TOP ARTICLES: Verify TRS Membership Eligibility Warning Vs. Error • RE Service Level Agreement • Upcoming TRS Trainings • Web Admin - RE Contact Support

Topic Legend

🏫   Reporting and Training for REs

❤️   Health Benefits

🔒   Information Security

📣   General Communications

We Want Your Feedback! 2026 Reporting Employer Satisfaction Survey (RESS)

TRS has partnered with Elite Research to conduct the annual Reporting Employer Satisfaction Survey. The survey provides TRS with valuable feedback so we can continue to improve the services we provide.

What You Need To Know:

- The survey will be sent to all RE contacts but should be completed by the individual who submits reports to TRS. If you do not submit reports to TRS, please respond "No" to the first question in the survey.

- The survey will be sent via email in February from noreply@qemailserver.com.

- If you think you should receive a survey invitation but do not receive one by mid-February, please contact SatisfactionSurveys@trs.texas.gov so we can ensure you receive the invitation. You may also want to check your email spam folders.

- Survey responses are confidential and will only be used to help improve the information, resources, training, and services TRS provides to Reporting Employers. At the end of the survey, you may provide your name and email if you wish to be contacted for follow-up regarding any of your responses.

We put your input to work! Below are improvements TRS implemented based on your feedback from the previous survey:

- Maintained RE Coach response time of one business day or better

- Piloted a Quality Assurance process for RE Coach phone calls with implementation scheduled for January 2026

- Began recording and publishing videos of RE virtual training sessions

- Continued to develop new modular, topic-based trainings, including error-resolution and summer school reporting

- Updated resources to the Error Resolution, RE Portal Certification and View Employee Information guides

- Expanded in-person training opportunities

If you have questions about the survey, please contact TRS' Satisfaction Survey team at SatisfactionSurveys@trs.texas.gov or Ashley Simmons at TRSsurvey@eliteresearch.com or (682) 294-0797.

Thank you for providing your candid and honest feedback. We look forward to working to improve our customer service.

Verify TRS Membership Eligibility Warning Vs. Error

Three common TRS warnings seen on monthly Regular Payroll (RP) reports identify potential eligibility issues when:

- A TRS-eligible employee is reported to be working less than half time of the position's full time equivalent (FTE).
- An ineligible employee is reported with time worked that is 50% or more of the position's FTE.

These warnings are a valuable tool for Reporting Employers (RE) to utilize in order to reduce future errors on their monthly RP report.

As a reminder, TRS eligibility should be evaluated at the time of hire and reevaluated when there is a change in position expectations. It should also be reevaluated at the beginning of each school year.

When reviewing these warnings, TRS recommends that you take the following steps:

1. Verify supervisors and managers understand scheduling employees to work more or less than original expectations can change the employee's TRS membership status, which in turn can impact employees and RE when required to pay TRS contributions.
2. Ask if the employee has a change in workload. Are employees working more or less than the amount they were hired to work? Find out if this is expected to continue or an isolated occasion?
3. Reevaluate the position for TRS eligibility if expectations have changed. An employee projected to continue to work half time or more of the position's FTE for a period of 4½ months or more, likely meet the criteria for TRS membership.

When an employee's hours are reported more or less than what they were hired to work, the RP 20 record will trigger a warning. If by the third month the employee continues to work more or less than what they were hired to work, the warning becomes an error on your RP report, and you will need to work with your RE Coach to determine next steps. Provide your RE Coach with the following information for each employee receiving the verify membership error:

1. How many hours per week was the employee hired to work?
2. What is the Full time Equivalent (FTE) in hours per week for the position? (30-40 hours or 00 if no FTE)
3. What caused the employee to work more/less than normal?
4. When will the employee return to their expected hours?

Upcoming TRS Trainings

2026 Virtual Sessions

TRS is offering the following virtual training sessions. Each attendee must register individually on the RE Portal Virtual Training page. This will ensure that you receive the link to access the web session as well as a copy of the materials being covered. All training sessions are scheduled to start on CST.

2026 Virtual Training Schedule		
Jan. 20	View Employee Information	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Jan. 21	TRS Membership Eligibility: Higher Ed	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Jan. 22	Helpful TRS Resources to Share with Members	10 - 10:30 a.m.
Jan. 27	TRS Membership Eligibility: Non-Higher Ed	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Jan. 29	TRS Reporting Requirements	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Feb. 12	Creditable Compensation	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Feb. 17	Substitute Employment: Non-TRS Retirees	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Feb. 18	Substitute Employment: TRS Retirees	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Feb. 19	Employment After Retirement: Non-Higher Ed	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Feb. 24	Employment After Retirement: Higher Ed	10 - 11:30 a.m.
Feb. 26	Completing the TRS28 and Reporting ORP	10 - 11:30 a.m.
March 24	Helpful TRS Resources to Share with Members	10 - 10:30 a.m.
March 26	Verify Membership Eligibility	10 - 11:30 a.m.
April 14	Error Resolution: Employee Demographic	10 - 11:30 a.m.
April 16	Error Resolution: Regular Payroll	10 - 11:30 a.m.
April 21	RE Ledger	10 - 11:30 a.m.
April 23	Penalty Interest, Fees and Reconciling RE Ledger	10 - 11:30 a.m.
April 28	Employer Contributions: Non-Higher Ed	10 - 11:30 a.m.
April 30	Employer Contributions: Higher Ed	10 - 11:30 a.m.
May 12	Reporting Summer School: Position Code 09	10 - 11:30 a.m.
May 14	Statutory Minimum Contribution	10 - 11:30 a.m.
May 19	RE Certifications	10 - 11:30 a.m.
May 21	Retirement Certifications	10 - 11:30 a.m.
June 11	Retirement Certifications	10 - 11:30 a.m.
June 16	Error Resolution: Employment After Retirement	10 - 11:30 a.m.
June 23	Helpful TRS Resources to Share with Members	10 - 10:30 a.m.

