Employer Advisory Group Meeting Agenda & Minutes

Date: 09/10/18
Start Time: 9:30 a.m.
End Time: 11:00 a.m.
Location: E562

Type of meeting: Periodic
Meeting called by: Sue Richards (Provaliant)
Minutes by: Sue Richards
Invitees: Melody Austin, Carol Casey, Mark Chi, ~~Jennifer Dujka, Jan Engler (opt), Chet Henry, Anandhi Mani, Art Mata~~, Jessica Palvino, Barbie Pearson, Michael Ressel, Frances Torres, Kevin Wakley

Christine Okanla (ACC)
Claudia Alba (Belton ISD)
- ✓ Rebecca Davis (Conroe ISD)

Betty Butler (Dallas County Comm College)
Wes Simmons (Dallas County Schools)
- ✓ Lori Johnson (Eanes ISD)
- ✓ Dawn Cummings (ESC 3)
- ✓ Tammy Cunningham (ESC 8)
- ✓ Emily Youngblood (Flour Bluff ISD)
- ✓ Jesse Cortinas, Jose Elizondo, Jr. (Judson ISD)

Mickey Smith (Malakoff ISD)
Cathy Felts (Mason ISD)
- ✓ Nancy Wiggins (Maypearl ISD)

Bonnie Barnhill (Midland Academy Charter)
Wesley Scott, David Rastellini, Lori Ganci (Northside ISD)
- ✓ Tonya Davis (Round Rock ISD)

Jenny Hale, (Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD)
Karina Garza (South Texas College)
- ✓ Christine Porter (Spring Branch ISD)

Becky Bunte (TASBO)
- ✓ Diana Salami (Texas State)

Aaron LeMay, Mary Davis (Univ of No Texas)
- ✓ Greta Graham (Uplift Education)
- ✓ Pamela McDonald, Jeannie Farahnak (UT Austin)
- ✓ Kim Ray (UTMB)
- ✓ Betty Su Williams (UT Health Science Center at Houston)

Conference Bridge: 877-746-4263
Participant Code: 2219128
Host Code: 2265442

Purpose of Meeting: Respond to questions, address concerns, and share information with members of the EAG. Members of this group represent REs from all over the State and all types of entities. They serve as the collective "voice" of all REs.

Expected Outcome: Questions and concerns expressed by members of the EAG will be addressed. EAG members are expected to share information with other entities in their region and bring questions and concerns from those entities to this group.

AGENDA

- Introductions and roll call
- Questions / topics for discussion

1. Certification of substitutes – TRS6.

   Prior to TEAM reporting, we were not required to submit a TRS6 for employees that have worked solely as a substitute for our district. With TEAM reporting, we currently have three substitute requests that we cannot process because the system will not accept the certification. We have been instructed to term them in our system (they are not termed) or create an ED40 for months that they did not work, but were employed only as a substitute. Since our software is not designed to do either of the recommendations, we wondered if there has been any discussion about this topic. A suggestion might be to allow the TRS6 to process with the No-Substitute Position Only selection and not require the non-substitute certification details. Only TRS will know when the non-substitute position ended and the final report month for the contribution. We do not have that information. Also, a there's a spelling error inn the error message that appears. (Becky Davis)
   Changes were made over the past few months and certifications should be saving correctly at this point (corrected over the summer). Spelling error in message will be corrected. Other than the spelling error, are issues still seen? If so, additional information is needed.

   Becky explained that her software creates an ED40 for months when a substitute works. If they didn't work in the month associated with the certification, they weren't able to create it.

   Mark will meet with TRS technical team about situations where substitute is noted as working in months preceding the certification month but not working in that month. ***[ACTION ITEM]***

2. Error 415 and Error 636. Eligible TRS Gross Compensation and member contributions must be reported if the employee was paid TRS-eligible compensation during the report period. If you feel the reported information related to this error is correct, please contact TRS.

