Guide for Processing Employee PERS Accounts (PPDB and OSPA)

Introduction:

This document provides information and tools on the process used for PERS account management that directly affects an employee's success at retirement. Following these steps ensures an employee's account is accurate when they request benefits from PERS.

The DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team and the PPDB Group is located in the DAS West building at:

155 Cottage St NE, U30
Salem, OR 97301

Role of Our Team:

- Report Required Personnel and Payroll Data to PERS
- Act as Liaisons for State Agencies and PERS
- Assist With Resolution of Specific Individual Employee Account Reconciliation
- Process and Track State Agency PERS Forms
- Clear Suspended EDX Records/Reports for all State Agencies
- Annual Reconciliation and Invoicing Between PERS, PPDB and OSPA Data:
    - Eligibility
    - Prior Year
    - USERRA
- Verification of Employee PERS Plan and Eligibility
- Clean-Up of Past Data Reporting Issues
- Legislation Tracking and Response for Agencies
- Attend employer Advisory Committee (EAC), Legislative Advisory Committee and Board Meetings on behalf of Agencies.

Status Check Process:

Request a copy of the Employee PERS History Questionnaire form from every new hire or re-employed employee:

- Available on our web site at:

  http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/HR/HRSS.shtml#Centralized_PERS_Team

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- Request a PERS status check on all new hires or re-employed employees including temporary, limited duration, part-time, full-time, retiree, etc. positions by using one of the following methods.

  - Filling out the PERS Status Check Worksheet (for each employee) by calling the PERS Employer Call Center between 8:30am – 12:00pm, Monday – Friday, at 1-888-320-7377. They will be able to provide the answers to the questions on the form. On OSPA final cutoff days only, after 12:00pm, for emergencies you may contact Darlene at 503-431-8929, otherwise please use the PERS Employer Call Center during their available times of service. Please do not e-mail requests for status check information.

  - Filling out the Status Check Spreadsheet Template (for processing one or more employees at a time - available on our web site) and faxing either; directly to the PERS Employer Call Center at 503-603-7626, or the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team at 503-378-4596. The spreadsheet will be filled out and faxed back to the agency at the return fax number entered on the form.

In order to obtain authorization to receive PERS status check information, the authorizing manager will need to send an e-mail to the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team contact for your agency. The e-mail will need to include the names of the employee(s) who need to have authorization. For a list of those individuals who are authorized for your agency please contact our office.

If there are questions regarding the status check information received please call or e-mail your agency's contact from the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team. For a list identifying the contact for your agency please visit our web site at http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/HR/HRSS.shtml#Centralized_PERS_Team

If HR obtains the status check information, the information needs to be shared with the payroll office to avoid duplication of staff time processing requests. If Payroll obtains the information they need to share information with the HR office.

Break-In-Service Legislation (HB2285):

Effective January 1, 2008, "Break in Service" statutory provisions were eliminated retroactively. It applied to all service by members of the system, whether performed before, on, or after the effective date of the Act. All exceptions to "Break in Service" were eliminated and the bill effectively treated "Break in Service" as if it never existed.

Previously, if a member left PERS-qualifying service on or after August 29, 2003 and was absent from paid service for six consecutive full months (or 12 months in some cases) a "break in service" occurred and the member was only eligible for OPSRP membership if they returned to employment with a PERS-participating employer.

The legislation directed PERS to:

1) Recalculate the retirement benefit of any member who retired before the effective date of the Act if the benefit was affected by "break in service."

2) Adjust the service credit of any active or inactive member who was affected by "break in service."

3) Adjust IAP contributions and accounts of any active or inactive member who was affected by "break in service." It also permitted PERS to refund or require additional contributions to adjust account balances.

Basic Rules for Determining Whether an Employee's Employment is Qualifying or Non-Qualifying:

Waiting period requirements are met when an employee has served six (6) full consecutive months, with the same employer, without a 30 day break-in-service, works into the 7th month and starts contributions. The first day of the 7th month is referred to as the contribution starting date (CSD). The State of Oregon is considered one employer.

To easily determine the contribution start date please refer to the PERS Contribution Start Date Worksheet on our web site.

