

TOP ARTICLES: Tips For End Of Year Processing • Deleted Records Verification Refresher • New Streamlined Process For Health Claims Data • And More!

## Legend

Articles are marked by topic!

Find icons as they relate to:



Reporting and Training for REs



Health Benefits



Information Security



General Communications



## FY 2025 Contribution Rates



Effective for any pay received starting Sept. 1, 2024, the new annual contribution rates will be in place. This fiscal year (September 2024-August 2025) the rates will remain the same except for the Public Education Employer Contribution, which will increase from 1.9 to 2.0%. These contribution rates are now published on the [TRS website](#).

RATE	CONTRIBUTION
8.25%	Member Retirement Contribution
0.65%	Member TRS-Care Contribution
0.75%	Reporting Entity TRS-Care Contribution
8.25%	State Contribution
1.25%	Federal TRS-Care
2%	Public Education Employer Contribution
16.5%	Pension Surcharge
\$535	TRS-Care Surcharge





As REs begin a new school year, TRS is winding down our fiscal year. This period can be hectic for everyone involved. Here's some important information and deadlines to keep in mind during this busy time.

**SEPT. 6, 2024**

**Due Date for  
August RP and  
ER Reports  
and Deadlines**

**All August reports and TEXNET deposits are due by 8 p.m. CT + on Friday, Sept. 6, 2024.** This applies to both the Regular Payroll (RP) report and the Employment After Retirement (ER) report.

**SEPT. 13, 2024**

**Year-End Deadline for  
Annual Statements**

**All RP reports for the entire 2023-2024 fiscal year must be at a "Completed" status by 5 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 13, 2024.** Failing to meet this deadline may result in incorrect annual statements for your employees.



The first two weeks of September will be especially busy. Your coach may not be able to respond to you immediately due to the volume of requests. To streamline communication, please consolidate your questions into one email to your coach. If you do not receive a response within one business day, or if you are unsure of who your coach is, email [reporting@trs.texas.gov](mailto:reporting@trs.texas.gov). **Please remember to include your four-digit TRS number in any email or voice message.**

## ADDITIONAL TIPS:

- 1** Web Administrators, please make sure to update your contacts in the RE portal. End contact records for those no longer serving in their roles and add any new contacts, including the Head of Institution. Further instructions can be found in the [Instructions for Web Administrators](#) guide on the TRS website.
- 2** Higher Education REs are not required to report student employees on the RP report if the individual is meeting the student employment requirements as stated in the Payroll Manual for Higher Education Employers. See [Student Employment](#) in the glossary of the Payroll Manual for Higher Education.
- 3** Each report month must include hours and days worked during that report month, regardless of pay periods. Even if the employees aren't paid in their first working month, report the time worked on the RP20.
- 4** Reporting Employment After Retirement (EAR) – EAR employment dates are based on the retiree's expected work during the fiscal year, not their contract. REs may report the employment dates on a month-to-month basis within the range of Sept. 1 – Aug. 31. For example, if the retiree's work concludes at the end of the Spring semester, and the employment type will remain the same through the year, the RE may report dates as Sept. 1 through May 31.



- 5** The Employment Type Code must reflect the retiree's actual work in each specific report month. Retirees working varying hours throughout the fiscal year should not be reported as full time consistently.
- 6** For retirees working as substitutes in multiple position codes, combine all substitute work under the primary position code on the ER20 (retiree employment information, compensation and surcharges).
- 7** For all terminated employees, whether it is due to termination, resignation, retirement or death, it's essential to submit ED90 records. This step is especially important for employees who are retiring but did not work in an eligible position during their last year of employment.

### TRS Business Hours

8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday  
Any requests for assistance (questions, overrides, etc.) received after 4 p.m. may be considered 'received' the next business day.

### RE Portal Validation Schedule:

1. RE Portal validations are scheduled to run on the hour and half hour from 6 a.m.– 6 p.m. – Example: 6 a.m., 6:30 a.m., 7 a.m.
2. Any information entered after 6 p.m. will not validate until the following morning.
3. Validation run processing times can take longer the week of the report due dates.
4. The portal is unavailable each day from approximately 7 p.m. until 10 p.m.

## Reporting Teacher Incentive Allotment Compensation



TRS coaches often receive questions regarding the reporting of Teacher Incentive Allotment (TIA) compensation for teachers in school districts. To ensure accurate reporting of these payments, please keep in mind:

- All TIA payments are TRS Creditable Compensation.
- TIA earned by an active employee are reported as TRS-Eligible Compensation on the Regular Payroll (RP) report in the report month paid.
- TIA payments are reported under the primary position code, subject to State Minimum Salary and Statutory Minimum contributions apply.
- If a TRS retiree, with a retirement date after Sept. 1, 2005, exceeds the one-half time limits, pension surcharge is due on any TRS creditable compensation paid in the month they exceed, including TIA compensation.

