

VOL. 2 | FEBRUARY 2020

# IN THE ERIC LOOP

Monthly updates for ERIC users.

## PAYROLL



### TIPS AND TRICKS:

## Well, hello again, employers.

Hello from the Montana Public Employee Retirement Administration (MPERA). This newsletter and those that will follow are intended to fill you in on the ongoing updates to ERIC, as well as to share some news about our agency and some tips and tricks to help you report payroll more efficiently.



If you are a Portal Access Manager and plan on leaving your position, DO NOT pass your ePass username and password on to your replacement. You MUST create a new contact and have them log in with their own credentials. Be sure to grant them access to this role. Can't figure it out? Call us.

844-304-5452

406-444-3994

# Understanding Pay Types

Reporting compensation is an important component for payroll reporting in ERIC. Accurately reporting an employee's pay is crucial to the members' benefit when calculating their Highest Average Compensation (HAC) or Final Average Compensation (FAC).

What type of pay is reportable? Each system defines compensation differently. We created a spreadsheet, linked at the bottom, to help as you report. For PERS members, for example, compensation is defined as payment paid out of funds by an employer in payment for the member's services (19-3-108, Montana Code Annotated).

**Reportable PERS** pay types include:

- Pay for Service Rendered
- Longevity Pay
- Annual, Sick, Vacation, Compensatory, Administrative Leave
- Retroactive Pay

PERS pay types that are **not reportable**:

- Lump-sum payments for compensatory leave, sick leave, banked holiday time, or annual leave paid without terminating employment.
- In-kind goods provided by the employer including: uniforms, housing transportation or meals.
- Contributions to group insurance (unless you have an approved IRS 125 Plan. Again, see the spreadsheet linked below.)
- One-time bonuses, temporary payments in addition to and not part of an employee's base pay.
- Early retirement incentive pay.

If you are an employer that reports multiple systems (FURS or MPORS for example), there is a comprehensive list of pay types for each retirement system that MPERA administers. Click here:



## Meet Our New Customer Service Supervisor

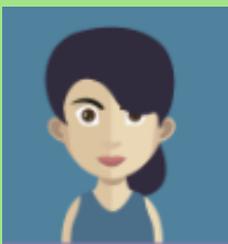


**Doug Hays**

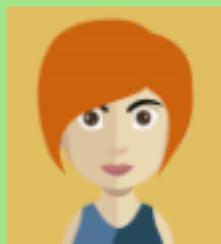
406-444-2996

Doug has 15 years of customer service management experience. He is an outdoor enthusiast who enjoys all outdoor related activities in his free time, to include fishing, hunting, hiking, biking, cross country skiing, snow shoeing and golfing.

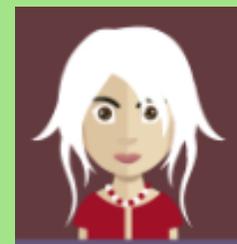
## Meet Our Payroll Reporting Customer Service Staff



Diana Stitt, 406-444-9171, has been with MPERA the longest, with 18 years under her belt. Diana has a green thumb and cares for quite a few plants at her workstation. When not at her desk, she is hard at work on her family's ranch.



Cathy Grose, 406-444-1860, is the newest member of the team, with a little over 5 years at MPERA. When not brightening up the office, Cathy is busy as a volunteer firefighter and with her grandchildren and the family ranch.



Roberta Scow, 406-444-5452, known as Berta to many of you, has been with MPERA for 15 years. She is also a plant lady, and when not at work she loves to garden, ski, golf and just get outside.

# Changes Coming in ERIC

**APRIL 8, 2020**

Mark your calendars! A new payroll schedule update is coming in April. You will be able to go out to a pre-populated schedule you can modify before you validate and finalize. This will add flexibility to your process. For example, if you normally add a payroll in June to pay out employee time, this new process will allow you to set up the payroll date, instead of having MPERA create a special payroll for you. We will send out notices for training sessions to help you through this new process as we get closer to the release date.

## MARCH RELEASES

New ERIC functionality is coming all spring! Each month we will send out new changes. These are the updates to ERIC happening this month that we think you should be aware of.

1

The Pay Date From and Pay Date To fields will be added to the Payroll Header Lookup and the Payroll Detail Lookup. This allows you to search for records associated to a single pay date or a range of pay dates.

2

If you are a new participant in the state 457 plan, you will receive a new validation if you attempt to enroll an employee in 457 prior to the effective or "start" date of the 457 plan. This is the message you will see:

"The 457 Plan for [Organization Name] [(OrgID)] became Effective on [Effective Date of Plan]. The enrollment date of [Enrollment Date] occurs before the plan effective date of [Effective Date of Plan]. Please modify the enrollment date or contact MPERA for assistance."

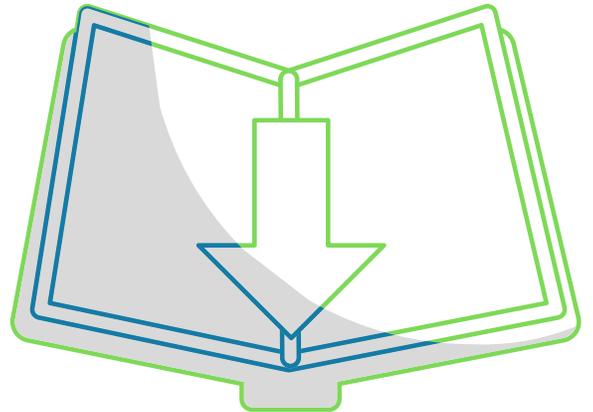
3

The Total Compensation Mismatch Error will now be displayed on the Payroll Detail level instead of the Payroll Header level.

4

The Primary Contact Access Timeout for VFCA will be changed to 14 months. VFCA Primary Contacts that do not access the system after 14 months will be locked out.

Access the Employer Handbook  
by clicking this icon.



Do you have any ideas to improve ERIC?  
We are always working on improving  
this system. Send a detailed email about  
the specific issue to: [rscow@mt.gov](mailto:rscow@mt.gov)