   We receive this error for employees that do not have compensation and have days/hours. This occurs for 1) **new hires** that have hours/days and have not yet received compensation (paid the following month) and 2) **unpaid leave** when someone is out (workers' comp, FMLA no leave available, etc.). In this case, the days may be reported one month and corrected the next month with a RP25 for docked hours/days. There is a timing issue in both of these situations. Will both of these situations continue to require an override? (Becky Davis)
   Neither error should occur if no days are reported. Specific examples will be needed to do further research. Yes, an override will be required.

3. We need a way, a easy way, to look up what was original submitted on employees. Like original employment date, contract begin and end dates. (Micky Smith)
   This enhancement is being considered for a future release. Next step is to have requirement gathering sessions so software developers will know what's needed. Some things being considered – is there a way to look at what was originally reported (e.g., Employment dates, contract begin/end dates, position code…). Payroll details and whether service credit was earned may also be helpful. Displaying information about concurrent employment is also being considered.

Mark asked what else might be helpful:

- *Jesse said it'll help to see TRS eligibility (Y/N) and Medicare info. Information about the time worked by retirees would also be helpful.*
- *Pam suggested including date when New Member Contribution period ends and the type of Entity someone retired from (e.g., ISD, state agency).*
- *Becky said it would be great to see a history of ED40s and ED45s for a participant*

4. Currently only someone with signatory authority is able to view/submit a Termination Certification. I would like to request the ability for Staff Contacts to certify the terminations. Staff Contacts are able to create an ED90 and submit with no signature intervention, which essentially does the same thing as a termination certification. This was discussed in the April meeting and TRS advised they would discuss internally and decide. Has there been any more thought to this? (Pam McDonald)
Yes, it's being considered. A new authority level may be needed that will give the ability to view/submit Termination Certification but not submit signatures.

5. Can something be done with Transfer In/Out that may help prevent imbalances? In the past, if I had a positive balance setting there then that figure showed up in the 'Transfer from' box but not in the 'Transfer To' and vice versa; if I had a negative balance in an account, it would show in the Transfer To but no balance showed up when I dropped down the same fund in the Transfer From box. This helped make sure you didn't transfer money into a fund that already had extra money setting there. (Cathy Felts)
There's a difference in the way that each column displays. "Transfer to" shows the total amount of unallocated cash receipts/payables for the fund type "Transfer From" displays Cash Receipt/Payable for the fund type Clarification is needed.

6. We would like for the penalties to be discussed given the continued issues with the reporting portal. (Betty Su for UT HSC San Antonio)
Addressed in August issue of the Update newsletter. Transitioning to assessing penalty fees on late reports beginning in September 2018. Two month grace period will be granted.

Penalty Interest is assessed if Texnet deposit or funds due per adjustments is late

7. We receive emails from TRS asking if an employee was enrolled or eligible for ORP back in the 1990's at a community college. How will we know if the position was ORP eligible, let alone if the employee did not notify us if they were ORP. TRS maintains the ORP documents from the various agencies and should not place the undue burden on their entities to have them contact former employers for something they should be responsible for maintaining. (Betty Su for MD Anderson)
More information is needed regarding the source of the emails. Mark said that typically, TRS reaches out to original employer where election was made, not the current employer. Perhaps there's a misunderstanding or there's a training issue that needs to be addressed.

8. At the last Advisory meeting, we were specifically told not to remove anyone from our files. Just this past week, we were told to remove our ORP participants who were in TRS and have moved to ORP because the issue is still not fixed. (Betty Su for UT HSC Houston)
What issue is being referenced? In the last EAG meeting we advised not to remove any TRS-eligible employees from files. There are still some issues related to ORP participants who may be an exception to that if there's data prior to election that needs to be reported.

9. It is recommended there be an estimated date, whether it is met or not, on all the items shown as 'TBD' in the pending items within the portal. (Betty Su for UT HSC Houston)
This has been tried in the past but due to the fluid nature of requests/enhancements, plans must

change at times. We don't want to set expectations that can't be met by unexpected business events. Updated workaround information will be available soon.