A thirty (30) day break-in-service is calculated using Monday through Friday and excluding recognized holidays.

For an easy worksheet to use in determining this please refer to our web site for the Basic Rules for Qualifying or Non-Qualifying Worksheet.

Timelines for Data Exchange from PPDB/OSPA to EDX:

With monthly reporting of personnel and payroll data to PERS, timely entry of personnel actions and name & address changes into PPDB is critical. We are able to capture and automatically report personnel actions that happen within the current payroll cycle only. Any retroactively entered personnel actions must be manually processed by DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team and reported to PERS.

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New Hire and Termination transactions:

You enter a new hire (PA Code 141) with a hire date of 6/5/2011

If	Then
This PA is entered anytime during the payroll cycle for June (6/1/2011 - 6/30/2011) up through payroll cut off run 2 (Monday 7/11/2011)	This new hire record information will be picked up and reported to PERS in the June (paid July) report that will be dated 7/31/2011, and submitted to PERS on 7/14/2011. Once this data is posted on to PERS' system, it allows all following personnel and payroll records to automatically post to the system.
This PA is entered anytime after payroll cut off run 2 (7/11/2011),	This becomes a retroactive entry and will not automatically be picked up and reported to PERS. E-mail your agency's DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team so they can manually report it to PERS. All subsequently reported personnel and payroll records will suspended until the new hire data is manually reported to PERS.

You enter a termination (PA code 520) with a termination date of 6/19/2011

If	Then
This PA is entered anytime during the payroll cycle for June (6/1/2011 - 6/30/2011) up through payroll cut off run 2 (Monday 7/11/2011)	This termination record information will be picked up and reported to PERS in the June (paid July) report that will be dated 7/31/2011, and submitted to PERS on 7/14/2011.
This PA is entered anytime after payroll cut off run 2 (7/11/2011),	This becomes a retroactive entry and will not automatically be picked up. E-mail your agency's DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team so they can manually report it to PERS. All subsequently reported personnel and payroll records will suspended until the new hire data is manually reported to PERS.

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Name & Address changes:

(PA Codes 230) have slightly different date restrictions for PERS reporting purposes

If	Then
You enter a PA Code 230 (name and/or address change) with an effective date of 6/5/2011. *PPDB will only let you enter this data in the current calendar month (6/1/2011 - 6/30/2011)*	This name and/or address change will be picked up and reported to PERS in the June (paid July) report that will be dated 7/31/2011, and submitted to PERS on 7/14/2011.
You enter a PA Code 230 (name and/or address change) in July, prior to payroll cut off run 2	This information will not be report to PERS until the following reporting cycle in August (because July's data will not be reported until the August report).

PERS Wage Job Class Code changes:

(PA Codes 238 and 268)

If	Then
You enter an original PA Code 238 (PERS Wage Job Class Code change) with a new hire record in the month the new hire was originally entered, with an effective date of 6/5/2011.	These PERS Wage Job Class codes will be picked up and reported to PERS in the June (paid July) report that will be dated 7/31/2011, and submitted to PERS on 7/14/2011.
You enter the PA Codes 238 and 268 (PERS Wage Job Class Code change) by opening a previous month's new hire record or creating a stand alone entry.	This becomes a retroactive entry and will not automatically be picked up and reported to PERS. E-mail your agency's DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team so they can manually report it to PERS. Any change to the PERS Wage Job Class code after the original new hire record must be manually reported to PERS. The use of the incorrect PERS Wage Job Class Code can result in the agency remitting too much or not enough in employer "match" contributions.

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Enter Verified PERS Account Information into PPDB:

Enter the appropriate PERS CDE: WAGE/JOB CLASS: into the PPDB by using the status check information received from the steps above and referencing the "PERS: Wage/Job Class" worksheet available on our web site.

When making the entry into PPDB please keep in mind that if the employee has no previous PERS history in PPDB and the agency's intent for the employee is "qualifying" the Wage Job Class Code will need to be coded to reflect what the employee will be once they complete their waiting time. At the end of the six (6) month waiting time the PERS System will assign the employee a CSD. Please refer to the PERS Contribution Start Date Worksheet located on our web site.

