

Program Letter

United States
Railroad Retirement Board
Office of Programs



Quality Reporting Service Center

Phone: (312) 751-4992

E-Mail: QRSC@rrb.gov

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Letter No. 2018-02

Date: December 5, 2017

TO: **Employer Contact Officials**

SUBJECT: **New RRB Forms Available via the Employer Reporting System (ERSNet)**

Please share this information with the appropriate members of your staff who file service and compensation reports and other related activities for employees of your organization.

The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) has added two new services to the ERSNet system. The following new services are available immediately on the ERSNet system and an explanation of their functions is shown below.

- Form G-73a.1, Notice of Death of Railroad Annuitant
- RL-5a, Notice to Employer of Annuity Award Listing

Form G-73a.1:

Form G-73a.1, Notice of Death of Railroad Annuitant, is used to notify an employer of an employee annuitant's death whenever a first notice of death is processed. The report is generated on a monthly basis and released to the last employer of the former employee.

RL-5a:

The RL-5a, Notice to Employer of Annuity Award, is a monthly listing provided to a requesting employer that provides initial annuity payment information about their former employees who have retired in the current month. The notice includes an annuity tier breakdown, date rights relinquished and Supplemental annuity information (if eligible). Employers who want to receive this information are required to submit a written statement which explains how the information will be used.

Submit your request along with a completed Form BA-12, Application for Employer Reporting Internet Access, to the Quality Reporting Service Center (QRSC). After it is received, QRSC will forward the request to the RRB's Office of General Counsel (OGC). OGC will render a decision as to whether the purpose of the employer's request will allow disclosure of the employee's annuity information.

Note – If you are currently receiving this listing, you are not required to submit a new request statement.

These notices are intended for employers that need this information from the RRB to administer their private pension plans or for other actuarial or budgetary planning purposes. The information is provided to employers for internal processing only and should be kept private and secure.

Enrollment in these services will eliminate the need for multiple releases of paper forms to employers. Both forms will be found under New Items in ERSNet (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

The screenshot shows the ERSNet system's main menu. The 'New Items' tab is active, displaying a list of various forms. One specific item, '» G-73A1', is highlighted with a red oval. The footer provides contact details for the Railroad Retirement Board and links to related government websites.

ACCESS Levels on the ERSNet Site

The ERSNet system is a role-based system which means that each user's access is tailored to the role of work they perform for their company. Access levels are assigned by the company, allowing employers the ability to retain control over the forms employees of their organization can view and submit to the RRB. If you are not enrolled and want to begin filing your reports on the ERSNet follow the instructions below.

Applying for Access

To apply for access do the following:

- Read the Security Guidelines explaining your responsibilities as a user of ERSNet. They are available at either <https://www.rrb.gov/RERI Chapter 8 Security Guidelines> or <https://www.rrb.gov/LERI Chapter 8 Security Guidelines>.
- File the enclosed Form BA-12, Application for Employer Reporting Internet Access. Complete Sections A, B, C, D, and F, then have the designated employee sign Item 5 in Section E, and return the form to you. The certification in Section E must be completed by a certifying official of the company who has the authority to sign official RRB forms. If you have signature authority, sign the certification. Otherwise, the company president and those persons designated on the Form G-117a, Designation of Contact Official, are assumed to have signature authority. *NOTE:* In addition to the information above, current ERSNet users wanting to add access to these two forms should mark "Modify Access" for Section D(1) as well as mark the "R" box next to each form under Section F. For additional copies of Form BA-12 or information on how to complete it, go directly to <https://www.rrb.gov/sites/default/files/2017-12/BA-12.pdf> or contact the Quality Reporting Service Center at the telephone number or e-mail address shown on page 1 of

this program letter. All employer forms can be accessed on the RRB website at <https://www.rrb.gov/Employers/Forms>.

Within five to seven days of receipt of an acceptable application, the RRB will mail your user ID and temporary password along with instructions for accessing the site. To deter fraudulent use of ERSNet, Form BA-12 cannot be completed or filed on our website. Original signatures (no reproductions) are needed, and the form must be transmitted by either the USPS or an express mail carrier. For security reasons, *facsimiles are not acceptable*.

Detailed instructions on how to use the system are covered in Part VIII of the Reporting Instructions. See below for direct links to the reporting instructions on our website.

