

# OPERATION GRANITE WAVE

NHRS Employer Data Reporting System Upgrade Project

## FAQ: Data Reporting System (DRS) upgrade

*Last updated: July 5, 2022*

NHRS is in the midst of a multi-year upgrade of its pension database product, known as PensionGold (PG). The upgrade from Version 2, which has been in operation since 2002, to Version 3 is expected to be completed in 2023.

The employer Data Reporting System (DRS) is a component of PensionGold, so this upgrade will impact reporting by our participating employers, although this won't occur until 2023. At this time, we are focused on the changes to monthly employer wage and contribution reporting for active members, which is the largest component of the DRS. Additional communication and instructions on the insurance authorization module and the retiree reporting module in the DRS will be provided at a later date.

NHRS has created this set of frequently asked questions (FAQ) to provide employers with general information about the employer reporting project. This FAQ will be updated as additional questions arise or circumstances warrant. As we get farther along, we expect to create additional FAQs on specific components of the project.

If you have any questions about the project that are not addressed below, please send them to [PGV3DRS@nhrs.org](mailto:PGV3DRS@nhrs.org).

### General

#### Why is the DRS changing?

The current version of the DRS, Version 2, has been in operation since 2002. Nearly 20 years is a long time to use a piece of software, especially with the advancements in technology over the years. In other words, it simply was time to upgrade to a more modern version of the Pension Gold software.

#### When do you expect the changes to happen?

Currently, Version 3 is expected to “go-live” in the fall of 2023. Though NHRS does not anticipate delays to the project, we will communicate any changes to the timeline if needed. The go-live will not be any earlier than the fall of 2023.

#### What are some of the key changes?

Some key changes include: files must be uploaded in XML format; a new file layout (schema) will be required; and pay periods will be defined for each employer based on pay frequency (weekly, biweekly, monthly) and pay date. For more details on key changes, visit the DRS

Upgrade Blog.

<https://www.nhrs.org/employers/employer-resources/drs-upgrade-project/drs-upgrade-blog>

### **Do employers have to do anything different yet?**

No. Please continue to use the DRS as usual.

### **What will you need from employers?**

Please be on the lookout for emails from NHRS regarding the project upgrade. As we go along, NHRS will send emails to employers if information is needed to aid in the project.

To help employers distinguish between upgrade-related communications and all other messaging from NHRS, we have created a project name and logo for this effort: Operation Granite Wave. Look for the Operation Granite Wave logo on all upgrade-related information from the retirement system.

### **When will the new file layout be available?**

The XML file schema is posted [here](https://www.nhrs.org/employers/employer-resources/drs-upgrade-project/xml-test-files). <https://www.nhrs.org/employers/employer-resources/drs-upgrade-project/xml-test-files>. At this point, the goal is to have a test file from each participating employer submitted to NHRS and validated by January 2023.

### **Will there be training for employers on the new interface?**

Yes, NHRS will provide employers with written training materials and live training prior to “cutover” and “go-live.”

### **What is the difference between “cutover” and “go-live”?**

There will be a two-month “cutover” period when NHRS Employers will be required to submit monthly wage and contribution information through both the current DRS in the current file format and the new DRS in the new file format to help us ensure the new system works as it should. “Go live” is when all employers begin exclusively using the new, version 3 DRS.

### **Will NHRS provide additional help after go-live while employers get used to the new interface?**

Yes! NHRS Employer Reporting team will be available to assist employers with any questions or problems they experience using the new system.

### **How do I keep up to date on the project?**

The best way to remain up-to-date on the DRS upgrade project is to visit our project updates page: <https://www.nhrs.org/employers/employer-resources/drs-upgrade-project>

## **File Layout Questions – New**

**On page two of the file layout document, it states that the fund ID is “1=NHRS,” but in the example XML file on page 15, it shows as “001.” Why is that?**

We have determined that Version 3 requires, at a minimum, a value of “1.” Values of “01” and “001” also work.

