

# TEACHER RETIREMENT SYSTEM of TEXAS

# UPDATE

## PROGRESS OF TRS REPORTS

TRS truly appreciates the time and effort all the reporting entities (REs) have put into submitting and completing monthly reports in the RE Portal. As the school year/fiscal year winds down, we want to remind you that there is still much that needs to be done to be ready for the end of the 2018 fiscal year.

TRS programmers and business staff continue to prioritize and correct defects in the RE Portal, releasing updates and enhancements on a monthly basis. Our goal is to have the system effectively process your reports in the way the system was originally designed to do so, and every effort is being made to reach that milestone.

As an RE, we ask that you continue to work on ensuring all your reports are submitted and up to date before the fiscal year ends. Many of you have made tremendous progress over the last few months. That has made a huge, positive impact to our members. Please ensure that momentum is not lost as we get into the home stretch!

For those of you who are up to date on your report submissions, we'd like to ask you to do a bit of housekeeping so that we move into the new fiscal year with a fresh start. Please search your Employee Demographic (ED) reports from September through the current month and delete any ED reports that currently reflect "Loaded" status. Also, if there are any ED reports that are "Incomplete," please delete all suspended records from those reports and resubmit so the report can reach "Complete" status. Similarly, if there is a "Rejected" ED file for a past month, please delete that report.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your reporting coach.

## SPRING TRAINING SUMMARY AND OUTCOMES

From late January to early May, TRS coaches, consultants, management, and IT representatives visited all twenty regional education service centers (ESCs) throughout the state and hosted training, feedback, and one-on-one sessions for RE personnel.

As for attendance, 885 people from 586 REs attended the Introduction to TRS Reporting sessions and 880 people from 588 REs attended the RE Portal Touchpoint sessions. This represented about 45 percent of over 1300 REs in the state.

Additionally, over 250 REs took advantage of the opportunity to meet with a reporting coach one on one. However, there were over 60 REs who did not attend a one-on-one session for which they had signed up.

As part of the RE Portal Touchpoint meetings, attendees were asked to provide suggestions for future enhancements to the RE Portal itself. We received many helpful suggestions. At this time, TRS is reviewing, categorizing, and prioritizing these suggestions. Fortunately, some of the suggestions were related to items TRS has already been planning, such as adding the actual retirement date back into the View Employee Information screen.

Other suggestions will take more planning. For example, in every meeting there were requests to provide more information about what had previously been reported for employees. We are currently examining options for providing the information REs need to complete their reports, while still being conscious of members' information security and confidentiality.

As always, our goal is to provide you the tools and service needed for you to submit and complete your TRS reports in a timely manner. We will continue to explore all the suggestions to ensure we are meeting that goal.

## REPORTING ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE IN AUSTIN

TRS would like to offer the opportunity for any RE who is working on October through January reports to come to Austin to get individualized assistance from your reporting coach. Please contact your reporting coach to schedule a day and time.

## STUDENT EMPLOYEES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

When the RE Portal went live, TRS postponed the requirement for higher education REs to report employees who were student workers under Texas Government code 822.002(b):

Sec. 822.002. EXCEPTIONS TO MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT.

(b) An employee of a public institution of higher education who is required to be enrolled as a student in the institution as a condition of employment is not permitted to be a member of the retirement system based on that student employment, and compensation paid to the employee for work performed as a student employee is not compensation subject to report and deduction for member contributions or to credit in benefit computations under Section [822.201](#).

The postponement was to be in effect for the 2017-18 school year only. However, TRS has since made a determination that higher education REs will not be required to include these student employees in their TRS reporting in future years either.

Please keep in mind that this ONLY applies to employees in positions where being enrolled as a student at that college or university is a requirement of the position held. It does not apply to positions filled by students where being enrolled is not a condition of employment.

## 2018-19 TRS-ACTIVECARE ANNUAL ENROLLMENT IS UNDER WAY

Annual Enrollment for TRS-ActiveCare participants began on July 1, 2018 and ends on Aug. 24, 2018. This is participants' annual opportunity to make changes to health benefits without experiencing a special enrollment event. Participants should be sure to take the time to consider all the options.

Encourage your employees to check out ALEX, an enrollment video, guide, and plan highlights on the [TRS-ActiveCare page](#).