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On the Horizon

Staff ready for summer processing

Every year it seems Application Processing uses what they've learned from past experiences and combine this knowledge with new ideas and technology improvements to assure our members receive the best service possible.

In the recent past some ORS staff might have told you that if you looked up the word "summer" in a thesaurus you would find the word "rush," or the phrase "piles of files." That's because summer is the time when many public school employees turn in their retirement application. In the past there was very little technology available. This resulted in desks piled high with files to be processed and staff rushing to get them done by summer's end. Times have changed!

Here is a rundown of some of what's new to assure ORS can meet this summer's demand:

- People On Demand (POD), the pilot group we told you about back in March, will be busy helping with various issues related to application processing as well as helping in other areas where they are needed.
- FLB forms have begun coming in. The pre-populated information makes the forms easier to read and, in many cases, has sped up indexing, making the forms available more quickly.

Some of what has been done in the past that will continue this summer includes:

- Leave time and AWS schedules take into account the need for extra staffing during the summer months.
- Final Salary Affidavits (FSAs) are being batched the first and third Friday of the month and mailed to the school by Mail Services instead of being individually faxed by ORS staff.
- The schools receive a FSA file tracker link so that they can check to see if they have any outstanding FSA needing completion.
- The application packets received will continue to be reviewed by the mailroom, and returned if incomplete. That way, the member is notified quickly of missing information vs. later when someone sets up the file.

In addition, many PIRs have been fixed that will help in the processing of applications.

"I think having our staff sitting so closely together and having shorter cubicle walls has helped improve communication between staff," said **Joyce Weber**, supervisor for Application Support. "Instead of having to leave your desk or talking over walls, staff can speak to each other easier."

- DMB Golf Outing - August 15
- ORS Picnic - August 20
- 18th Annual ORS Golf Outing - August 28
- All Staff Meeting - October 7

Quick Links

- [ORS Member Website](#)
- [ORS Employer Website](#)
- [Knowledge Library](#)

Commonly Used Acronyms

AST	Application Support Team
BLA	Business Leadership Assembly (EPC, BPOs, and BPLs)
BPD	Benefit Plan Design
BPL	Business Process Leader
BPO	Business Process Owner
CE	Customer Education
CSC	Customer Service Center
DB	Defined Benefits
DC	Defined Contributions
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DMB	Department of Management and Budget
EPC	Executive Process Council (<i>Phil, Laurie, Tim, Anthony, and Kathy</i>)
EPO	Executive Process Owner
ER	Employer Reporting
ORS	Office of Retirement Services
PRIM	Preretirement Information Meeting (<i>public school</i>)

Every summer seems to bring it's own unique challenges. "Working with these challenges, and the dedicated CSC staff, we're anticipating a very successful summer," says Joyce Weber.

Tutorials now online for public school employees

Public school employees can now view online tutorials explaining their retirement plan. Four new tutorials have been added to the public school employee's website on the [Webinars and Seminars page](#).

The new tutorials are condensed versions of the same content delivered during PRIMs, divided into sections. The tutorials are about four to nine minutes each and cover the following topics:

1. Qualifying for Your Pension
2. Calculating Your Pension
3. Pension Payment Options
4. The Equated Plan

CE staff will also develop similar tutorials to post on the state employee's website.



miAccount update

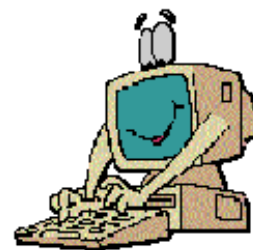
The pilot group for miAccount has been, well, quiet. In the big picture, that is good news. The pilot group users were asked to report problems and there have been very few. ORS also changed the email address where temporary passwords, confirmations, and message board responses are generated from to ors-messages@michigan.gov. This change seems to be working much better with most internet service providers.



The next step is to start getting member IDs to our active members. Plans are to include the member ID on the public school member statements and begin mailing the statements the beginning of August. Specifics on the distribution of member IDs to active state employees are still being determined.

