

Public Employees' Retirement System
of Mississippi
Mailing & Shipping Address:
429 Mississippi Street
Jackson, Mississippi 39201-1005
(601) 359-3589 or 1-800-444-PERS (7377)
Employer Hotline: (601) 359-2090
Web Address: www.pers.state.ms.us

PERS Quarterly Employer Update

Issue Date January 6, 2006

Distribute to all Administrative, Payroll, and Human Resource Personnel

Military Service Credit

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Assisting a Retiring Employee	2
Upcoming State Holidays	2
RET 6.06 Update	3
New Agency Agreements	3
Board Election News	4
PERS Employer Hotline	4

PERS law recognizes the federal requirement relating to the reemployment of employees whose employment is interrupted by qualified military service. Part of the federal law that provides job protection for employees who leave employment for military service relates to their pension benefit. If an employee qualifies for job protection and actually returns to employment with the same Employer, the employee must be given an opportunity to make up pension contributions that would have been made if the absence from the job due to military service had not taken place.

Any interested party should refer to PERS Regulation 49, Conditions for Existing Military Service at NO Cost and Qualified Military Service Due to Interruption of Employment Available Upon Payment of Required Employer and Employee Contributions. If an employee may qualify to make up pension contributions, the employer must certify that the individual is, in fact, qualified to do so by completing PERS Form 25D, *Determination of Entitlement to Purchase Pension Service Credit under the Veterans' Reemployment Rights Laws*. If the employer certifies that the employee is entitled to secure pension contributions for the period of absence due to military service credit, the employer must then be prepared to make the requisite employer contributions. In order to determine the required employer and employee contributions, the employer must also complete PERS Form 25M, *Statement of Qualified*

Military Service. Copies of the member's military Form DD214 or discharge papers must also be submitted for employees returning from military service, along with a copy of the employee's Social Security Card. Form 25A, *Acknowledgement of Right to Purchase Service Credit under the Veterans' Reemployment Rights Laws* serves to protect the employer from future liability. This form should be used when an employee returns to employment after a period of absence due to military service if that employee is entitled to job protection. Where such individual has missed some period of service credit in one of the retirement systems administered by PERS, we request that the employer complete Form 25A so that the employee acknowledges that he or she has been provided with information on his or her right to establish any missed pension credit and the time frame within which such individual must assert that right. Upon the expiration of the time period as noted on Form 25A, the individual will not be allowed to purchase such credit, and thus the employer will no longer be liable for making required employer contributions. Thus, for each employer's protection, it is extremely important that the employer and the returning employee have a clear understanding of the liabilities associated with this issue. Employers should submit a copy of this form to PERS for our files. At such time as the individual desires to make up any required employee contributions, Form 25D and Form 25M must be completed and submitted to PERS.

WHEN ASSISTING A RETIRING EMPLOYEE...

PERS members who decide to retire should make application with PERS as early as possible. It is *not* required that the member be within three months of retirement and is actually preferred that the member already has his retirement paperwork submitted in full or in part by three months prior to his effective date of retirement so that the processing may be completed timely. The following tips will help you help your employees complete the process.

- **COMPLETING THE PROJECTED UNREPORTING EARNINGS TABLE ON AN EMPLOYEE'S PERS FORM 9A SRVC, PRE-APPLICATION FOR SERVICE RETIREMENT BENEFITS**

Even though payroll may have already run for the previous month, list those wages on the Projected Unreported Earnings Table on the employee's PERS Form 9A SRVC, *Pre-Application for Service Retirement Benefits*, because the wages might not have posted yet to our system.

- **RETIRING MEMBERS WHO DECIDE NOT TO RETIRE YET**

If the retiring employee changes his mind about retiring after submitting retirement paperwork, advise him to contact PERS directly. We require that the member let us know in writing.

- **DESIGNATING DATES ON PERS FORM 9A SRVC**

Use appropriate dates on PERS Form 9A. An employee's "date of termination" is his last date of employment, the last day for which he will receive payment from your agency for actual work. His "date of retirement" will be the first day of a month later than his date of termination, often the first day of the month following his date of termination or the first day of the month following his reaching retirement eligibility but never earlier than the submission of his original PERS Form 9A. The date of retirement will not be earlier than or the same as the date of termination. A *revised 9A* must be submitted for any changes that occur after the original form is submitted.

- **REQUESTING AN ESTIMATE OF BENEFITS FOR AN EMPLOYEE WHO IS NOT YET READY TO RETIRE**

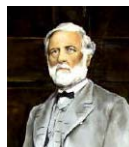
We can prepare an Estimate of Benefits for any member who would like the information, **but a *Pre-Application for Service Retirement Benefits* should not be submitted.** To request an estimate, simply provide the employee's name, Social Security Number, date of retirement on which the estimate should be based, and any other information that might affect the estimate (e.g., accumulated unused leave amount or expected lump sum leave payment amount). The Estimate will be mailed to the member's home address as listed in our records.

