

We understand that the employer reporting process can seem overwhelming, especially for those who have never reported before. This FAQ is intended to provide basic information and resources to those who are new to the process.

### DRS Glossary Terms

#### File

A collection of data stored in one unit, identified by a file name. Employers create and submit files to NHRS each month.

#### Batch

For NHRS purposes, this is a file that contains wage and contribution data for active members.

#### Record

Wage and contribution information associated with an individual member that is submitted in the monthly file.

#### Plan

Members are reported under the plan in which they are enrolled i.e. Employee, Police Officer, Firefighter (State or Political Subdivision), or Teacher (Political Subdivision).

#### XML Schema

The structure used to define elements in an XML document. Think of this as the file format.

#### Validation Tool

A software application available on NHRS.org that allows employers to test whether their employer reporting XML file is properly formatted (valid) before submitting it.

#### File Processing

The process of validating the individual member records contained in a file uploaded to the DRS.

#### Edit

The process a file goes through after completing the validation process and successful file processing. The edit process identifies exceptions (errors) within the file that must be corrected.

#### Exception

An error in a file being submitted to NHRS. Exceptions must be corrected in order for the batch to post.

#### Notification

An automated email message sent to the address associated with an employer's account. Employers receive notifications during the file processing and edit stages if issues with the active member file are identified. Employers also receive a confirmation email when the file is accepted and posted to the DRS.

#### Report

The DRS can generate various reports that provide information designed to help employers identify errors or validate information contained in the batches submitted to NHRS.

#### Help! I was just hired and I don't know where to start.

The first thing to do is gain access to the Data Reporting System (DRS). This will allow you to report to the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS, the retirement system). Each user must have his or her own unique login; you are not allowed to use the same login information as someone else in your office.

For first-time use of the DRS, please contact DRS Support at (603) 410-3508 to request a login username and password, or fill out and submit a DRS User Access Form:

<https://www.nhrs.org/docs/default-source/employer-education/nhrs-drs-access-form.pdf>

#### What is the Data Reporting System (DRS)?

The Data Reporting System is a secure online portal for NHRS-participating employers. It is through this portal that employers are able to submit their monthly reporting to the retirement system. The DRS is accessible from [nhrs.org](http://nhrs.org).

#### How do I log into the DRS?

Click on the DRS Quicklink button at the top of the NHRS homepage. If you have already been given a login username and password from NHRS, click "Authorized" and enter your login information.

#### What are the different DRS modules? What are they for?

The DRS consists of three separate reporting modules. Note that you will only see modules that you have access to.

- The [Employer Reporting](#) module is used to report monthly wage and contribution data for active, full-time members.
- The [Retiree Reporting](#) module is used to report hours worked and compensation paid to NHRS retirees who are on the payroll.
- Employers and third-party administrators (TPAs) use the [Insurance Reporting](#) module to update insurance premiums and to submit insurance authorizations for their retirees.
  - **Note:** Most employers will not see this option, as many insurance providers manage this process. If you are responsible for completing insurance authorizations and have questions, please visit our Employer Resources page for step-by-step instructions, or call (603) 410-3675 to speak with an NHRS Medical Benefits Representative.

#### What does it mean to "report" to NHRS?

NHRS requires employers to submit a reporting file each month. This file contains member records and information. Reporting also includes the monthly payment of employer and member contributions.

#### Why do I need to report to NHRS?

Under the law, employers are required to report member data on a monthly basis. NHRS uses reported data to calculate and finalize retirement benefits, process member refunds, prepare annual member statements, and provide members with personal data through *My Account*.