Rail Employer Reporting Instructions

https://www.rrb.gov/RERI_Part_VIII_Employer_Reportin g_System_ERS_Internet_User_Instructions

Labor Employer Reporting Instructions

https://www.rrb.gov/LERI_Part_VIII_Employer_Reportin g_System_ERS_Internet_User_Instructions

Attachments:

Form BA-12

Security Guidelines

Explanation of Access Levels

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ATTACHMENT 1

United States of America
Railroad Retirement Board

Form Approved
OMB No. 3220-0008

Application for Employer Reporting Internet Access

General Instructions – This form may be used by employers covered under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts to add, modify, or terminate employee access to the Railroad Retirement Board's (RRB) Employer Reporting System (ERSNet). You may request system access for one or more employees, and you may authorize different levels of access for each employee. You may also request that an individual employee file online reports on behalf of one or more subsidiary or affiliate employers. In each case, your employees must certify that they will adhere to the RRB's security guidelines, which include the use of an authoritative electronic signature. The *Security Guidelines* are under *Part VIII, Chapter 8* of the *Reporting Instructions* on the RRB's website.

- To request new or modified system access, complete the entire form.
- To terminate an employee's access, complete only Sections A, B(1-4), D1, and E.

Making representations on this form to gain unauthorized access to the RRB Employer Reporting System or using an authorized access for fraudulent purposes is a violation of federal law punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both.

We estimate this form takes an average of 10 to 20 minutes per response to complete, including the time needed for reviewing the instructions, getting the needed data, and reviewing the completed form. Federal agencies may not conduct or sponsor, and respondents are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB number. If you wish, send comments regarding the accuracy of our estimate or any other aspect of this form, including suggestions for reducing the completion time, to: Associate Chief Information Officer for Policy and Compliance, Railroad Retirement Board, 844 N. Rush Street, Chicago, IL 60611-1275.

Section A Employer Information

In this section, enter the BA number, name, and address of the employer whose reports will be accessed online.

Special Instructions to Request Access on Behalf of Multiple Employers – If you are requesting the **same level of access** for the employee listed in Section B on behalf of multiple employers, list all affected BA numbers in Item 1. If you are requesting **different levels of access** for this employee for different employers, file a separate application for each level of access.

1. BA Number(s):

2. Name and Address of Employer – *If you are requesting access on behalf of multiple employers, provide only the name and address of the employer serving as primary contact for this account.*

Section B Employee Information

1. Name:

2. Title	3. Telephone Number ()	4. E-Mail Address
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5. I have read the document "Security Guidelines" and agree to comply with these guidelines. I understand that my logon, if used to file forms, has the same status as my signature on a paper document. I also understand that providing false or fraudulent information through the RRB Employer Reporting System is a violation of federal law punishable by fine, imprisonment, or both.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Section C Group or Section E-Mail Address to Receive Notices																									
Complete this section only if you prefer to designate a group or section e-mail address as the default address for RRB work notices, rather than the e-mail address listed in Section B above.																									
<p>1. Default E-Mail Address:</p> <p>2. If you have more than one group or section e-mail address, number each address and specify here which forms or group of forms are associated with each address.</p>																									
Section D Requested Action and Level of Access <table border="1"> <tr> <td>1. Action (check appropriate box)</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Add New User</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Modify Access</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Terminate Access</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="4">2. Explanation of the Levels of Access Used in Section F on the next page.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>R</td> <td>Reader</td> <td colspan="2">User can only view the forms. Restricts access to "read only."</td> </tr> <tr> <td>U</td> <td>Updater</td> <td colspan="2">User has access to complete or "update" a form that changes the RRB's record of service and compensation. User cannot submit the form to the RRB without authorization.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>A</td> <td>Approver</td> <td colspan="2">User has access to approve, update, certify and submit forms to the RRB. Level "A" access is appropriate for personnel who work independently and supervisory approval is not needed.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>X</td> <td>Terminate</td> <td colspan="2">User is prohibited from access to ERSNet or a particular form.</td> </tr> </table>		1. Action (check appropriate box)	<input type="checkbox"/> Add New User	<input type="checkbox"/> Modify Access	<input type="checkbox"/> Terminate Access	2. Explanation of the Levels of Access Used in Section F on the next page.				R	Reader	User can only view the forms. Restricts access to "read only."		U	Updater	User has access to complete or "update" a form that changes the RRB's record of service and compensation. User cannot submit the form to the RRB without authorization.		A	Approver	User has access to approve, update, certify and submit forms to the RRB. Level "A" access is appropriate for personnel who work independently and supervisory approval is not needed.		X	Terminate	User is prohibited from access to ERSNet or a particular form.	
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For additional information on levels of access, see <i>Part VIII, Chapter 2</i> of the <i>Reporting Instructions</i> .																									
Section E Certification of Authority to Approve Access <p>The form must be signed by an official with signature authority to sign RRB forms for the employer(s) listed in Section A. Signatures of two individuals are not required if the employee listed in Section B has authority to sign RRB forms. The head of the company and those persons designated on Form G-117A, <i>Designation of Contact Official</i>, have signature authority. A contact official may assign signature authority to a designee, but the RRB will verify with the contact official any signatures other than those of a contact official.</p>																									
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>1. Name (Print)</td> <td>2. Title</td> <td>3. Telephone Number ()</td> </tr> </table> <p>4. I have signature authority to approve this request and authorize the RRB to grant access as indicated above. I understand that I am responsible for notifying the RRB if, in the future, this individual's access should be terminated.</p>		1. Name (Print)	2. Title	3. Telephone Number ()																					
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Signature: _____ Date: _____																									
<p>Questions? Please contact the System Administrator at (312) 751-4961 or the Quality Reporting Service Center at (312) 751-4992.</p>																									
<p>Mail this completed application to: Quality Reporting Service Center Railroad Retirement Board 844 N. Rush Street Chicago, IL 60611-1275</p>																									
<p>For RRB Use: Access _____ Reviewed by: _____</p>																									