Addresses:

For current employees, please have them work with HR to update PPDB information. This is the only method to update address/name information for PERS and OSGP. The data is reported electronically from PPDB. Please do not have current employees contact PERS directly or fill out the Information Change Request (PERS Form), as PERS cannot update current employee data using these methods. The only way ING (formerly CITIbank), third party administrator, can get address information for IAP accounts and OSGP is through PPDB.

Please note if another employer enters a different address for the employee, the PERS system will update with the latest information reported. If your employee notifies you their address is still incorrect please notify us so that we can manually change the address again.

If you submit a change to an employee's name and address in June, PERS will not receive the information until mid-July due to the timing of our report being sent to PERS.

For terminated employees who contact you, please update PPDB with the updated information for W-2 delivery, etc. PERS does not accept electronic (PPDB) address/name information updates for terminated employees. In order for PERS to be updated the terminated employee will need to contact PERS directly at 1-888-320-7377 or refer them to the PERS web site at: http://oregon.gov/PERS/, where they can obtain forms to update their information.

Name Changes:

Name changes are only picked up by the PERS EDX system if the changes are within the first two characters of the **last** name. If you have changed a name in PPDB and the first two characters remained the same please notify your agency's contact from the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team so we can process a request to manually change the name.

All name changes, regardless of the first two characters, require manual entry from our staff for the change to be accepted in the PERS system.

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Date of Birth (DOB) Changes:

The PERS EDX system is unable to upload DOB changes after the initial hire date personnel action is sent to PERS. If the agency finds that they need to make this change in PPDB after the initial hire date please notify the contact, in our unit, for your agency.

Social Security Number (SSN) Changes:

It is recommended that SSN changes in PPDB not be made between payroll run 1 and run 2. Most SSN changes are not picked up and reported to PERS as a result of timing issues. In order to ensure that these changes are reported to PERS we work with the PPDB Group to obtain a list of SSN changes so that we can manually correct the change in EDX or with PERS staff, to make these changes to the employee's account. Quite often the account needs to be manually worked on by PERS staff to merge the data from the old SSN to the new SSN.

Entries in OSPA:

- If status check information received indicates that the employee is eligible for PERS contributions upon hire, the P010 screen needs to be set up effective for the first pay period of employment. Please reference the P010 screen entry guide from the OSPA Reference Manual from the web site below:

  http://oregon.gov/DAS/SCD/OSPS/referencemanual.shtml

- If the status check information received is that the employee has "No Record" or no previous PERS history, the P010 screen RETIREMENT START DATE field will need to be entered for the pay period the employee will be eligible for contributions. For example, if the employee has a 12/1/10 CSD the employee is eligible for contributions starting with the 12/31/10 PPE. OSPS will prepare a report that is sent out to agencies before Run 1 final cutoff of the effective pay period so that the agency can set up contributions on the P010 screen before Run 1 final cutoff closes.

- If the status check information received is that the employee is a retiree the P010 screen will need to be changed to no longer submit contributions by entering "N" for the RTMT SYST field and an "N" for the RTMT STAT field effective with the pay period the employee was hired as a retiree.

To determine whether hours are calculated for PERS use the pay type code and RMT columns on the PTB1 screen for the benefit package code the employee is in on PPDB. OSPA is programmed to look at the RTMT SYST AND RTMT STAT codes on the P010 screen to determine the employee's PERS Membership (Tier 1, Tier 2 or OPSRP). OSPA sets up codes to be PERS subject or non-subject based upon the PERS Payment Categories document from the following PERS link:

http://www.oregon.gov/PERS/EMP/docs/er_general_information/payment_categories.pdf?ga=t

Notes:

- *If contributions are not set up on the P010 screen effective with the employee's first PERS subject wages the employee's wage records will suspend in EDX.*
- *If contributions are set up on the P010 screen on run 2, when they needed to be effective for run 1 and 2, OSPA will not go back and retroactively calculate contributions for run 1 subject wages and will cause the employee's wage records to suspend in EDX.*
- *Setting a corrective flag in OSPA will not cause PERS contributions to be retroactively calculated if the*

P010 was not previously set. The employee's wage records will suspend in EDX.

