclusive benefit of the plan participants and their beneficiaries. As of 2024, RSA-1 offers a traditional 457(b) Pre-Tax Account and a designated Roth Account.

If you have any questions regarding RSA-1 participation, please call 334.517.7000 and ask to speak with an RSA-1 Representative. The RSA-1 Enrollment Packet can be found at https://www.rsa-al.gov/rsa-1/forms/. For assistance with reporting RSA-1 contributions in the Employer Self-Service (ESS) Portal please contact Employer Services at 334.517.7005, option 1 for ERS employers, option 2 for TRS employers, or email Employer.Services@rsa-al.gov.

Information to know before submitting RSA-1 Contributions

Retirement and RSA-1 contributions must be reported and submitted separately. Employers can report and work on retirement and RSA-1 contributions simultaneously and independently of each other, provided an enrollment submission is not in progress. RSA-1 contributions need to be submitted prior to the agency's Retirement Contributions, as RSA-1 contributions are due within 10 days of being withheld from the employee's paycheck.

Before submitting RSA-1 or Retirement Contributions, it is important that you review the pay dates on your agency's payroll schedules in the ESS Portal. If a pay date needs to be updated on your payroll schedule, please ensure it is updated before submitting RSA-1 and Retirement Contributions for that pay period. Once contributions to either of these are submitted and posted, no adjustments to the pay date can be made. **ESS users should be diligent when reporting RSA-1 contributions to ensure the correct contribution type is entered based on the employee's request for a Pre-tax or Roth account type.**

Payroll Schedules

Payroll Schedules must be set up prior to the beginning of each plan year for each type of payroll frequency. When creating a Payroll Schedule for retirement purposes, the system will automatically create a Payroll Schedule for RSA-1 with the same pay date, pay period begin and end dates. If you are an RSA-1-only agency, you will have to create an RSA-1-only payroll schedule each plan year.

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 prior to submission.

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 were changed.

- Steps to edit the payroll information after the schedule is created:
    - Open the payroll schedule by selecting the plus sign.
    - Select Action > Edit next to the pay period needing updates.
    - After changes are made, select Action > Save.

If your agency does not have employees who contribute to RSA-1:

- You must skip the individual RSA-1 payrolls until someone begins contributing to RSA-1.
- Navigate to the Report Tab, Select Action > Edit> select the skip payroll check box > select the Action button again > select Save.

Employee Information Screen

ESS Users can see if their employee is enrolled and eligible to contribute to RSA-1. Users can navigate to the Services tab, select Employee Information, and search for the employee by SSN, PID, or Last Name to view this information. Once the employee has been selected, their Account History with the logged-in agency's retirement system (ERS, JRF, TRS) will be displayed.

The information provided will show whether the employee has enrolled with RSA-1. If enrolled with RSA-1, additional information is provided, such as the suspension end date (if the account has been suspended), the employee's RSA-1 year-to-date contributions, and the RSA-1 Contribution Limit for the calendar year.

RSA-1 Contribution Information

Pre-tax RSA-1 contribution represents the employee's RSA-1 pre-tax deferral amount.

- If the employee has elected to participate in the optional RSA-1 Pre-Tax deferred compensation plan, the pre-tax amount is deducted from the wages and should be reported in the box listed as Pre-Tax. A pre-tax 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.

Post-tax RSA-1 contribution represents the employee's RSA-1 post-tax contribution amount.

- If the employee has elected to participate in the optional RSA-1 Post-Tax (Roth) deferred compensation plan, the post-tax is deducted from the wages and should be reported in the box listed as Post-Tax. A post-tax 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.

Submit RSA-1 Contributions via File or Manual Submission

Contributions can be submitted by uploading a retirement contribution file that includes RSA-1 contributions or by manually entering an employee's wages and RSA-1 Contribution 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 retirement contribution file that includes RSA-1 contributions can be generated from your agency's software system if your agency made the required RSA-1 updates to include Roth contributions in your file and uploaded into the ESS Portal, notifying the RSA of your employees' wages and RSA-1 contributions for that pay period.
    - To upload a retirement file that includes RSA-1contributions, select Report > Submit Report.
    - Select Upload File under the RSA-1 Contribution 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 RSA-1 contributions manually will do this by entering online under RSA-1 Contributions by navigating to the Report tab > Submit Report.