Start The New Year Cyber-Smart 🔒

As the new year begins, inboxes get busy – and cybercriminals know it. January is a prime time for New Year–themed phishing emails that look legitimate: "2025 Payroll Update," "New Benefits Form," "Holiday Schedule Changes," and more. These messages often mimic trusted services and try to catch people rushing through emails after the break.

Phishing emails may link to fake login pages or attach files that install malware. Some newer scams even use AI-generated messages that look cleaner and more convincing than ever.

Here's how to protect yourself:

1. **Slow down before clicking.**
   Check the sender, hover over links, and be cautious with anything asking you to update information or sign in quickly. Legitimate organizations won't pressure you.

2. **Use your "Report Phish" tools.**
   If something feels off – even a little – report it. One report can prevent others from being targeted.

3. **Trust your instincts.**
   Cybersecurity isn't about being technical. It's about paying attention, asking questions and double-checking unexpected requests.

Cybercriminals count on distraction at the start of the year. But with a little awareness and a few easy habits, you can stay one step ahead. Here's to a new year filled with fresh starts, growth – and far fewer phishing emails (hopefully)!

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Web Administrators - RE Contact Support ❤️

Reporting Employer (RE) Web Administrators are responsible for maintaining all RE contacts in the RE Portal. This includes creating, activating, updating, and deactivating web accounts for the RE's users. This also includes resetting passwords for the users.

- Web Administrators cannot maintain their own profile. If a Web Administrator needs updates to their contact profile or have their password reset, they must email reporting@trs.texas.gov for support.

- If you are not the designated Web Administrator for your RE but need assistance with your RE Portal log in, please reach out directly to your RE's Web Administrator.

> **RE contact maintenance reminders for the Web Administrator:**
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> - To establish a new Web Administrator, the RE must complete a TRS 597A form. This form must be signed by the Head of Institution and emailed to reporting@trs.texas.gov.
>
> - Each RE is required to designate each of the following RE contact types with the RE Portal:
>   » Web Administrator, Head of Institution, Reporting Official, and Payroll Contact.
>
> - Additional guidance on RE contact maintenance is available in the Instructions for Web Administrators document on our website.

Reporting Employers Service Level Agreement

At TRS, we value the trust you place in us and remain committed to delivering the highest level of service. As part of that commitment, we want to remind you of our Service Level Agreement (SLA), which ensures timely, reliable and consistent support for your needs.

RE Coaches are expected to respond to all inquiries within the SLAs (as shown below), but some situations may take longer to resolve. Complex situations that require additional information from the REs or in depth research could take extra time to resolve and may lead to completion outside of the SLAs listed below. Please note that any requests for assistance (questions, overrides, etc.) received after 4:00 p.m. CT will be considered received the next business day.

Service	Expectation
Email	Within one business day; most responses should be within the same business day. If you receive an out-of-office message from your RE Coach, please be sure to forward the full original email to reporting@trs.texas.gov for support during your coach's absence.
Phone	Most phone call requests will be handled the same business day. This includes incoming calls, returning calls and voicemails. RE Coaches are expected to be available to accept incoming calls when not in training or responding to emails and chats. Most coaches take lunch between 12 and 1 p.m. Your coach should include their working hours in their email signature.
RE Portal Chat	Chat is available 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., and 1 – 4 p.m. each business day from the 11th through the end of the calendar month. There are some resources available in the Chat feature, even when Chat with an RE Coach is not available. You can access these through the Open Live Chat option in the RE Portal.
Overrides	Override requests should be completed within one-two business days once all required information is received. If a coach reaches out for additional clarification, please provide the information as quickly as possible.
Fund Transfer Requests	Within one business day.
597A Forms	Within one business day.
Password Reset for Web Administrators	Within one business day.
Unfreeze RE Portal Account	Within one business day.
TRS Internal Requests for other departments	Three to five business days. Includes participant account updates.
TRS Legal Review	Generally, two weeks. Includes standard superintendent contracts, settlement pay. Certain requests may take longer.

Videos: *Assigning an Authority Level*

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 Employers Video Library to understand TRS processes and reports for reporting employers.

Click Here to Rate This Issue of the *Update*

Pension Education Resources

Members can learn all about TRS pension benefits by watching our Pension Education Resources.
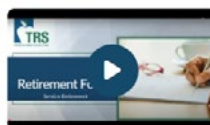
Retirement Forms Video

Early Career Members: Manage Your Pension Benefits with MyTRS

Mid-Career Members: Plan Your Future with MyTRS

Follow TRS on Social Media

Navigating Life Events With Ease

We all experience life and job changes that can be both exciting and challenging. These events often require updates to your account information and other essential actions. Keeping your information current ensures you receive timely support and services tailored to your needs. Visit our dedicated webpage for "Life and Job Changes" - it's a comprehensive guide to assist in navigating these events.

TRS members will find the "Ready to Retire" section of our Life and Job Changes webpage holds valuable answers to common questions like:

- How can I learn more about my benefits and ask questions?
- Will I receive social security?
- What do I need to consider when preparing a retirement application?

Explore the Life and Job Changes webpage 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.