Please reach out to your RE Coach if you have questions or encounter errors related to reporting TIA compensation.

For additional information on the Teacher Incentive Allotment, refer to Section [48.112](#) of the Texas Education Code, or contact the Texas Education Agency (TEA).



## Reporting Period Deadlines For FY 2025



Below are the TEXNET and report due dates and penalty fee deadlines for each month in the upcoming fiscal year. Starting with the September 2024 report period, both RP and ER reports will fall under a reduced Penalty Fee Grace Period for completion. Specifically, the grace period for the completing the September 2024 payroll reports has been reduced from one calendar month to 21 days. For subsequent report months (October 2024-August 2025) the grace period remains at 14-calendar days.

Keep in mind there will be no grace period on monthly TEXNET deposits. To avoid penalty interest for late funds, ensure that your TEXNET payments are remitted by 8 p.m. CST on the TEXNET due date.

Report Month	Regular Payroll Report and TEXNET Due Date	Regular Payroll Report Grace Period Deadline	Employment After Retirement Report and TEXNET Due Date	Employment After Retirement Report Grace Period Deadline
September 2024	Oct. 4, 2024	Oct. 25, 2024	Oct. 10, 2024	Oct. 31, 2024
October 2024	Nov. 6, 2024	Nov. 20, 2024	Nov. 8, 2024	Nov. 22, 2024
November 2024	Dec. 6, 2024	Dec. 20, 2024	Dec. 10, 2024	Dec. 24, 2024
December 2024	Jan. 6, 2025	Jan. 20, 2025	Jan. 10, 2025	Jan. 24, 2025
January 2025	Feb. 6, 2025	Feb. 20, 2025	Feb. 10, 2025	Feb. 24, 2025
February 2025	March 6, 2025	March 20, 2025	March 10, 2025	March 24, 2025
March 2025	April 4, 2025	April 18, 2025	April 10, 2025	April 24, 2025
April 2025	May 6, 2025	May 20, 2025	May 9, 2025	May 23, 2025
May 2025	June 6, 2025	June 20, 2025	June 10, 2025	June 24, 2025
June 2025	July 3, 2025	July 17, 2025	July 10, 2025	July 24, 2025
July 2025	Aug. 6, 2025	Aug. 20, 2025	Aug. 8, 2025	Aug. 22, 2025
August 2025	Sept. 5, 2025	Sept. 19, 2025	Sept. 5, 2025	Sept. 19, 2025

## Deleted Records Verification Refresher



Whenever a Regular Payroll (RP) or Employment After Retirement (ER) record is removed before reaching a completed status, a Deleted Records Verification report is generated. This report provides detailed information to TRS about why the record was deleted. When completing the verification report, select one of the following reasons for deletion:



**Record was Combined:** This reason code should be used if your software generated multiple RP20 records for the same individual and you need to consolidate the information into one RP20 record.



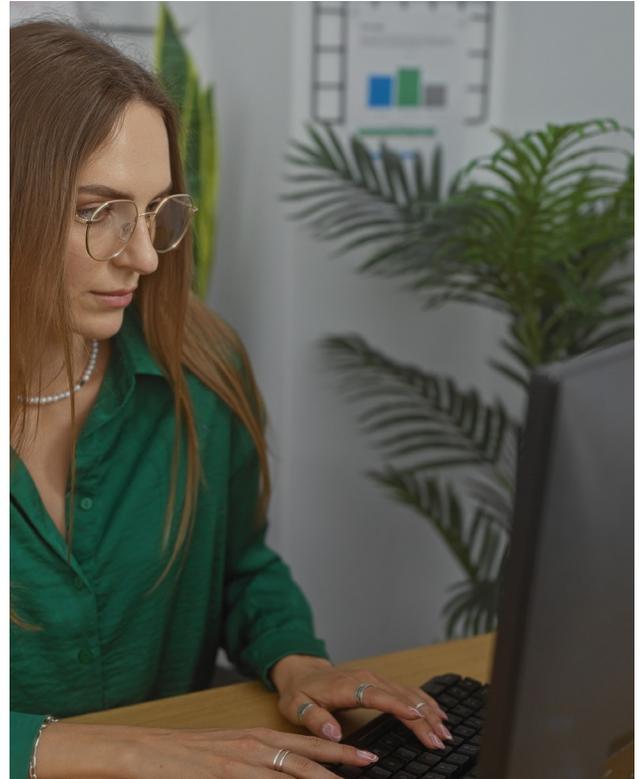
**Record Created in Error:** Select this option if the RP20 record is unnecessary, and no reporting is required for that employee for that report month.



