



Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund

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GENERAL MEMORANDUM

Sent via U.S. Postal Service

Number: 580

Date: December 10, 2008

To: All Authorized Agents

Subject: e-Service and electronic communications

Executive Summary

IMRF has expanded our Web-based transactions and electronic communications to provide our existing service at a lower cost and improve the service we provide. For example, using the Employer Access Document Archive, employers can view and download more than 27 types of IMRF documents.

Employers with Employer Access accounts currently receive General and Special Memorandums via email. However, email presents several challenges. They can be blocked by spam filters and “lost” (never received by the employer). If you have an Employer Access account but have not been receiving emails from IMRF, please contact us at 1-800-275-4673. In 2009, IMRF plans to expand our electronic communications:

- We plan to implement secure email for the Employer Access website early in 2009.
- Beginning January 2009, employers with Employer Access accounts will receive the email newsletter, *Employer Digest*, twice a month around the 5th and 20th. It will include links to General and Special Memorandums as well as other IMRF-related news. If you have an Employer Access account, **the employer email newsletter will be the only notification you will receive regarding IMRF news, policies, or legislation.** Therefore, please let us know if you do not receive *Employer Digest* in your email inbox.
- When IMRF issues a General or Special Memorandum or has other news to announce, we will:
 - Update our home page, www.imrf.org, with the new information, and
 - Issue an RSS News Feed. To register for IMRF News Feeds or to read more about them, visit www.imrf.org/info/news_feeds.htm.
- It is essential that employers be kept informed about recent economic events and the impact on employer rates. Therefore **I strongly recommend that your Chief Executive Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Human Resources Manager subscribe to IMRF news feeds.**

To read IMRF's e-Service Vision, visit http://www.imrf.org/info/e-service_vision.htm.

For several years, IMRF has been expanding our Web-based transactions and electronic communications capabilities to provide our existing service at a lower cost and to improve the service we provide. This memo provides a brief background on our efforts and plans for the future.

Employer Access Document Archive

Employers can view and download imaged copies of 27 different types of IMRF documents by using the Document Archive in the Employer Access website. Examples of documents available via the Document Archive include Advance and Final Rate Notices, GASB Statements 27 and 50, Employer copies of Member Statements, copies of member enrollments and terminations, member information changes, wage reports and wage adjustments, and adjustment advice letters.

Web-based transactions

Employers with Employer Access accounts send member enrollment, termination, and information changes as well as wage reports and adjustments via the Web. Web transactions catch errors when they are made—before the data reaches IMRF. As a consequence, Web-based transactions result in more accurate and timely data and save time for both employers and IMRF since there are fewer errors to correct.

Digital records

In addition to providing increased speed and accuracy, Web-based transactions and reports allow you to access a digital record of your transaction or document when you need it.

Electronic mass communications

In addition to moving paper-based transactions and reports to the Web, IMRF has moved paper-based *mass communications* to an electronic format. Employers with Employer Access accounts receive the following mass communications via email:

- General and Special Memorandums
- Monthly *Employer Digest* (employer newsletter)
- Ad hoc Employer Bulletins

Please note: employers without Internet access receive General and Special Memorandums and other employer reports via U.S. postal mail. In addition, all employers receive individualized correspondence via postal mail. At this time, IMRF has not moved correspondence addressed to an individual employer to the Web, but we are exploring the feasibility of doing so.

As with Web-based reports and documents, providing mass communications via email greatly reduces the cost to provide the information and the time needed to send it. However, email presents several challenges:

1. Spam filters

IMRF uses an outside vendor, Constant Contact, to deliver mass emails. Some employers' email spam filters do not allow them to receive email from Constant Contact. IMRF continues to work closely with these employers to make the necessary changes to their email spam filters.

2. "Lost" emails/emails not received

Although we receive statistics from Constant Contact regarding our emails, IMRF is never certain if our emails are reaching all of our intended recipients. Therefore, it is possible that after IMRF releases an email to our 3,724 employer contacts, some of those contacts never receive the email (which is why this General Memorandum is being released as a paper memo).

If you have an Employer Access account but have not been receiving IMRF emails, please contact an IMRF Member Services Representative at 1-800-ASK-IMRF.

3. Email "fatigue"

We do not wish to clutter employers' email inboxes with multiple emails. It is our desire to keep our emails to a minimum, while at the same time providing employers with the information they need to administer IMRF.

Please note: employers with Employer Access accounts should not opt out of receiving IMRF emails. As an employer contact, it is critical that you receive emails that keep you up-to-date about IMRF.

Electronic communications in 2009 and beyond

While recognizing both its limitations and advantages, IMRF plans to continue to communicate electronically with employers that have Employer Access accounts. However, in an effort to avoid email fatigue and to ensure employers receive the information they need:

1. Employer Access secure email

IMRF plans to implement secure email for the Employer Access website early in 2009. When secure email is available, employers will be able to securely send and receive email concerning your employer's and members' IMRF accounts.

2. Two monthly *Employer Digest* emails

Beginning January 2009, employers with Employer Access accounts will receive the email newsletter, *Employer Digest*, twice a month, around the 5th and 20th. This email newsletter will include links to recently issued General and Special Memorandums as well as other IMRF-related news.

You will no longer receive separate emails for individual Memorandums or other news items. Instead, you will receive two emails a month that summarize recent IMRF news. **Since the employer email newsletter will be the only notification you will receive regarding IMRF news, policies, or legislation,** please contact an IMRF Member Services Representative at 1-800-ASK-IMRF if you do not receive Employer Digest in your email inbox.

Employers without Internet access will continue to receive paper General and Special Memorandums.

3. IMRF website

When IMRF issues a General or Special Memorandum or has other news to announce, we will update our home page, www.imrf.org, with the new information.

4. RSS news feeds

RSS stands for Really Simple Syndication. It is a web content format which, when used with an RSS “aggregator” (such as your web browser or a free news reader you can download), allows IMRF to alert you to new content on our website. New content is delivered directly to you.

Whenever IMRF issues a General or Special Memorandum, or has other news to announce, IMRF will issue an RSS News Feed. To register for IMRF News Feeds or to read more about them, visit www.imrf.org/info/news_feeds.htm.

It is essential that employers be kept informed about recent economic events and the impact on employer rates as well as other important IMRF news. Therefore, **I strongly recommend that your Chief Executive Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, Chief Finance Officer and Human Resources Manager subscribe to IMRF News Feeds.**

At one time there was no choice but to design business processes around paper-based transactions. Current computerized benefit and accounting systems were designed in the early 1990’s—before the Web and email became a part of everyday life. But today, the Web and email has increased expectations and has provided opportunities for IMRF to reduce costs, increase efficiencies and communicate more quickly.

Questions?

To read IMRF’s e-Service Vision, visit http://www.imrf.org/info/e-service_vision.htm. If you have any questions regarding IMRF’s e-Service initiatives, please call an IMRF Member Services Representative at 1-800-ASK-IMRF (1-800-275-4673) Monday through Friday, 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Sincerely,



Louis W. Kosiba
Executive Director