**On page two of the file layout document, under “Total Salary” it says Decimal (11,2), but when BMSI used the new Version 3 Schema, it showed as (9,2).**

It appears that the “Total Digits” parameter is a typo. The true precision of that field is 11,2 (i.e. 11 total digits with 2 after the decimal). The “minInclusive” and “maxInclusive” fields perform the actual limitation. We will update the schema to be 11 Total Digits, but this will not affect the field itself.

**If a set pay date (per an employer’s pay frequency) falls on a holiday and subsequently changes the date the check is paid, would the system automatically account for the holiday and not cause an error?**

No, Version 3 does not automatically update reporting schedules for holidays. Note: If the pay date was moved and reported, but not updated in Version 3, the batch would reject since the pay periods do not align. To avoid this, scheduled updates should be made on an employer basis. The employer and/or vendor must reach out to NHRS to adjust the pay schedule. We will provide a list of scheduled pay dates prior to ‘go-live’ to fix this prior to starting the new system.

**If an employer reported a regular pay, but then the member was fired and did not complete a full pay period, and they had to cut a check for that shortened week. Would the employer get an error message if they marked it as final pay?**

Yes. In this scenario, the member’s pay date is different from the pay period record in Version 3. The batch would reject since the pay period pay date would not match the expected pay date within Version 3. Employers are unable to change the pay date, so they should modify their report in these circumstances to automatically have the pay date for each member match the expected date in Version 3.

**Will anything be changing for the retiree import file layout specifications with PGV3?**

NHRS has not yet reached that deliverable in our upgrade project. Once we have determined that, we will be sure to pass on that information.

**Can you explain the difference between a teacher member’s enrollment date and their contract date? I am getting exceptions when I submit wage and contribution data to NHRS.**

The enrollment date for any teacher who occupies an NHRS-covered position is always the first day they begin working full-time. This can sometimes cause confusion for school district employers because a teacher’s NHRS enrollment date may not be the same as his/her contract commencement date.

For example, if an employer enters a teacher's contract commencement date of September 1st as the enrollment date, but the teacher actually started working and began to be paid as of August 25th, an exception will occur when the employer submits the wage and contribution information to the DRS. This is because the wages were paid before the enrollment date.

To resolve this, employers must record the enrollment date for teachers as the first day they actually worked for which they will receive pay, regardless of the effective date of the contract.

**When entering certain teacher contract-required fields, there are two additional checkboxes. What are they for?**

When entering contract-required fields such as "pay period begin date," "pay period end date," "contract salary," "pay frequency" (21 or 26), there will be two additional check boxes. One for "Job Share" and one for "Apply subsequent pay periods".

- **Job Share** = A checkbox to indicate the member is working under job share.
- **Apply Subsequent Pay Periods** = A checkbox to indicate the same contract information (including job share) should be applied to the pay periods within the batch that are AFTER the pay period selected. Otherwise, the contract information is just for that given pay period. The contract information is added for the subsequent pay periods when transmittal posting occurs and the member is posted.

**Will NHRS accept demographic-only batches in PGV3?**

No. In practice, NHRS would not expect to see new hires until the employer had salary and contribution information to report. New hires and terminations will be reported through the file with their field value listed in the file layout.

For example, if a member's salary is their "final pay" field value would be 1, or if they are a new hire the tag is required and the field value is 1.

The Employer may get exceptions to clear on these as well and there will be drop down selections for them to choose from.

To clear up the requirement tag conditions, they are as follows\*:

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|--|---|
| • Pay Period                           | Although optional, this should have information in the file |
| • Salary Component                     | Although optional, this should have information in the file |
| • Contributions                        | Although optional, this should have information in the file |
| • Contract Information (Teachers only) | Although optional, this should have information in the file |
| • Address                              | Optional UNLESS a new hire                                  |
| • Phone                                | Optional UNLESS a new hire                                  |
| • Email                                | Optional  |

\* Note: The tags marked “Although optional” were created for those that may be on a leave of absence. They are still active members but not currently contributing with no active wages or contributions.