**Duplicate Record:** If your software has created two RP20 records with identical information, confirm they are duplicates and delete one RP20 record.



**TRS Maintenance or Defect:** Only use this reason code when instructed by your RE coach due to a defect. Sometimes, deletion is necessary, pending scheduled software maintenance.



**Retiree Reported on RP:** You have determined that the RP20 record created is for a TRS retiree and should be reported on ER report. Delete the RP20 record, create an ER20 to report the information, and update your software to reflect the employee is a TRS retiree. Note: You should not take this step unless all compensation and contributions that the retiree earned prior to retiring as an active member have been reported to TRS. If this is compensation earned prior to retirement, please reach out to your coach for assistance.



**Non-Retiree Reported on ER Report:** Confirm with your coach that the employee is not a TRS retiree. Once confirmed, delete the ER20 record from your report and create an RP20 record. Also, you should update your software to generate future RP20 records.



**No Longer Employed:** Confirm that an ED90 record was submitted for this employee before deleting the RP20 record. You may delete the RP20 record if it's determined that the record was generated after the final report month and no further reporting is needed. If you need to report final compensation after the final report month, please reach out to your coach for further assistance before you delete the RP20 record.



**Other, Please Explain:** Use this reason code if the record being deleted does not fall under one of the other options. When selecting Other, please make sure to provide sufficient information to justify the record's deletion.



TRS 'Full Payroll' rules require Reporting Employers (REs) to provide monthly reports on eligible and ineligible employees via the Regular Payroll (RP) report, and all TRS Retirees on the Employment After Retirement (ER) report.

To clarify TRS reporting requirements related to Independent Contractors, consider the following guidelines to help you determine whether an individual is an Independent Contractor and whether they should be reported to TRS.

## WHO IS AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR/CONSULTANT?

An [independent contractor](#) is typically an individual who is retained by the RE to perform a service or complete a project.



## AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR IS USUALLY NOT:

- An independent contractor is usually not:
  - under the day-to-day control of the RE (duties for a position that are established in employer policies, laws and/or rules indicate that the person is under the day-to-day control of the reporting employer);
  - required to keep “office hours” or “work hours” as does an employee (teaching a class or meeting with students at an established time is considered keeping “work hours”);
  - utilizing the RE’s facilities, equipment, or materials to perform services; or marketing their services to only one employer.
  - Positions such as superintendents, principals, assistant principals, teachers, administrators, and coaches cannot be considered as independent contractors. Simply changing a position’s title to include any form of “independent contractor” doesn’t suffice for classification.

## WHO DETERMINES INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR STATUS?

REs should seek advice from their own legal team to determine if the arrangement is an independent contractor or employee.

A TRS retiree and employer must carefully assess whether their work arrangement as an independent contractor meets all the legal criteria for this type of relationship. Federal income tax and social security laws play a role in determining whether a retiree is an independent contractor.

## OUTSOURCING TO THIRD-PARTY ENTITIES

If a TRS Retiree is [employed by third-party entity](#) to perform duties related to employment by a Texas public education employer, they are subject to the [Employment After Retirement laws and rules](#). An RE and retiree should not rely on the name of the company or the work contract to determine if reported to TRS.

If an RE does not outsource 100% of the duties or services of a position, the retiree must be reported on the ER report, subject to Employment After Retirement (EAR) laws and rules.

## ED REPORT AND RP REPORTS

Independent contractors (non-TRS retirees) are not reported on Employee Demographic (ED) or Regular Payroll (RP) reports.

## ER REPORTING

TRS Retirees working as an [independent contractor during the first 12 months](#) after retirement must be reported to TRS on the ER report. Not every situation could be covered above. Please reach out to your RE Coach if you need assistance.



Some highly paid members may have their annual creditable compensation limited in accordance with Section 401(a)(17) of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC). These limits affect individuals who joined TRS for the first time on or after Sept. 1, 1996. The annual limit is subject to change each plan year. Pay excluded from creditable compensation under this law is not subject to member contributions and does not factor into benefit calculations.



