

# EMPLOYER BULLETIN

## TESTING PROCESS FOR EMPLOYER PAYROLL FILES

December 2019



In our journey to pay period-based reporting, TRS has reached another milestone: We are prepared to initiate the testing process for employer payroll files in Gemini. TRS will contact employers when we are ready to accept test files, but the expectation is to open the testing process on January 2, 2020. Additional information on the Gemini project and file testing is available on the [Pay-period Reporting \(Gemini\) page on the TRS website](#).

### Steps to Initiating Gemini Testing

Employers (or your payroll vendors) will need to complete certain steps in order to test the employer's payroll report files that must be certified by TRS prior to switching to pay period-based reporting. The certification process verifies that each employer is ready to participate once TRS goes live with the new pay-period reporting system.

### Two Separate Data Submission Options For Go-live

#### 1. File Upload

- Using the Employer Portal in Gemini, you will be able to upload a file to TRS for processing.
- If you choose to use this option, then you will likely work with a payroll vendor or your in-house Technology Department who has developed an application to build these payroll files that you will be able to generate containing all your data for the given pay period by selecting a button.

#### 2. Data Entry

- Employers who do not work with a payroll vendor and have not developed a way to provide data to match TRS's requirements will have the ability to enter payroll data manually.
- Generally, this option will be used by employers that have fewer than 50 TRS-covered employees but it is available to all employers.
- Employers will have the ability to replicate what was sent from the previous pay period and then make any necessary changes for the current reporting period.

### Certification Requirements

All employers who plan to report to TRS via file upload (option 1 above) will be required to be certified via this testing process prior to Gemini's go-live date either directly or indirectly by their payroll vendor. Employers planning to manually enter their data (option 2 above) won't have to provide any test files; (more)

however, they may be required to complete a different certification process that we will share in a future communication.

In order to complete the certification process for file upload, TRS will run employer payroll files to ensure the files conform to the TRS defined file format. TRS will also run the files through a series of validations, for example, to ensure an employer is remitting 9% contributions on all creditable earnings. The employer's files will need to pass a threshold of 90% with a maximum number of errors. Specifically, if a file contains 100 records, only 10 out of the 100 can have errors. Regardless of the number of records, no file can contain more than 50 errors. Once a file successfully meets the criteria, that employer will be considered "certified."

TRS has been working with several payroll vendors that TRS-covered employers use for their payroll needs. Employers who currently use and will continue to use or will be transitioning to one of these vendors prior to the Gemini go-live date **will be certified indirectly** through their vendor's testing. The vendors will submit employer test files directly to TRS and sample certain employer data. For example, if a vendor provides software for 200 TRS-covered employers, then we might choose a sampling of 25 employers. If all 25 employers' files in that sample are within the acceptance criteria, then all 200 will be considered certified.

If an employer uses one of the vendors listed below, a test file **will be obtained by the vendor**:

- Specialized Data Systems (SDS)
- Skyward
- Tyler Technologies
- Powerschool
- Decision Systems
- Alio (Weidenhammer)

If your district is included in your vendor's sample testing, you might be asked to assist in the testing process. If your employer's payroll software vendor is not listed above, contact them as soon as possible about these upcoming changes. If you do not use one of the listed vendors, **you will be required** to test with TRS.

## Pay-period Payroll Contact Information Required Online for Certain Employers

Contact information is required for all school districts that are not using any of vendors listed above and they will be using the file upload option to submit data to TRS. [Select this link to visit the Pay-period Payroll Contact Information page and fill in each required field.](#)

TRS staff will use the information submitted to create new credentials for you in the secure file upload system (SFTP - Secure File Transfer Protocol). You can expect a separate email with a video explaining the method for securely transferring files between your employer computer and TRS using SFTP.

## Stay Informed by Keeping All Gemini Information

TRS will contact employers when we are ready to accept test files. Please keep all correspondence from TRS regarding the new pay-period reporting system so you can refer to it in the coming months. Please share this bulletin with your district superintendent or director, your IT Department, a representative from your payroll vendor and anyone else at your district who will be using the new reporting system.

## Questions About Gemini

Contact us by calling 888-678-3675 or email us at [employers@trsill.org](mailto:employers@trsill.org).