<u>Examples of what can be done through a manual contribution submission:</u>

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

<u>How to Submit Contributions Manually:</u>

- Navigate to the Report tab > Submit Report > Enter Online under RSA-1 Contributions.
- Select the Employer the submission is for.
- Select the Reporting Frequency.
- Select the Pay Period.

- Select the Pay Date.
- Once the screen refreshes, select the previous pay period if you wish to copy over the Regular Payment Lines for employees with RSA-1 contributions.
- 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.

Note: When submitting RSA-1 contributions manually, users can copy over the Regular Pay payment reasons from the previously posted RSA-1 contribution report. All other payment reasons (i.e. Lump Sum/Longevity) will need to be entered for each employee as needed.

Lump Sum Payments/Payouts for RSA-1 Contributions

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

These wages need to be reported on the last pay period the employee was/will be considered active. If you are reporting these wages after the employee has retired or the employee has been terminated, you will need to add these wages to the last pay period the employee was considered active. Please follow the steps below to add these wages:

- In an active RSA-1 contribution submission, select Add Contribution.
- Enter the employee's SSN, PID, or Last Name. Select the Plan Year and Pay Period during which the employee was/will be considered active.
- Select Add a New Record with the Information I Entered and 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, Pre-Tax, Post-Tax, or both, and select Submit.

Prior Pay Period Adjustments for RSA-1

Option for File Submitters:

- If File Submitters would like to process a Prior Pay Period Adjustment in their RSA-1 contribution file, the file will need to have a separate record for each pay period and payment reason they are trying to correct. Only positive adjustments can be made.

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

- With an active RSA-1 contribution submission in progress, select Add Contribution.
- Enter either the SSN, PID, or Last Name of 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 wages and the RSA-1 contribution amount and select Save Changes. Only positive adjustments can be made.

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.

Payment Screen

The Payment screen is the last screen users will see prior to submitting payment for contributions. On this screen, users will be able to enter the amount of money deducted from their bank account to pay for RSA-1 contributions.

- 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 RSA-1 contributions, similar to the Summary screen on a retirement contribution submission. Users can 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 PDF format.

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

ER0410: "Employee has not completed their enrollment with RSA-1. RSA will only accept contributions for 31 days from the first date it was received. "

This error message occurs when an RSA-1 contribution is reported for a member, but no enrollment forms have been received. The system will accept the contributions for 31 days and if no enrollment forms are received during this time, the contributions will be refunded back to the member.

To correct this:

- The user would need to contact the member to have them send in an enrollment form as soon as possible so the contributions are not refunded back to them.

ER0412: "Participant has not provided a Contribution Allocation for the Regular Pre-tax account type."

This error message occurs when an RSA-1 contribution is reported under the pre-tax column, but RSA-1 has not received the appropriate documentation directing contributions to pre-tax.

To correct this:

- The user would need to contact the member to have them verify if they submitted a Contribution Allocation form and if so, which allocation they chose, pre-tax or post-tax.

ER0413: "Participant has not provided a Contribution Allocation for the Regular Roth account type."

This error message occurs when an RSA-1 contribution is reported under the post-tax column, but RSA-1 has not received the appropriate documentation directing contributions to Roth.

To correct this:

- The user would need to contact the member to have them verify if they submitted a Contribution Allocation form and if so, which allocation they chose, pre-tax or post-tax.

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. Select the report name from the drop-down menu. Below are some of the most common reports used by employers.

Report Name	Description
Contribution Adjustment	Provides the users with a list of employees for whom an RSA-1 adjustment was made between two dates. Note: 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 RSA-1 contribution submission, along with the original amounts from the file, as well as the current/posted amounts for Wages and RSA-1 contributions, so the changes can be identified.
Error Summary	This report shows a summary of errors within a specific report period.
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.
Wages and Contributions	Provides wages and contributions broken down at an employee level in a submission.

RSA-1 Forms

If you need a copy of the RSA-1 enrollment form packet, please see the attached link: https://www.rsa-al.gov/uploads/files/RSA-1_Enrollment_Packet.pdf