For the 2024-25 school year, the IRC §401(a)(17) annual creditable compensation limit (for new TRS members after Aug. 31, 1996) is **\$345,000**. The cap is based on the TRS plan year of Sept. 1 through Aug. 31 and not the member's contract or work agreement year. Once a member's reported TRS-eligible salary, beginning with the September posting, reaches the cap for that year, no further TRS-eligible salary is to be reported until the following September – the start of the next plan year. *However, Reporting Employers must continue to report Total Gross Compensation and days and hours worked each report month after reaching the salary cap.*

To determine if an employee is subject to the Salary Cap provision, REs should use the [View Employee Information](#) screen in the RE Portal. Additionally, the View 401(a)(17) screen in the RE Portal allows REs to see employees who are subject to the Salary Cap provision and have reached or exceeded 85% of the limit for the TRS plan year.

## TRS is Looking For You: Early Career Feature Subject For Video



*Please share with your employees!* TRS is interested in featuring members early in their careers for a video series spotlighting how you can connect with your retirement system to maximize your benefits. As part of the video series, TRS will connect you with a TRS Benefits Counselor to receive an overview on helpful resources and information you can use to better understand your future retirement benefits.

We look forward to sharing this video as a helpful resource for other members --- just like you --- who are wondering how they can connect with their retirement system at this point in their careers. There's no better time to start planning than today.

Please share the word and share your interest by emailing [communications@trs.texas.gov](mailto:communications@trs.texas.gov). We look forward to hearing from you!





TRS has streamlined the request and reporting process for claims data in 2024. This new automated process allows employers to access a Summary Health Plan Report directly within the familiar RE Portal.

To restrict access to HIPAA data to only essential users, there is a new Health Administrator (Health Admin) role in the RE portal. This role is assigned by the Web Administrator for the Reporting Entity.

The Health Admin must be an employee of the Reporting Employer and authorized to:

1. Complete the Plan Sponsor Certification and Summary Health Information Request Form
2. Receive an encrypted copy of the report.

The Health Admin can digitally sign the information request form within the RE Portal. This signature will trigger creation of the report.

After reviewing the report, within 10 business days TRS will make the report available in an encrypted zip file and store it in the new Document Center of the RE Portal. At the same time, TRS will send the password to decrypt the file to the Head of Institution's email address on file at the time the request is fulfilled.

For security reasons, TRS staff will not provide this password directly to the Health Admin. Only the Head of Institution (authorized by TRS) can share the password with the Health Admin. This ensures that HIPAA protected data is provided to authorized employees only.



- To ensure a smooth process, please review and confirm the information listed in the RE Portal for your head of institution before submitting a request.
- To assign the Health Admin role as a web administrator, see this guide on the [TRS website](#).
- Health Admins must follow this process for each data request.
- For questions or issues specific to requesting health care data, please contact [healthcarecomm@trs.texas.gov](mailto:healthcarecomm@trs.texas.gov).

- As before, Reporting Employers are limited to a total of two Summary Health Information requests per State Fiscal Year (Sept. 1-Aug. 31).
- The data within the report will remain nearly identical to the prior version with some small updates. The new template is [available here](#).
- The data being provided is protected by HIPAA and can only be used for the purpose of obtaining premium bids or quotes outside of TRS-ActiveCare.
- Previously there was a second option for a de-identified report that required manual review by a de-identification expert and was rarely requested by employers. To streamline the process for obtaining critical data needed to get quotes, TRS will only provide the option to request Summary Health Plan Reporting. However, TRS will continue to publish extensive data about plan performance in its annual TRS Health Benefits Report and other public venues.
- An employer must have participated in TRS-ActiveCare for at least 36 months to request claims data.



As cybercriminals become more adept at exploiting our enthusiasm for beach days, road trips, and soaking up sun, it's crucial to stay vigilant and informed. Our first part of the Summer Cybersafety and Travel series covered safe booking practices and social media precautions; part two will go a little deeper into practical measures to protect your personal information and devices during your journey. From locking your screen to setting up multi-factor authentication (MFA), these additional tips will ensure your next summer getaway remains enjoyable and cybersafe!