#### When is the reporting due?

Monthly member and employer contribution payments and corresponding data files for all pay dates from the prior month are due – free of errors – no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the following month (i.e. reporting for the month of August is due no later than September 15). Please note that you may create your batch and submit it as early as 25 days before the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

#### How do I submit reporting files?

Employers may submit member payroll reporting files to the DRS via web entry or by uploading XML, comma-delimited, or fixed-length files. For employers who are not using web entry and are instead submitting a file, XML is the preferred method among the three choices. To create the file, you must extract the information from your

payroll system. **Note:** NHRS makes available to participating employers an XML Schema Verification Application (“Validation Tool”). This tool will identify any formatting issues within an XML file before it is uploaded to the DRS. Click here to learn more: <https://www.nhrs.org/about-nhrs/news/article/2017/04/21/nhrs-employer-notification-validating-xml-files>

### **I received an email stating that my file has “exceptions.” What does that mean?**

An exception is an error in the file that was submitted to NHRS. There are many reasons why a file may contain exceptions (i.e. a member record may be missing information, a member’s salary may have significantly changed from what was previously reported, multiple files exist for the same pay period, etc.) Exceptions must be corrected in order for the batch to “post,” i.e. be accepted by the DRS.

### **How do I know if I have any exceptions?**

As mentioned in the question above, employers will receive email notification if their file contains exceptions.

### **What happens if I don’t correct the exceptions in time?**

Exceptions must be corrected in order for the file to post. If your exceptions are not cleared by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the file will not post, and you may be subject to a penalty.

### **Help! I don’t know how to clear my exceptions.**

NHRS has created instructions on how to clear the most common exceptions. A good place to start is our Employer Resources page. If you don’t see instructions for the exception you have, or you’re still having trouble, you can contact NHRS for assistance. Please call (603) 410-3532 or email [exceptions@nhrs.org](mailto:exceptions@nhrs.org). **Note:** Many exceptions can be cleared by the employer, but some must be cleared by NHRS.

### **How do I submit contribution payments?**

Employers must send their contributions to NHRS via payment voucher in the DRS. For step-by-step instructions on how to enter a payment voucher, see: <https://www.nhrs.org/docs/default-source/employer-education/how-to-enter-a-payment-voucher---updated-3-18.pdf?>

### **What happens if I miss the reporting deadline?**

Statutory penalties apply for late or incorrect reporting, and/or late contribution payments. NHRS will assess penalties for employer files that are not free of exceptions and posted by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. Contribution payments not received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month will be subject to an interest penalty. For more information, see: <https://www.nhrs.org/about-nhrs/news/article/2017/05/08/employer-alert-reporting-and-payment-penalties>

### **Why is there a penalty for late reporting and late payments?**

The integrity of the data NHRS receives from employers is crucial to its ability to effectively administer retirement benefits. Without timely and accurate payroll information and payment of contributions, the retirement system cannot correctly calculate or finalize pensions for recent retirees.

### **What if the 15<sup>th</sup> falls on a weekend or a holiday?**

Files must be posted and payments must be received no later than the first business day following a weekend or holiday.

### **Do I need to report retirees?**

Effective January 1, 2019, employers are required to report on an annual basis, no later than February 15, all hours worked and compensation paid to any NHRS retirees employed in the prior calendar year. The first employer report, for calendar year 2019, is due no later than February 15, 2020. There is a \$25 per day penalty for late or incorrect reporting of retiree data. **Note:** Employers, no later than February 15, 2019, also are required to provide the names and position titles of any retired members employed on the effective date of the law. This data will be used as the basis for administering a grandfathering provision that allows these retirees to work more hours per year for as long as they stay in the same position. Following the initial designation of grandfathered retirees in 2019, employers will then be required to annually verify that these retirees remain in the same position as of January 1 of each calendar year.

### **Are employers penalized if a retiree exceeds the part-time work threshold?**

No. Although employers must report retiree information to NHRS (including hours worked and compensation paid), the retiree is ultimately responsible for complying with the hourly statutory requirement.

For additional resources and step-by-step instructions on the DRS and the three separate reporting modules, visit our Employer Resources page: <https://www.nhrs.org/employers/employer-resources>



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