For the latest version of PERS Form 9A SRVC, refer to our website's Forms Library. As of today, the latest version is dated 04/28/05.

UPCOMING STATE HOLIDAYS:



**BIRTHDAY OF
MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
& ROBERT E. LEE —
MONDAY, JANUARY 16, 2006**



**GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY —
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2006**



- **OFFERING OTHER ASSISTANCE**

Direct employees to the PERS website (www.pers.state.ms.us). Our Benefit Estimate Calculator and Refund Payback Calculator enable members to calculate estimates which show several options and may provide valuable information instrumental in their retirement planning. The latest edition of the PERS Member Handbook is also available online (from the homepage, point to **Member Services** and click on **Member Handbook**).

Updated PERS Reporting System — RET

RET 6 has been updated to version 6.06. PERS is requesting that all reporting agencies update to the current version. To determine your version, from the RET menu screen, click on Help, About RET. Note your version number. If your version is not 6.06, you should update RET. The updates are the result of requests from the reporting agencies and PERS Wages and Contributions staff. Solutions to issues such as correcting corrupt indices, the saving of the agency's file to A: drive by default, and keying allowed in the combo boxes are contained in the updated executable. See the Guide to RET 6 located on the PERS website for a complete listing of the updates including the step-by-step instructions to fully utilize the updates.

To receive this update, you will need to download the RET.exe file. In your Internet Browser's address area type www.pers.state.ms.us. Click on **Employer Services**, then on **RET program**, then on **Download RET Version 6 software (Login Required)**. You will be required to login with a username and password. The username and password are case sensitive.


User Name: **retuser**
Password: **Youmaypa55**

Click OK. At the bottom of the page you should see **Other File Downloads**. Click on **RET Executable**. Click Save. From the **SAVE AS** dialog box, change the "Save in" to C:\program files\RET6 (Use the drop down arrow on the right and select your local disk (C:), then double-click on the program files folder, then double-click on the RET 6 folder). Click Save. A message will be displayed that the RET.exe exists, and you will be asked if you want to replace it. Click on **YES**. If you do not receive this message, you may need to start over or ask someone to help you. You will need to replace the older version.

If you encounter any problems or need assistance, please contact PERS via email at the RET website indicated above or call the Wage and Contribution Reporting Department at 1-800-444-7377 or the PERS Employer Hotline at 601-359-2090, option 1.

New Agency Agreements for PERS Coverage

- **Town of Chunky** (Agency #5006-000) — Retirement & Social Security Coverage, effective 01/01/2006 approved by PERS Board of Trustees 12/16/2005.
- **Town of Lyon** (Agency #0707-000) — Retirement Coverage for Elected Officials, effective 07/01/2005, approved by PERS Board of Trustees 12/16/2005.



Refer to the
PERS website
(www.pers.state.ms.us)
for the most up-to-date
versions of selected
PERS Regulations
and the most recent
versions of
PERS forms.



Election News

Currently, PERS has two vacancies on the Board of Trustees, one representing State Employees and the other representing Municipal Employees. Run-off election schedules were revised following Hurricane Katrina and are as follows:

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

The elected State Employee Representative to the Board of Trustees will fill the vacancy created by the March 31, 2005, retirement of Jan Larsen, serving out that unexpired six-year term which ends June 30, 2008. The two candidates certified by the PERS Board of Trustees to be placed on the ballot for the runoff will be the only eligible candidates. They are Ray Balentine and John L. Mulholland.

January 9, 2006	Mail Ballots to Agencies
February 8, 2006	Deadline for Receipt of Ballots (5:00 PM)
February 10, 2006	Count Ballots
February 28, 2006	Board Approves Election at Regularly Scheduled Meeting

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATIVE

The elected Municipal Employee Representative to the Board of Trustees will fill the vacancy created by the April 30, 2005, retirement of Doug Hague, serving out that unexpired six-year term which ends December 31, 2008. The two candidates certified by the PERS Board of Trustees to be placed on the ballot for the runoff will be the only eligible candidates. They are Tom Lariviere and Eddie R. Myers

January 10, 2006	Mail Ballots to Agencies
February 13, 2006	Deadline for Receipt of Ballots (5:00 PM)
February 15, 2006	Count Ballots
February 28, 2006	Board Approves Election at Regularly Scheduled Meeting

For further information on any of the information in this newsletter or on other PERS topics, call us at 1-800-444-7377 or visit our website at www.pers.state.ms.us

Employer Hotline

PERS has a telephone number for use exclusively by PERS Employers. The number is **601-359-2090**. A caller may access various departments:

- For Wage & Contribution Reporting assistance, press 1.
- For Refund assistance, press 2.
- For Member Records assistance, press 3.
- For Claims and Benefits assistance, press 4.
- For Pre-Retirement Education assistance, press 5.
- For Retiree Payroll assistance, press 6.
- For Disability and Retiree Insurance assistance, press 7.
- Callers who are unsure what type of assistance they need and/or wish to speak directly to a PERS Representative may press 9.