

OPERATION GRANITE WAVE

NHRS Employer Data Reporting System Upgrade Project

FAQ: Data Reporting System (DRS) upgrade

Last updated: March 28, 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.

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 spring/summer 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 spring/summer 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. A more detailed list of changes will be released in early 2022.

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.

Have you sent out any recent emails?

Employers should have received an email in September with an attached “Employer Profile” containing information that NHRS currently has on file. We asked that employers confirm or update the information, if needed, and send it back to NHRS. If you have not received this email or have not yet responded to it, please call NHRS at (603) 410-3532 or email ERProfile@nhrs.org.

When will the new file layout be available?

NHRS is currently working on implementation and testing of the new file layout with a small group of NHRS Employers and several third-party payroll providers. At this point, the goal is to release the file layout in early 2022 and 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.

All new project information will be uploaded to this page. Please also be on the lookout for emails from NHRS, especially if they have the Project Granite Wave logo.