



# Employer *Bulletin*

Employer Communication Center (608) 264-7900 Toll free: 1-888-681-3952 <http://etf.wi.gov>

## WRS Annual *Statements of Benefits* Enclosed

A personalized Wisconsin Retirement System (WRS) annual *Statement of Benefits* (dated January 1, 2009) is enclosed for each of your active employees with WRS contribution balances as of December 31, 2008. Please distribute these according to the instructions and guidelines provided below.

### Changes to the January 1, 2009 *Statement of Benefits*:

The *Statements of Benefits* are now being sent to you by certified mail. Each box or package that is mailed receives an individual article number and requires a signature upon delivery. This is intended to increase security and to reduce the possibility of lost or misplaced *Statements*.

The following were added to the *Statement of Benefits* explanation pages:

- **Primary Beneficiary Designation for WRS Required Account (Section 5):** A phrase was added following the last sentence to state, "If no valid designation is filed, then standard sequence (explained on the forms) is used."
- **Money Purchase Balance (Section 9):** A third sentence was inserted to say, "If you have purchased other governmental service, the amount paid plus accrued interest is not eligible for matching employer contributions."
- **Additional Information:** A phrase was added after the last sentence of the second paragraph to state, "If application is not made when due, then ETF will make a forced distribution the year that you are (or would have been) age 70 ½ or your WRS employment ends, whichever is later."

### Instructions and Guidelines for *Statement* Distribution

Employers are responsible for distributing the *Statements of Benefits* to their active WRS covered employees. You may attach postage and send the *Statements* to your employees via U.S. mail in the envelopes provided. Be sure to send *Statements* to employees on leaves of absence.

If a *Statement* is included for an employee who recently terminated or for whom a termination report has not yet been sent to ETF:

- Mail the *Statement* to the participant.
- In the event a termination report has not been sent to ETF, immediately submit one. Please refer to Chapter 9 "Periodic Employee Transaction Reporting" in the *WRS Administration Manual* (ET-1127) for methods available for reporting terminations. Your report should include the employee's employment termination date, applicable WRS earnings and hours of service, and last known address. ETF will update the employee's WRS account information.

**Note:** *Statements of Benefits* for employees working for more than one WRS employer are sent to the employer with the employee's most recent WRS begin date.

January 1, 2009 *Statements* will not be sent to you for:

- Employees who terminated employment and for whom you reported the employment termination to ETF prior to the *Statement* printing date. ETF will send *Statements* directly to the employee's mailing address.
- New WRS participants who enrolled in late December 2008 whose first wages were paid in January 2009. These employees will not receive *Statements* because no WRS contributions were paid in 2008.

## Employees Should Carefully Review *Statements*

The annual *Statement of Benefits* provides WRS participants the opportunity to review important WRS account information that will eventually be used in benefit calculations. Therefore, we ask that you encourage employees to carefully review their *Statements* and the enclosed supporting explanation. Most questions can be answered by reading this information or visiting our web site and viewing the Department's online video, *Your Annual Statement of Benefits*. Go to: <http://etf.wi.gov/webcasts.htm> and click on "Participants" to find the program. To get the maximum value, we recommend the employee have their *Statement of Benefits* in hand when viewing it.

Your employees should contact you for clarification of the WRS information that you have reported to ETF: employment category, earnings, and hours worked (ETF converted the hours worked to WRS creditable service). It is critical that you immediately correct any reporting errors. Please refer to Chapter 11 of the *WRS Administration Manual* (ET-1127) for instructions and guidance on making prior year account adjustments.

Please notify your employees that **after** terminating all WRS covered employment, they must notify ETF of any address changes so they will continue to receive their annual *Statement of Benefits* (until a benefit is taken) and other mail from ETF.

## Employer Feedback on *Statement of Benefits* Format

ETF continually seeks to improve the annual *Statement of Benefits* format and we welcome your feedback. Please address all comments to:

Michelle Solberg  
Department of Employee Trust Funds  
Office of Budget and Trust Finance  
P.O. Box 7931  
Madison WI 53707-7931.

You may also contact her via e-mail: [michelle.solberg@etf.state.wi.us](mailto:michelle.solberg@etf.state.wi.us).

## Questions

Employees having questions after reviewing the information supplied with the *Statements of Benefits* and/or after discussing their account balances with you may contact ETF's Member Call Center toll free at (877) 533-5020, or by calling (608) 266-3285 in the Madison area. Employers with questions should contact ETF's Employer Communication Center toll free at (888) 681-3952, or locally (608) 264-7900.

Employers: Please post and/or share this information with all of your employees.



## Department of Employee Trust Funds

# ***STATEMENT OF BENEFITS***

Did you know...

You can watch the Department's online video, ***Your Annual Statement of Benefits***, from any computer with a high speed Internet connection.

The video is a step-by-step explanation of each section of the *Statement of Benefits*.

To view ***Your Annual Statement of Benefits*** online, go to the Department's Web site <http://etf.wi.gov/webcasts.htm> and select the video catalog for "participants".

Viewing tip: Have your *Statement of Benefits* in-hand while viewing the program.