



PSPRS STARS August Newsletter

‘STARS’ SYSTEM LOOK, FEEL, FUNCTIONS TAKING SHAPE



The ‘STARS’ pension administration system set to launch March/April 2025 is taking shape, as system design stages have concluded, and the project has shifted into final rounds of product testing.

“It’s been years in the making and we’re extremely excited to test across all of the features in preparation to roll this out for employers, local boards and our membership,” said PSPRS Deputy Administrator Mike Smarik. “Along with testing, PSPRS and its vendors will be creating training products to help stakeholders use this new and improved system.”

The STARS system will deliver employers and local boards a number of enhanced functions, including a fully centralized portal for contribution reporting and payments, member demographic and employment history functions, and allow employers to self-manage access for their staff. In July, the PSPRS Steering Committee overseeing STARS project management selected a new logo for the system. Created by Rajee Mohan, PSPRS webmaster, the modern logo – a star – features the three colors representing public safety, corrections and elected officials plan members.

‘STARS’ SYSTEM DEMOS FOR EMPLOYERS SET FOR OCTOBER

Employers first glance into the STARS system features will start through a series of product demonstrations set to kick off in October.

The demonstrations will occur through the regularly scheduled bi-weekly employer calls hosted by PSPRS Local Board Relationship Manager Joann Lowey. The demonstrations will focus on the employer self-service system within STARS that will become active next spring.

“We can’t encourage employers enough, especially designated STARS points of contact, to attend these meetings,” said PSPRS Member Services Director Robert Ortega. “The demonstrations set for this year will be followed by employer training in early 2025.”



LAST CHANCE TO TEST EMPLOYER FILES



The employer file testing period is coming to an end and with it PSPRS may lose the time and flexibility to provide ongoing technical support to employers. To avoid hang-ups with submitting files next year, employers must finish testing of contribution, demographic and healthcare files with PSPRS staff.

Employers wishing to test retiree healthcare files must do so before August 15. Healthcare files will be used by employers when STARS launches to submit pension deductions for retiree healthcare and to remit health subsidy payments on behalf of retirees, via batch file imports. File testing focuses on ensuring that the structure of

the file meets import specifications. The specification document is available on the [STARS Pension Administration System webpage](#).

JOIN THE BI-WEEKLY STARS CALLS

The bi-weekly employer calls are hosted on Zoom. The next call is **Wednesday, August 14 at 1 p.m.** PSPRS shares key information, such as changes to policy, payment and processing, and allows time for employer questions.

- Zoom link: [Click to join meeting](#)
- Dial-in number: +1 (602) 753-0140
- Meeting ID: 934 4033 4774
- Passcode: 994068



GET SET UP FOR ACH PAYMENTS NOW



We've said it before, and we will say it again. Employers are requested to establish electronic ACH payment connections to help ensure accurate and timely processing of payments to employers and to PSPRS for contributions, premiums etc.

This is a quicker and more efficient way for our office to send payments to employers and vice versa. As PSPRS transitions to the new STARS pension administration system, overdue or late payments will incur fees automatically. Any payments that require a check to be printed will be handled directly by PSPRS' bank, which will add time to employer receipt of payment. We encourage employers to get set up now with an ACH payment process. For more information, reach out to our finance team at finance@psprs.com.

RESOURCES

[March 2024 Pension Administration System \(PAS\) Update](#) (YouTube Video)

[March 2023 PAS Project Overview Presentation](#) (YouTube Video)

[Review Your Employer Group Number/STARS Point of Contact](#) (pdf)

[Contribution Import File - Errors and Warnings](#) (pdf)

[Demographic Import File - Errors and Warnings](#) (pdf)

[Health Insurance Field Values](#) (pdf)