- *Making P060 adjustments for a late start in contributions will not post the suspended records our unit receives for the employee's account. We will still have to manually go in and adjust the employee's account so that the contributions can be seen on-line. The money still goes from OSPA to PERS.*

How to Use the PERS Wage Job Class Code Worksheet:

- First obtain status check information from PERS on the employee using instructions previously described in this guide.
- Determine whether the position is qualifying or non-qualifying;
- Based upon the PERS plan the employee is in or will be in, determine the appropriate PPDB code to use starting with the definition column on the left of the worksheet;
- Once you have determined the appropriate definition move to the right of the worksheet to the appropriate PERS plan. The employee will be either a PERS Member (Tier 1 or Tier 2) **OR** an OPSRP Member. The appropriate PPDB and OSPA codes are provided for each plan.

Notes:

The codes used in OSPA and PPDB, when referenced, should match the definition and PERS Membership on the PERS Wage Job Class Code Worksheet. If they do not, please contact your agency's contact in the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team.

Leave Without Pay (LWOP) Reporting for PERS Purposes:

All full days of LWOP are reportable to PERS even if an employee is covered by the Oregon Family Leave Act (OFLA), the Federal Medical Leave Act (FMLA) or SAIF. There are no restrictions on the number of days for reporting LWOP to PERS.

Our unit is currently working on a web based reporting site for agencies to electronically go in and report this data. It is not up and running at this time but will be in the near future.

In the mean time we have asked agencies to please send an e-mail to the contact, in our unit, for your agency and we will get this information reported for you. If you prefer you may use an Excel spreadsheet to report LWOP start and end date segments.

Forms:

All PERS related forms are sent to our office by PERS staff. Our staff sort, track, and fax all forms to each agency.

All forms need to be returned by the agency to our office, except the Personnel and Medical File (PMF) requests. Any information the agency has for the employee related to the PMF requests needs to be mailed directly to PERS (Security Level 4) at the address listed on the fax coversheet sent to the agency with the faxed employee authorizations to release the information. This process is set up to enforce HIPPA regulations in regards to any sensitive data that may need to be sent to process an employee's request for payment of PERS benefits.

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Agencies should only receive Sick Leave Request forms for employees who have requested a PERS Disability benefit.

When the unit initially started, not all copies of forms were maintained in our office. Our current practice is to maintain copies of all forms submitted to the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team. However, you may receive requests for forms you have already submitted to our office. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and should not be a common occurrence.

Why We Ask What We Ask of Agencies:

PERS FORMS:

Salary Certifications: Prior to 2004, PERS received an accounting of annual wages and contributions of each employee. Salary certifications are filled out by pay date and are used to assist PERS in determining an employee's final average salary to process their disability retirement or service retirement. You will continue to see less and less of these request because as of January 1, 2004, PERS receives monthly breakdowns of wages and hours.

Salary Breakdowns: Prior to 2004, PERS received an accounting of annual wages and contributions of each employee. Salary breakdowns are filled out by pay period and require the hours paid, in addition to wages and contributions. Salary breakdown forms are used to determine if the employee met waiting time and if they worked enough hours in the calendar year to receive retirement service credit. This can have an impact on the employee as it may change their contribution start date and/or retirement service credit. It can also impact the agency if the data included requires the reporting of less or additional salary and contributions. This would result in either a refund or invoice with prior year earnings to the agency. If you no longer have the microfiche, please work with OSPS to either look at the microfiche they have available or to make arrangements to obtain files from archives.

Sick Leave Forms: These are only requested if an employee has applied for disability. Sick leave balances for employees not requesting a disability are reported to PERS electronically with their termination as long as it's processed in the same pay period they terminate in. If the leave balances are processed outside of the pay period, please notify your DAS Centralized PERS Services Team member so we can manually correct the balance prior to PERS processing the employee's benefit.

Disability Employment Status Request form: These are used to assist PERS Disability in determining the employees last day of employment. An employee can apply for disability if they expect to be out at least 90 consecutive days. The employee does not need to wait until after the 90 days to apply. An employee can apply for disability when on paid leave, but PERS can't make disability payments for any month in which they receive salary or paid leave benefits, excluding a vacation or compensatory time.