- Information sharing
  - Defects that were fixed and enhancements that were released on August 31st
    - *REs are now able to submit adjustments for employer contributions for participants whose account is closed*
    - *Position codes are now required on ER25*
    - *Prevented CJ contribution for ineligible employees*
    - *Reinitiated certifications will not retain previously reported data*
  - In the pipeline for future releases
    - *TRS-care effective dates will be available during processing for more accurate validation*
    - *Paragraph may be added to Member Statements for participants whose statement doesn't include a full year of contrubitions due to incomplete RE reports*
    - *General errors that have been seen when navigating to error/warning page will be addressed*
    - *Clean up of business rules and validations related to ORP to increase accuracy of reporting*
    - *New validation when a regular payroll record on a summer RP is tied to a position code for a timeframe earlier than May*
    - *Penalty feels will be charged for late reports (will include two month grace period for FY19)*

- RE Report Status

Report Month	***# Completed RP Reports***	***% Complete***	***# Incomplete RP Reports***
Feb	*1320*	99.92%	1
Mar	*1318*	99.77%	3
Apr	*1311*	99.17%	11
May	*1294*	97.73%	30
Jun	*1267*	95.69%	57
Jul	*1184*	89.36%	141
Aug	*737*	55.58%	589

- Additional Discussion
  - *Jesse asked about bus drivers – hired in July as a trainee (not really an employee at that point – just working part of the time); if they get their CDL, they'll be hired as a bus driver.*

Jesse is wondering if they should be reported during the training period. Mark said to look at the expected timeframe – someone who passes continues to work and someone who doesn't pass won't come on board. Since employment is open ended when they start training, the requirement for eligibility is met

- *Tonya mentioned communication by State auditor going to the wrong person; they should be contacting the Reporting Official. TRS Internal Audit will follow-up with the State Auditor and make sure they know who to contact at the RE.* ***[ACTION ITEM]***

- *Jose mentioned annual statements and said that a lot of members aren't aware of the problems the REs are having with reporting. He's concerned that members will be contacting the Entities and hopes that TRS isn't putting full responsibility on the Entity. He's afraid that the message on statement will appear year after year and wonders if statements with message can be regenerated in 6 months or so. Jose said that they're already getting phone calls and the Superintendent is getting calls.*

  Barbie said that employer won't at all be blamed in the message. Message will just say that compensation may not include the full year due to incomplete reports. Going forward, compensation received after statements are printed will appear on the next statements that are printed.

  Barbie also mentioned FAQs that will be available to members about the member statements and asked EAG members to submit any questions with answers that they feel will be helpful. ***[ACTION ITEM]***

  Betty Su asked if theirs will show all compensation and Barbie said that compensation that's been posted when member statements are printed. Exact date when compensation will be captured isn't known at this time but REs will be notified when it is

  Mark said that a letter was sent to Head of Institution and Superintendent for all Entities who are working on reports through July reminding them to complete their reports by 5pm on 9/12/18.

- *Question was asked about weekend processing because some REs experienced slowness. Mark said there was a problem this past weekend that was resolved this morning. During the week, the last processing run starts at 7pm and system goes down at that point and is back online at 7 am the next day.*

ACTIONS, DECISIONS, ISSUES from the Meeting

Action, Decision, Issue	Description	Assignee	Targeted Completion Date
ACTION ITEM	*Address situations where substitute is noted as working in months preceding the certification month but not working in that month.*	*Mark*	*9/28/18*
ACTION ITEM	*Send suggested questions and answers for FAQs that will be available to members who have questions about their member statements*	*EAG members*	*10/12/18*
ACTION ITEM	*Contact State Auditor and make sure they know who to contact when information is needed from an RE*	*Carol Casey*	*9/14/18*