



STATE OF WISCONSIN
Department of Employee Trust Funds
David A. Stella
SECRETARY

801 W Badger Road
PO Box 7931
Madison WI 53707-7931
1-877-533-5020 (toll free)
Fax (608) 267-4549
<http://etf.wi.gov>

CORRESPONDENCE MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 23, 2010

TO: Budget and Operations Committee
Employee Trust Funds Board

FROM: Jean Gilding, Administrator
Division of Retirement Services

SUBJECT: Operations Update

This memorandum is for informational purposes only. No action is required.

The following is an update on various operational activities within the Division of Retirement Services (DRS). Some of this information will be presented at the Joint Informational meeting.

Service Delivery Strategies Update

At the June Budget and Operations (B&O) Committee meetings, Shawn Smith, Member and Employer Services Bureau director, informed you about our service delivery strategies to expand member and employer education and outreach. I provided an update at the September committee meeting. The following are some additional key actions related to our strategic efforts that have taken place.

Strategy #1: **Dividing the state into nine service delivery districts.**

- Completed the site planning for the outreach and education schedule for 2011.
- Managed logistics and agreements for 28 new sites that have not previously been visited for group sessions.
- Launched an online interactive district map, allowing members to view outreach activities in their districts.
- Created a new marketing flyer that will soon be inserted in each retirement estimate packet drawing members' attention to the availability of group sessions close to where they live.

Reviewed and approved by Robert J. Conlin, Deputy Secretary.

Signature

Date

Board	Mtg Date	Item #
BUD	12.2.10	2A

- Held WRS benefits presentations in every service district of the state and collected customer satisfaction data from attendees at the sessions. Although there were a limited number of respondents, the results were encouraging.
 - ✓ 83% indicated the presentation was “very effective” in helping them understand the retirement system.
 - ✓ 95% rated the presenter as “very effective” in delivering the presentation.
 - ✓ 80% said questions were answered, “very effectively.”
 - ✓ Overall, 89% rated the quality and usefulness of the presentation as “high” (the highest possible score).

Strategy #2: Closing the stand-alone Waukesha office.

- Closed the Waukesha office October 6 to individual appointments; we will maintain group appointments twice per week for the remainder of the year to ameliorate any service gaps.

Strategy #3: Expanding education and outreach to members and employers by making more resource materials online in multiple formats.

- Completed a project to put all pre-reconciliation reports online in a downloadable format for employers. This will greatly facilitate the employers’ process of reconciliation and save on the cost of mailing paper pre-reconciliation packets every year to all participating employers.
- Began offering webinar employer training sessions on the topic of Annual Reconciliation and Reporting. This online web conferencing tool allows ETF to simultaneously deliver employer training throughout the State of Wisconsin. Employers connect directly to ETF by calling a toll-free telephone number and viewing an interactive online presentation. As of November 19, 115 employers received this webinar training.

Strategy #4: Conducting a comprehensive training needs assessment and educational outreach plan for WRS employers.

- Conducted 15 outreach meetings with representatives from 91 WRS employers. All ETF service districts were represented (locations: Green Bay, Manitowoc, Appleton, Superior, Ashland, Eagle River, Wausau, Hudson, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Bristol, Middleton, Janesville, Milwaukee, Racine) and employers from surrounding counties were invited to attend these sessions. This outreach campaign was the first part of the Employer Education Plan. The goals of these meetings were to present information on upcoming online applications, discuss employer training plans, and solicit feedback or input on how ETF could better serve employers to assist them with the administration of the WRS.

Relocation of Staff to the Department of Revenue (DOR) Building

The relocation of some staff to the DOR building took place in early October. The move was completed on schedule and all major construction and configuration work has been completed. As can be expected, there were a few challenges; these mostly centered on phones, automated system access speed, transfer of people/paper between sites, etc. For the most part, these have been resolved.

Division of Retirement Services supervisors and managers are currently examining floor plans for the Badger Road facility, now that some space has been vacated in that building. The focus remains on moving staff that were previously located outside their work units back into those areas.

Annuitant Variable @ Core Project

Each year the Department receives several hundred requests from annuitants seeking information related to the Variable portion of their monthly annuity. Most want to know whether their current Variable payment portion is ahead or behind what the payment amount would have been had they not participated in the Variable Fund. This calculation is manual, as the historical data necessary to perform the calculation is not electronically stored. The new Benefit Payment System (BPS) has the capability to make this calculation for annuitants going forward, but only after the annuitant's "Variable at Core balance" is brought up to date and entered into BPS.

The Department requested and received funding for four one-year project positions to bring Variable at Core balances for all annuitants up to date. In January, 2010, four contract staff were hired and the annuitant "Variable @ Core Project" was implemented. At that time, there were approximately 32,000 annuitants participating in the Variable Fund. As of November 22, 2010, we have completed 82% of these manual calculations.

Position Recruitments in the Division of Retirement Services

The Division has filled seven vacant Trust Fund Specialist positions (three in the Contact Management Section and four in the Retirement Planning Section). These staff are training in a group setting and progressing well.

The Division is currently conducting interviews for seven Trust Fund Assistant positions (two in the Member and Employer Services Bureau and five in the Benefit Services Bureau). Again, as appropriate, training will be conducted in group settings.

The following recruitments are on schedule for interviews in November and December:

- Two Employee Benefit Plan Policy Advisors
- Two Trust Fund Specialists

Employer Communication Center System Upgrade

Implemented the Call Center Anywhere application (used in ETF's Call Management Section) for the Employer Communication Center. This is a web-based system that manages the calls for assistance we receive from employers. The implementation of this application for employers will result in better customer service and ease the administrative burden for manual statistical tracking.

1099-R Year-End System Testing

Year end testing to ensure the timely and accurate distribution of 1099-R documents within the BPS and the Lump Sum Payment System (LSPS) is underway.

Other Business Process Improvements/Accomplished

The following is a list of business process improvements that have been completed:

- Re-engineered process to complete retirement packets at the DOR site.
- Finalized a standardized group counseling session presentation.
- Completed an application to provide employers with electronic copies of annual reconciliation reports.
- Implemented the use of Webinar training seminars.
- Streamlined the initial review of death notices.
- Updated procedures for processing Power of Attorney (POA) papers.
- Added new functionality to the LSPS.

Current Focus

The Division is now gearing up for the end-of-year activities including January retirements, tax reporting, tax withholding changes, Variable Fund cancellations, increased "walk-in" traffic, service purchase applications, submission of additional contributions, and employer service and earnings reporting.

In addition, a primary focus within the Division will be moving forward with the Department's strategic planning efforts.