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Last Day of Paid Leave Request form: These are used to assist PERS Disability in determining the employees last day of pay. Disability benefits are effective the first of the month following the last month in which the employee received salary. PERS will not pay any benefits until the employee has been physically off the job for 90 consecutive days. After the 90-day period, benefits paid are retroactive to the employee's effective date of disability retirement if they didn't receive any paid salary from their employer for that time.

Request of Personnel and Medical Files: These are used to assist PERS Disability in approving/denying disability benefits. The cover sheet includes mailing instructions as these documents need to be mailed directly to PERS.

USERRA Certification form: This form is used when an employee returns from military leave and they qualify for reemployment under the federal "Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act" (USERRA). When an employee returns from military leave, they are entitled to receive both retirement service credits under the retirement plan for the time they were gone, as well as plan contributions based on the salary they would have earned had they still been at work. The form requires the dates they were last at work, the active duty begin and end dates, as well as they date of reemployment or return to work. Since January 2006, any time between when the employee left active duty and returns to work is considered "decompression time" and is eligible for contributions. Salary for this time must be included in the salary section of the form.

This form needs to be sent over to our team for preliminary processing. It will then be sent to PERS for them to prepare the employee's IAP account to allow for USERRA contributions. Once the account it ready, PERS staff will let us know that we can enter the PERS subject salary and contributions into EDX. After the contributions posts to the employee's account, an invoice will be prepared and sent to the agency for payment of the Employee "pickup" and Employer "match" contributions to PERS.

This form will not be sent out to you from our section as with most other forms. Only the agency can determine if the employee qualifies for reemployment under USERRA, and when they return to work. It can be found on the PERS web page under:
http://www.oregon.gov/PERS/MEM/docs/forms/451emw.pdf please contact us if you have questions about completing the form.

PERSONNEL/PAYROLL DATA:

Timesheets: We may request timesheets when it appears wages are missing and a leave without pay isn't reflected in PPDB. PERS needs the gaps filled in to determine all eligible retirement service credit and to be able to process employee benefits. Currently, we are only able to manually report full days of leave without pay to PERS. We are working on a web based system that will electronically report full days of leave without pay to PERS. There will be more to come down the road on this.

Payroll registers: An employee's hours and wages are reported electronically to PERS on a monthly basis. There are a few rare times, mainly due to negative adjustments and correctives, we may ask for payroll registers because the hours and wages don't match up correctly. The payroll

registers aid us in ensuring the amounts are reported to PERS accurately.

Leave Accrual: We may request leave accrual data to report a leave balance to PERS or to help us in determining how many hours the employee worked that month.

Payroll Workups: If you are preparing a payroll workup, it's generally due to a retroactive payroll adjustment or settlement/arbitration. Please forward these documents to us as PERS request us apply the money in the month it would have been earned in. Currently, the payment comes through as a retroactive payment or is added in to the currents month's wages.

Settlement/Arbitrations: Once a settlement/arbitration is signed by all parties, please forward a copy to our unit. Our unit will review and apply the payment to the employees retirement account in agreement with the PERS statues. Please refer to our website for assistance with standardized language. The link is: http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/HR/docs/ppdb/PERS_SW_Guide.pdf

Verify PPDB job segments: PERS has moved all of their old data from RIMS over to the PERS Database (jClarety). We are now able to see an employee's employment history that has been reported to PERS over the years. We may ask you to verify the employment and LWOP dates because we either received a question from PERS, the employee or agency on wages reported during a LWOP segment or missing service time. It's important the confirmation you provide us is accurate, because it's a manual and time consuming process to fix the employees account for both our unit and PERS.

Verify/change wage/job class codes: As we work through records and verify an employee's information, we may ask you to make wage/job class code changes so the records (history and current) are reflected correctly. The wage/job class code tells PERS if the employee is general service, Police & Fire, Judge, or Legislator etc. We have the wage/job class codes broken out by PERS plan and class so we are able to gather data and pull reports if necessary for Legislative session request, data reconciliation, etc. Please contact PERS for a status check so you know which plan code to use which will help you determine the wage/job class code.

