

THE Inside STORY

A Utah Retirement Systems Newsletter for Employers

Comprehensive Employer Trainings

Don't Forget to Register

Find out what's new at URS
at one of these helpful seminars

The annual URS Comprehensive Employer Trainings are set to begin on May 5, and continue through May 21, at a location near you.



Go to www.urs.org/employertesting

Please take this opportunity to meet with our team as we present the most current retirement laws, legislative changes,

and updates regarding participation. Our compliance team will help you understand how to prepare for a compliance audit. We'll answer your questions and tell you what's new at URS.

If you have questions, contact Ryan Ashcraft at 801-366-7414 or 800-753-7414. We recommend all personnel working with retirement-related processes attend this seminar each year. As things change, we'll keep you informed and prepared. ■



Locations and Dates

Washington City	»	May 5
Richfield	»	May 6
Moab	»	May 7
Price	»	May 8
Heber City	»	May 11
Vernal	»	May 12
Provo	»	May 13
Ogden	»	May 14
Logan	»	May 18
Farmington	»	May 19
Sandy	»	May 20
Salt Lake City	»	May 21

Contributions are required within 30 days

Changes during this legislative session now require employers to make contributions within 30 days of the end of the pay period. Beginning July 1,

2015, contributions will be due within 30 days instead of 60 days. Please make the adjustment now so you're prepared for this change. Thank you. ■

Retirement Eligibility

Times Have Changed, Rules Haven't

Years ago, employers looked at retirement benefits as a good way to encourage long-term, stable employees. Many school districts wanted to expand the eligibility for retirement benefits to their employees. Some employees performed more than one job for their employer. Unfortunately, none of these jobs alone qualified the employees for retirement benefits. So, to provide the flexibility desired by employers, the URS Board passed resolution 1999-08, allowing employers to sign an irrevocable commitment for coverage whereby they can combine two or more positions in order for an employee to meet eligibility for retirement benefits. Dual employment certification allows employers to combine jobs, with different duties, to meet eligibility for service credit.

Times have changed. Now employers are seeking to limit the coverage for retirement benefits. Retirement eligibility has changed very little. The main change for schools now requires the inclusion of a normal benefit for classified employees hired after July 1, 2013.

The lack of a dual employment certification in place doesn't allow an

Want to Learn More?

If you have questions, please contact your employer support representative.

employer to break up similar jobs or tasks to avoid eligibility. Similar work performed by an employee cannot be split up based on things such as location, pay rate, or schedule. If the essential job duties or functions performed for the employer are similar then they are to be treated as a single position of employment for the purpose of determining retirement benefit eligibility. For example: An aide may work at different schools, or for different pay rates, or on different schedules, but if the aide is performing the general functions and duties of an aide then all work as an aide must be combined and used to determine retirement eligibility.

For retirement eligibility, "employment" with a participating employer is work performed in a single position or multiple positions of employment with similar duties. The dual employment certification necessitates employers combine positions of different duties to meet eligibility. ■

Tip From the Auditors

Public Safety: Be Aware of Changes

Are you up-to-date on all of the laws regarding the Public Safety Retirement System? Here are some important points.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Have all of your public safety job descriptions been approved by URS?

Employees qualify for membership in a Public Safety Retirement System if employed in a URS-approved public safety position.

How do you know which of your positions have been approved? Log in to [URS for Employers](http://www.urs.org) at www.urs.org, and select "Public Safety." All positions approved by our office are listed on this page. If you have a position that's not approved, send a public safety job description to URS for review on the same site.

REPORTING OF BASE HOURS

What is reportable compensation in the Public Safety Retirement System?

Compensation means the total amount of payments includable in gross income that are received by a public safety service employee as base income for the regularly scheduled work period. Compensation in the Public Safety Retirement System does not include overtime pay, sick pay incentives, retirement pay incentives, uniform expenses, travel expenses, a cell phone allowance, or lump-sum or special payments covering accumulated leave.

PUBLIC SAFETY ELIGIBILITY

Do all public safety employees meet the eligibility requirements for the Public Safety Retirement System?

