NEWS TO USE

PERSI

A newsletter for PERSI employers

EMPLOYER ONLINE GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE

It's hot, it's exciting, it's totally new and PERSI is proud to offer it to employers. It's the Employer Online Guide…and it's now available for PERSI employers to use. Introduced at this year's Employer Meetings, the Online Guide is a tool designed to assist employers in performing aspects of their jobs relating to PERSI. As part of the Employer Portal (another tool introduced at the Employer Meetings), the Online Guide is one of PERSI's new web-based resources specifically for employers.

Easy to Use Format

Organized in chapters, the Online Guide covers a wide-range of information about everything from Account Withdrawals and the Choice Plan to Military Service and Workers' Compensation. PERSI policies and state regulations are included in the guide along with topics based on questions and input received from employers over the years. This tool should make it easier for employers to find the PERSI information needed to perform their jobs. Employers are encouraged to peruse the guide to become familiar with the layout and content.
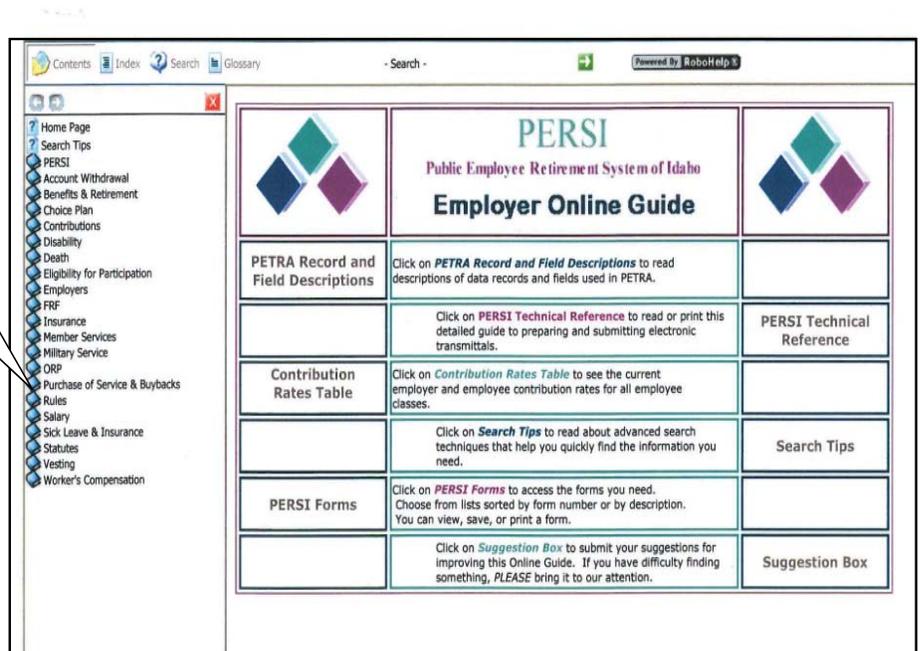
Useful Features

Technical information on how to submit a transmittal and links to necessary forms are among the useful features of the Online Guide. As an added bonus, employers can submit suggestions for additional topics and share ideas for improving the guide as it grows. An index makes it easy to find topics of interest, and the glossary provides definitions of commonly used PERSI and retirement terminology.

Designed and developed by PERSI Technical Writer Larry Sweat in collaboration with Employer Service Center Manager Debbie Buck, the Online Guide is easy to navigate and written in easy-to-understand language. Employers needing assistance with the guide can call the Employer Service Center at 1-866-887-9525 or 208-287-9525.

Employers who attend an Employer Meeting will have the opportunity to learn about the guide in more detail…and about the Employer Portal where the guide is located.

EMPLOYER MEETINGS KICK OFF

The much-anticipated Employer Meetings kicked off in Boise on April 10th. Finding the right balance between educating new employers while maintaining the interest of long-time employers is always a challenge when setting the Employer Meeting agenda. Based on feedback, PERSI has succeeded in putting together just the right mix of information.

As in past years, the meetings provide an overview of the Base and Choice Plans, with an emphasis on PERSI rules and reporting responsibilities. Unused sick leave and forms round out the morning discussion. The afternoon session begins with a review of new legislation. Of particular interest this year are SB 1003 - Employers That Fail to Report Qualified Employment of a Retiree, and HB 0202 - Reemployment of Retired Teachers and Administrators. The legislative review is followed by a brief refresher on electronic and PETRA transmittal reporting. The first part of the afternoon concludes with discussion about electronic fund transfer payments, ACH requirements, and using iTelecash.

The final hour of the Employer Meetings is dedicated to the PERSI Web site (www.persi.idaho.gov), the Employer Portal, and the Online Guide. Although PERSI provides a general overview of the Web site, the Employer Information pages are the primary focus. From the drop-down menu under the Employer Information tab on the PERSI home page, attendees are shown how to log in to the Employer Portal. From the main page, employers can link to an employee section that lists the active employees on record for the employer, or they can choose to link to the *News to Use* newsletters, go to a message board where employers can leave messages for or receive messages from PERSI, visit the PETRA log in page, return to the PERSI Web site, utilize the Online Guide, or use the Social Security look up tool. (The Social Security look up tool is an easy way for employers to check the status of an employee or prospective employee to find out if he/she is retired from PERSI. Having the means to check with PERSI on someone's retirement status eliminates confusion and ensures that employers receive accurate information in a timely manner.)

All attendees receive a 155-page workbook, which can be used later as a reference guide. Following the meetings, employers are asked to complete a meeting evaluation form to help PERSI gauge the usefulness of the materials and determine if employer needs were met. Thus far, the reviews have been overwhelmingly positive. Following the meetings, PERSI will mail each attendee a certificate stating they successfully completed the Employer Training Program.

Thanks to Employer Service Center Manager Debbie Buck and her team of fiscal technicians (Alan Roberts, Barbara Weirick, Pam Fowers, Alice Brown, and Linda Whitney), and with assistance from PERSI Answer Center Manager Judy Aitken and her staff (Kimberlee Hall, Kari Caven, Lisa Mabe, Catherine Atchison, Lisa Conn, Melody Hodges, Kathi Kaufman, Jami Davis, and Roger Bartlett), PERSI is chalking up another great round of informative meetings. If you have not yet registered for a meeting, you can contact Jami Davis at (208) 287-9250 to find out if any openings exist in your area. If you already attended a meeting, we appreciate your support and hope you found the information helpful.

Notes

Choice Plan Manager Diane Kaiser attended the Callan Investment Institute's Fifth Annual Defined Contribution Conference in San Francisco. The keynote speaker at this educational forum was Charlie Cook, a political analyst for the National Journal Group and publisher of *The Cook Political Report*. Communication and education, challenges facing defined contribution plans, alternative investments, and the Pension Protection Act of 2006 were among the topics discussed.

At the April Board meeting, Chief Investment Officer Bob Maynard reported that as of April 25, 2007, the fiscal year to date return on PERSI investments was 17.3% and the current value of the fund was $11,230,972,936.

PERSI staff continues to be recognized by the local Ronald McDonald House (RMH) for contributing pull tabs and old cell phones for recycling, which generates funding for RMH.