Notes and Reminders:

- **PERS Tier 1** employees were hired on or before 12/31/1995.
- **PERS Tier 2** employees were hired on 1/1/1996 up through 8/28/2003.
- **OPSRP** (Oregon Public Services Retirement Plan) employees would need to have been hired on 8/29/2003 or after.
- **IAP** (Individual Account Program) started for everyone on 1/1/2004
- **PERS CDE: WAGE/JOB CLASS field in PPDB** was implemented on 9/1/04 but can accept date prior to this date.
- **Student workers** are not eligible for PERS benefits (ORS 238.015 (5) and OAR 459-010-025) and service time as a student worker does not qualify as part of the waiting period.

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- **Temporary employment** counts towards the six (6) month waiting period.

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- There is a guide on our web site for recommended **settlement and arbitration** language. Please be sure to fax (503-378-4596) copies of the signed documents to our unit to ensure any monetary payments are appropriately posted to the employee's account.

- If you receive **invoices** directly from PERS please be sure to fax them to our unit as soon as possible. We will research the invoice and return it to the agency with the supporting documentation for payment or appeal the invoice.

- When sending **balance transfer (BT) payments to PERS** please be sure to send an e-mail to linda.ely@state.or.us with the BT number, the employee's name, the amount remitted and the date sent. This way we can ensure that the funds are credited to the agency's employer account timely.

- Employees who are **retirees and social security age eligible** do not have a 1040 hour limit that they need to work under. http://www.ssa.gov/retire2/agereduction.htm

- Employees who are **age 65 are not eligible to purchase additional Police and Fire Units**. If your agency has PERS Police and Fire classified employees please run queries against the date of birth for retirees to ensure that you do not have employees sending money to PERS that will need to be refunded later.

- **OPSPR plan members are not eligible to purchase additional police and fire units**. Only Tier 1 and Tier 2 plan members are eligible. Please do not send Notice of Unit Election forms for OPSRP members for processing.

- **The P010 screen does not recalculate missed contributions for run 1 payroll** if the entries are not set up until run 2. The system will only send contributions for any additional wages paid on run 2. You will need to make P060 adjustments to submit what wasn't paid for run 1 and notify the contact, from our unit, so that they can go and fix the suspended records for this employee.

- **Making P060 adjustments for a late start in contributions will not post the suspended records our unit receives for the employee's account**. We will still have to manually go in and adjust the employee's account.

- **E-mails or spreadsheets need to be sent to our unit identifying ALL full days of LWOP segments**. Even though an employee is covered by FMLA/OFLA and SAIF, the LWOP is still reportable for PERS purposes. (You will see more on this at a later date as we are working on a web reporting process for agencies to submit this data).

- When **determining the contribution start date (CSD)** for an employee, remember that the first working day is what is used to calculate the start date. The first working day could be the 2nd, 3rd or 4th of a month and still count as a full month.

- **It is not recommended to make SSN changes between run 1 and run 2** for payroll purposes and usually causes split account issues for PERS data.

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- When an agency's monthly report has a load error rate equal to or greater than 85%, **IAP contributions** for all employees will not be credited to the employee accounts until the error rate drops below 85%**.**

- State employee **recognized service dates** are different than PERS Retirement recognized service dates. The retirement dates may not match due to LWOP which can reduce an employee's service credits.

- Retroactive or purged personnel actions must be manually processed and reported to PERS. E-mail your agency's contact in the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team for processing.

- Our Web Site and List Serv Communications:

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- To view information and tools for the **DAS HRSD Systems (PPDB Group) and Services (HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team)** units please go to the following web link:
-
- http://www.oregon.gov/DAS/HR/HRSS.shtml
-
- To receive important communications via e-mail from the **DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team** please feel free to go to the following web site and register:

- http://listsmart.osl.state.or.us/mailman/listinfo/das_centralized_pers_services_team

- To receive important communications via e-mail from the **DAS HRSD PPDB Group** please feel free to go to the following web site and register:

- http://listsmart.osl.state.or.us/mailman/listinfo/hrtech-net

- When communicating with the DAS HRSD Centralized PERS Services Team it is very helpful if you have the PERS Employer Number and Oregon Employee Number (Employee Identification Number – EIN). If emailing, please include this information in the subject line.

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