Employees qualify for membership in the Public Safety Retirement System if their

» New web page will help Public Safety employers save time and effort, **Page 4**

current position is approved, requires an average of 2,080 hours annually based on their regularly scheduled shift, and they meet the five following criteria:

- 1)** The position requires completion of the Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST);
- 2)** The job places life or personal safety at risk;
- 3)** The employee performs duties that actively prevent or detect crime and enforce criminal statutes or ordinances of the state of Utah or any of its political subdivisions;
- 4)** The employee responds to situations involving threats to public safety and making emergency decisions affecting the lives and health of others;
- 5)** The employee performs duties that consist of providing community protection.

If an employee works for a public safety department and does not qualify for the Public Safety Retirement System, please evaluate the employee for eligibility in the Public Employees Retirement System.

For more information, visit the [Employer Knowledge Corner](#). A recent webinar, "[The Public Safety and Firefighters Retirement Systems](#)," addresses this subject. The Employer Knowledge Corner is in the [Employers section](#) of www.urs.org. If you have more questions please contact Records Management at 801-366-7318 or 800-753-7318. ■

Requirements for Elected and Appointed Officials

Tier 1 Public Employees Noncontributory and Contributory Retirement System

The monthly minimum earnings requirement for an elected or appointed official to be eligible for retirement coverage increases each year based on the consumer price index as provided in Code Ann. §§ 49-12-407 and 49-13-407.

As of February 1, 2015, through January 31, 2016, the minimum earnings requirement is \$1,004 per month.

Minimum Earnings Requirements Monthly Amount

Feb. 1, 2013 – Jan. 31, 2014: **\$973**

Feb. 1, 2014 – Jan. 31, 2015: **\$988**

Feb. 1, 2015 – Jan. 31, 2016: **\$1,004**

Tier 2 Contributory Retirement System

Beginning July 1, 2011, a person initially entering full-time employment participates in the Tier 2 system.

Participating employers must certify full-time elected or appointed officials in order for the employee to qualify for retirement coverage.

You, as an employer, determine whether your elected or appointed official is full time.

Please call our Records Management Department at 801-366-7318 or 800-753-7318 if you have any questions about employee certification or eligibility requirements.

New web page will help Public Safety employers save time and effort

We now have an updated Public Safety page in URS for Employers at www.urs.org. Sending job descriptions for approval and reviewing your approved positions is now easier.

You can manage all of your public safety positions on one page. You can add new descriptions and modify current titles, and seamlessly send them to URS for approval. You can check positions

pending approval or remove positions no longer in use. Click the link provided to view a copy of job descriptions URS has on file.

This innovation is available to save you time and effort. If you have questions about this new tool, please contact your Employer Support Representative. Or, contact us at 801-366-7770 or 800-695-4877. ■

Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act

2015 Federal Compensation Limits

Federal rules in accordance with the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) prevent URS from accepting contributions on earned salary that exceeds certain limits.

One limit applies to members of URS before January 1, 1994, and the other applies to members of URS after January 1, 1994. Compensation limits since 2013 are listed in the next column:

	Members after Jan. 1, 1994	Members before Jan. 1, 1994
2013	\$255,000	\$380,000
2014	\$260,000	\$385,000
2015	\$265,000	\$395,000

Contributions based on salaries reported to URS above these limits will be refunded annually to the employer. ■

Expanded direct deposit available to members

While URS has offered direct deposit to a participant's bank account for monthly URS Retirement (pension) and URS Savings Plans (401(k), 457 and IRA) payments, we haven't, until now been able to offer direct deposit on individual payments, such as 401(k) or 457 loans, hardship payments, or one-time withdrawals.

We are now offering this direct deposit feature on these one-time payments.

Simply complete the URS Savings Plans Direct Deposit for One-time Payments (DCEFT-1) form and submit it with your withdrawal, hardship, or loan promissory note, and we will deposit those funds directly to your bank account.

This is just one more example of URS adding features and benefits to help you manage your account more efficiently and effectively. ■

Questions about your retirement benefits? These brochures can help

If you or your employees have questions about retirement benefits, the best reference is the *Highlights* brochures. These brochures, specific to each retirement system, give detailed information about things like benefit

formulas, eligibility requirements, death benefits, payout options, and more. The *Highlights* brochures for each system are posted under the [Publications tab](#) at www.urs.org or you may request a hard copy by emailing publications@urs.org. ■