

EMPLOYER Notice

Ohio Public Employees Retirement System • 277 East Town Street • Columbus, Ohio 43215

Changes to certification process for OPERS disability applicants

Who should read this notice

Finance directors, payroll, human resource and benefits professionals of OPERS public employers

Situation overview

Employers are required to submit a *Certification of Employee's Final Payroll* (DRF-85) for employees who have been approved by the OPERS Board of Trustees for disability retirement. The OPERS Board of Trustees considers disability applications at their regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

Once the Board of Trustees has approved a disability benefit application, the public employer is required to certify the last date of the individual's public employment. A disability benefit cannot be paid until the public employer certifies the last day of earnings. Effective Nov. 26, 2012, OPERS will begin to notify electronic reporting employers of pending requests for certification of final payroll of a disability recipient by sending an outbound e-mail to ECS contacts with the online reporting role.

What employers need to do

Effective with the enactment of SB 343 on Jan. 7, 2013, a disability recipient must be off of the employer's payroll (the last day earnings are reported) by the end of the month following the OPERS Board of Trustees approval of the disability benefit application. Employees who remain on the employer's payroll (continue to earn wages) past this date will not have their disability benefit paid.

Employers should log in to ECS immediately upon receipt of the OPERS notification e-mail and complete the requested certification (DRF-85) so that an employee's disability benefit is not impacted. This may require the employer to confirm the employee's last date of compensation with the employee to ensure the last day of earnings is known and is prior to the end of the month following the Board of Trustees' decision to grant the disability benefit.

Communicate with your employees who have applied for an OPERS disability so they are prepared to cease earning wages no later than the end of the month following the OPERS Board approval of their application.

Why this is important

Due to implementation of S.B. 343, the length of time an employee can remain on the employer's payroll following the OPERS Board of Trustees' approval has been shortened. Employees not adhering to these guidelines shall not receive their disability benefit.

Note:

The electronic and paper Certification of Employee's Final Payroll (DRF-85) has been updated to remove "title" as a required field.



1-888-400-0965
www.opers.org

More information on back

Changes to the *Employer Manual*

No revisions to the *Employer Manual* have been made as a result of this *Employer Notice*.

Whom to contact for more information

After reviewing this *Employer Notice*, contact Employer Outreach with questions at 888-400-0965, or by e-mail at employeroutreach@opers.org.

For a current listing of OPERS Board members, please visit www.opers.org

It is your responsibility to be certain that OPERS has your current physical and e-mail address on file. If OPERS is not made aware of address changes, we cannot guarantee that you will receive important information pertaining to OPERS public employers. This Employer Notice is written in plain language for use by public employers who are subject to coverage under the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System. It is not intended as a substitute for the federal or state law, namely the Ohio Revised Code, the Ohio Administrative Code, or the Internal Revenue Code, nor will its interpretation prevail should a conflict arise between it and the Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code, or Internal Revenue Code. Rules governing the retirement system are subject to change periodically either by statute of the Ohio General Assembly, regulation of the Ohio Public Employees Retirement Board, or regulation of the Internal Revenue Code. If you have questions about this material, please contact our office or seek legal advice from your attorney.