### LOCK IT BEFORE YOU ROCK IT

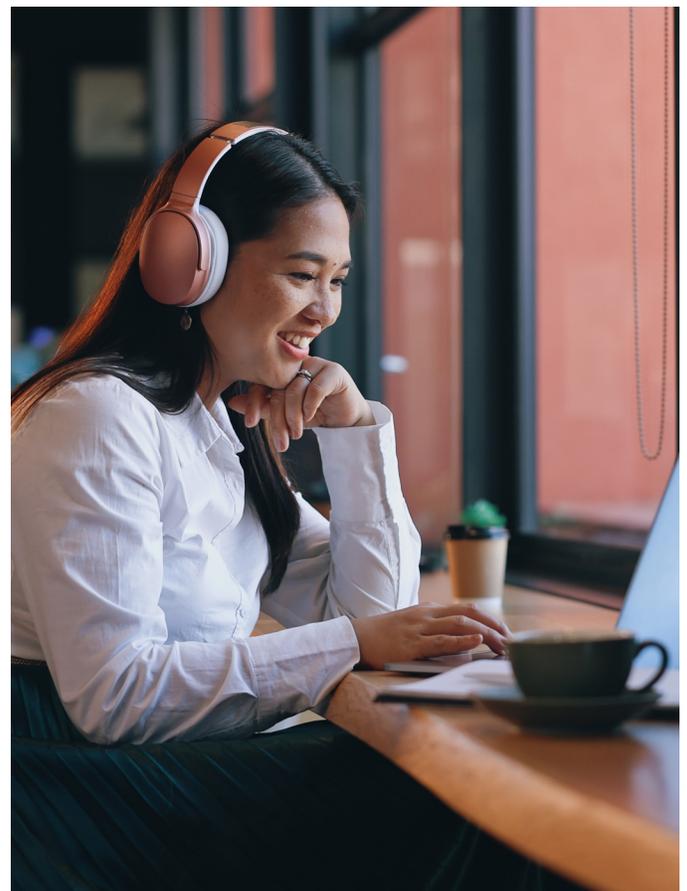
It might seem like common sense to lock your computer when you leave the room, but this is even more important when using your devices in public places like the airport or coffee shop.

And it's not just your computer—your cellphone is a pocket-sized supercomputer with all kinds of information on it, like saved passwords, banking information, and access to all your accounts. None of this would be good for anyone but you, so ensuring your devices are locked and loaded is nonnegotiable.

#### When you travel, be sure to always:

- **Lock your screen when not present (or better yet never leave a device unattended!).** If you must temporarily walk away from your device in a public space, always lock your screen. It's smart to set an auto-lock feature after a minute of inactivity in case you forget.
- **Make your passwords strong.** Using strong passwords that are difficult to guess is a must. If you can stall someone's access when they try to swipe your phone, you'll be in a lot less trouble. Passwords like "1234" and drawing a square on your phone aren't very original--and are often the first thing they'll guess.
- **Use facial recognition or touch ID.** A strong password is great, but it can be a pain for you to have to type in every time your auto-lock feature kicks in. By enabling face or touch ID, you can easily unlock your device and rest easy knowing a cybercriminal can't get in.
- **Set up multi-factor authentication (MFA).** MFA is like adding a second layer of protection. If someone tries guessing your password too many times or logs in by means of suspicious activity (like from another state!), MFA forces the user to verify it's you by means of another separate authentication method. For instance, it might send you a text and not let them in until they enter the code or have them answer three security questions.

We're all thrilled to be back to exploring—and making the most of the summer and fall to come. Whether you're lounging on a beach or embarking on a road trip, protect your digital world. Go ahead, get away! You've earned that well deserved R&R!



## TRS RE Portal: Training



Many people find that a video explanation is the best way to learn! Take advantage of more than a dozen informative videos in the [TRS Video Library](#) to understand TRS processes and reports for reporting employers.

## Follow TRS on Social Media



## Navigating Life Events With Ease



Career changes often necessitate updates to your account information and other essential actions. That's why the [TRS Life Event Resource Kit/Employer Toolkit](#) is so important – it's a comprehensive guide to help guide members during life and career transitions.

TRS members will find the “[Nearing Retirement](#)” section of our Career Events Resource Toolkit holds valuable answers to common questions like:

- How do I determine what retirement benefits I'm eligible for?
- How can I be better prepared for retirement?
- What TRS health plans are available for retired public school employees?
- I'm thinking about retiring, what should I do first?

Explore the [Life Event Resource Kit](#) today! Whether starting a new job, transitioning, or planning for retirement, these events have a significant impact. We're here to help you make the most of your benefits – in all ways possible – with each step forward.

## Now Accepting Nomination Forms for 2025 TRS Board of Trustees Election



TRS is now accepting nominations for eligible members to qualify as candidates for the election of the Public School District Employee position on the TRS Board of Trustees. To qualify, 250 signatures from eligible members must be collected and turned in by the deadline, Jan. 27, 2025.

Nominate yourself or someone you think would be a great fit representing you in this position which will be for a six-year term beginning no earlier than Sept. 1, 2025 and ending Aug. 31, 2031, [here](#).



Click [Here](#) to Rate This Issue of the *Update*

## Member Education Videos



Learn all about your TRS pension benefits by watching our [Member Education Videos!](#)

Help us spread the word about the series by downloading a [poster](#) from our website and displaying it at your school.