Free computer classes available

Is an Excel class on your IDP? Need a refresher in Microsoft Word? Want to expand your horizons with PowerPoint? Well, DMB Organizational Development has a computer class to fit your needs! Check out the scheduled classes for the next quarter (July, August, and September) on the [DMB intranet site](#). After you log-in, on the top navigation click Employee Services, then Organizational Development, and finally, Computing Assistance. Check with your supervisor to get scheduled in one (or more) of the free classes.



business briefs

School employers to be notified of miAccount and

	<i>employees)</i>
PRO	Preretirement Orientation (<i>state employees</i>)
PS	Process Support
SME	Subject Matter Expert
STG	Systems Technology Group (<i>Web self-service contract vendor</i>)
T&T	Tools and Technology
UAT	User Acceptance Testing

Welcome Letters

School employers will be sent an email early next week telling them about miAccount, Member IDs, and the *Welcome Letter* for new members. The message assures employers of ORS's commitment to safeguard our customers' confidential retirement information. In addition they can expect their new employees reported on or after April 1, 2008 to receive their Member ID in their personalized *Welcome Letter*. This letter will encourage them to login to miAccount and nominate their beneficiary.

Glorious golfing galas!

For those of you who are golf enthusiasts here are a couple opportunities to indulge yourself this summer:



DMB Golf Outing

All DMB staff are invited to the annual DMB golf outing. The four-person scramble will be held on Friday August 15, 2008 at Royal Scot Golf Club in Lansing. [Join your fellow DMB co-workers for a fun day on the course.](#)

ORS Golf Outing

The 18th annual ORS Golf Outing will take place on Thursday, August 28. The cost is \$156 per foursome. When it first originated, the outing was held as a competition between ORS and DIT (at that time known as ASD). The winning office received a plaque, while the losing office received a "Crying Towel." [Read a little history on the event \(from 1998 to present\), or get information about this year's event.](#)

There is still plenty of room for teams in this year's outing, so get your team information to **Fred Covert** or **Bill Motz** as soon as possible. The deadline for registering and payment is Thursday, August 14.

Comings & Goings

CE welcomed two student employees: **Julie Schafer**, who started June 9, and **Annie Earls**, who joined the team June 16.

Julie is finishing up her last year at Baker College in Owosso where she is working toward her degree in human resource management. When she's not busy at work or school, she enjoys scrap booking.

Annie is a junior at Michigan State University where she is double majoring in communications and political science. She played basketball for MSU her freshman year and now enjoys playing on club teams.

CSC welcomed student **Olivia Johnson** on June 9. She completed one year at Central Michigan University and is now attending Lansing Community College to pursue a future in landscape architecture. Olivia lives in Durand and has a strong love for animals – she has seven dogs and one guinea pig!

The Director's Office welcomed their new student, **Matt McCool**, on June 16. Matt is currently attending Lansing Community College in his sophomore year and plans to transfer to Lawrence Technological University to pursue a degree in engineering. He is a car enthusiast and enjoys golfing in his spare time.

Laura Garza returned to ORS on June 16 to fill a temporary position in PS. Welcome back, Laura!

Staff on the move

Jennifer Carter, former temporary employee, accepted a student position in PS effective June 9.

Kara Gross has traded in her student position for a permanent spot in CSC. Her position was effective June 16.

Knowledge Library

[Click here to go to the Knowledge Library now.](#)

What's my Knowledge Library password? Where's that policy I need?

If you have these types of questions, the chart below can help you find your answers. The Knowledge Library has transitioned from Process Support to Customer Education. **Josey McCloud** is now receiving your general Knowledge Library questions while **Linda Reznick** continues to address password issues.

Uploading information	Customer Education – Josey McCloud
Help with searches	Customer Education – Josey McCloud
Password resets	Process Support – Linda Reznick
Questions or concerns	Customer Education – Josey McCloud

DMB Mission:
Partners in achieving
excellence

ORS Purpose:
We are an innovative
retirement
organization driven to
empower our
customers for a
successful today and
a secure tomorrow.

The *LookOut* is
published by the
Office of Retirement
Services,
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and Budget, State of
Michigan

Director:
Phil Stoddard
Edited by Customer
Education

Thanks for reading!!



Renovation Update

B-Wing is cleared out

With staff moved out of B-Wing, the modular furniture and the carpeting have been removed. The goal is to have all surplus items out of that area so the contractor can begin tearing out the ceiling and walls to update the electrical, the data and phone lines, and the air processing system.

ORS Studio

The Studio has a temporary home in the mailroom during our swing time. With this change in location, there will be times when noise in the mailroom will need to be kept to a minimum. Please watch for signs on the doors for "Noise Reduction Alerts." Your help and cooperation is appreciated.

Supplies

Don't forget to use the Supplies email box, ORS-Supplies@michigan.gov, to report equipment service needs or order supplies. The mailroom is a secured area and should not be entered by anyone except for Document Management staff and CE staff working in the Studio.

Note: Because some of the links in this newsletter point to network resources, some of the links may not work if you are reading this outside of the organization.