

## USING COMPLIANT SOFTWARE FOR TRANSMITTALS

When employers use software that's compliant with the transmittal specifications outlined in the Employer Transmittal Reporting Manual (on the PERSI Web site at [www.persi.idaho.gov](http://www.persi.idaho.gov)), data usually transmits without a hitch. Unfortunately some employers are using non-compliant software, and that can create problems.

Generally, larger employers utilize compliant software. Many use software vendors for payroll and other purposes, so that same software package is used to transmit payroll data to PERSI...and that tends to work just fine. Smaller employers don't necessarily have access to the same resources as the larger employers, so transmittal difficulties can arise. PERSI has tried to help employers by offering PETRA as a solution.

### PETRA

PETRA is an Internet reporting application available via the PERSI Web site. This is an easy way for smaller employers (usually fewer than 20 employees) to transmit payroll information to PERSI. Only employer-authorized personnel can access PETRA using an email address and password. PETRA requires manual data entry and transmittal over PERSI's secure internet Web site. PETRA has six steps:

- Log in
- Edit sick leave or comments; view summary information
- Add, edit or delete detail records
- Recalculate summary from details
- Review summary information
- Print report and submit to PERSI

As an added feature, if the person preparing the report is unable to finish during a single session, partially completed transmittals are retained so they can be completed later. All in all, this is an easy and straightforward way to transmit payroll information to PERSI.

### ESC Guidance

If PETRA doesn't fit your needs, you may want to talk to someone in the Employer Service Center (ESC) about your options. It should be noted, however, ESC guidance would be limited because PERSI cannot recommend one particular software vendor over another. And since a multitude of programs are available and unique issues are associated with every employer, PERSI cannot determine the best software solution for each employer's specific needs.

### Transmittal Requirements

The Employer Transmittal Reporting Manual is available in the Employer Section of the PERSI Web site. Transmittal requirements are explained starting on page 4. The 2007 Employer Training Manual also provides details on transmittal reporting starting on page 69.

Regardless of the transmittal method used, it is important to encrypt the data before transmitting it to PERSI.

For assistance, call ESC toll-free at 1-866-887-9525 from outside the Treasure Valley or at 287-9525 from Boise and the surrounding areas.



### PETRA Log In

You will need an E-Mail Address and Password to access this site. If you have already registered you may sign in below. If you have not registered, click [Register Now](#).

If you wish to access your Choice Plan 401(k) account directly with the PIN given to you by ACS HR Solutions, [click here](#).

E-mail Address:

Password:  
(This is not the PIN  
from ACS HR Solutions)

**Submit**

[Forgot Password?](#)  
[Help Page](#)

[Not Registered?](#)  
[Register Now](#)

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# UNDERSTANDING WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Workers' compensation can be confusing...and that confusion is sometimes reflected on employer transmittals. This article is meant to help employers understand how workers' compensation can impact PERSI contributions and a member's service credit.

## What is Workers' Comp?

Workers' compensation insurance pays benefits to employees who suffer a workplace injury or work-related illness, and it also protects employers by limiting exposure to litigation arising from such incidents. When an employee is receiving workers' compensation, the employer may pay the difference between the workers' comp benefit and the employee's regular wage. Typically, this breaks down to 67% paid by workers' comp and 33% paid by the employer.

## PERSI Contributions and Earning Service Credit

Employer and employee contributions may be due on salary paid to an employee who is off work because of an approved workers' compensation claim. A month of service credit is earned for each month the employee (member) receives salary in addition to workers' comp benefits, *provided* the combination of salary and worker's compensation equals 100% of the employee's regular salary. Simply put, if workers' comp pays more than 50% of the employee's regular salary and the employer pays the difference to bring the employee's salary to 100%, the employee (member) is eligible for service credit and the employer must pay contributions on the wage portion they paid.

## Workers' Comp Status on Transmittals

When the employer reports the reduced wage on a transmittal, the "Workers' Comp" field should be

checked or set to "Y" (YES) to indicate the member *is* receiving a workers' comp benefit in addition to a reduced wage from the employer. Marking this field signals the PERSI system to exclude the pay cycle when calculating the member's average monthly salary (AMS). If PERSI didn't exclude the pay cycle, the member's AMS would be lowered which could potentially reduce his/her retirement benefit.

Some employers check the "Workers' Comp" field to indicate an employee's eligibility for workers' compensation; however, to PERSI it means the member *is already on* workers' comp and getting paid for it. If an employer is collecting the workers' compensation benefit from the employee and then paying him/her 100% of his/her regular wage, the pay should not be reported using the "Workers' Comp" field because the reported wages are not reduced (and therefore, the AMS will not be affected). If the employee is receiving workers' compensation but no wages, an eligibility end date and reason code (LWOP) should be entered on the transmittal.

## Still Confused?

For more on workers' compensation, check out the Online Guide in the Employer Portal available via the PERSI Web site at [www.persi.idaho.gov](http://www.persi.idaho.gov).

PERSI's goal is to ensure members receive the benefits to which they are entitled. Employers can help PERSI and their employees by using the "Workers' Comp" field correctly. As always, ESC is available to answer questions. Call 287-9525 from the Boise area or toll-free 1-866-887-9525 from outside the Treasure Valley to speak to a Fiscal Technician.

## Notes

[Kathleen McRoberts](#) joined PERSI as the second legal counsel.

Former employee [Kris Colt](#) returned to PERSI as an IT Information System Tech.

[Denice Desilet](#) accepted the position of Technical Records Specialist in the PERSI Processing Center. She was formerly a Customer Service Representative in the PERSI Answer Center.

[Linda Parker](#) joins the Pocatello office as a Customer Service Representative. She came to PERSI from Qwest Communications where she was a Sales and Service Consultant for 14 years.