Continued on Next Page

Section F Forms and Levels of Access				
Check one box for each form. Note: Employee's level of access will apply for all employers listed in Section A.1.				
Form BA-3, Annual Report of Creditable Compensation	<input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> U	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form BA-4, Report of Creditable Compensation Adjustments	<input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> U	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form BA-6a, Form BA-6 Address Report			<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form BA-11, Report of Gross Earnings	<input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> U	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form G-73a.1, Notice of Death of Railroad Retirement Annuitant	<input type="checkbox"/> R			<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form G-88A.1, Request for Verification of Last Date Carried on Payroll	<input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> U	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form G-88A.2, Notice of Retirement and Request for Service Needed for Eligibility	<input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> U	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form G-88P, Employer's Supplemental Pension Report	<input type="checkbox"/> R	<input type="checkbox"/> U	<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form GL-129a, Record of Employer Determination on Employee Protest of Service and Compensation			<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-3s, Request for Lien Information; Report of Settlement			<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-3u, Request for Section 2(f) Information			<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-4E, Notice of RUIA Claim Determinations	<input type="checkbox"/> R		<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-4K, Prepayment Notice of Employees' Applications and Claims for Benefits under RUIA	<input type="checkbox"/> R		<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-6, Report of Tier I Tax Transactions	<input type="checkbox"/> R			<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-6Y, Annual Summary of Tier I Tax Transactions	<input type="checkbox"/> R			<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-30b, Notice of Lien	<input type="checkbox"/> R			<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-40Q, Quarterly Notice to Employers – Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act	<input type="checkbox"/> R			<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form ID-40R/S, Annual Notice to Employers – Railroad Unemployment Insurance Act and Annual Proclamation	<input type="checkbox"/> R			<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form RL-5a, Notice to Employer of Annuity Award	<input type="checkbox"/> R			<input type="checkbox"/> X
Form SI-5F (SUP), Status Report – Personal Injury Claims	<input type="checkbox"/> R		<input type="checkbox"/> A	<input type="checkbox"/> X

ATTACHMENT 2

Security Guidelines

Introduction

The site, <https://secure.rrb.gov/ERSNet/login.aspx>, is an official United States Government site intended for use by employers covered under the Railroad Retirement and Railroad Unemployment Insurance Acts in filing service and compensation reports with the Railroad Retirement Board and related activities. The site is referred to as the Employer Reporting System (ERSNet). The Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is taking all reasonable measures to ensure the security of the information sent and received via the ERSNet site.

Transmission Security

RRB.gov/ERSNet utilizes a secure transmission protocol (Secure Sockets Layer – SSL) to provide encryption protection for the communication between your computer and the server that RRB uses for the Employer Reporting Internet site. You will note that the address to the site begins “https” rather than “http”. This indicates you are connecting to a secure site using Secure Sockets Layer.

Authentication of User

The RRB uses a written application form to ensure that only authorized users have access to the system. The application is signed by an authorized representative of the employer and reviewed by the RRB. Once authorized, future authentication is controlled by a logon and password. A logon, if used to file forms, has the same status as a signature on a paper document.

Password Security

It is the responsibility of each individual to keep secure the password supplied for the purpose of accessing the RRB employer site. In applying for access, you agree not to share your password and to log onto the system only as yourself. All individuals requiring access to the system should apply for their own access. Users are responsible for all use of their password accounts. The system will prompt you to change your password every 60 days. If you do not access the system that often, you will be prompted to change your password upon accessing the system but in no case will passwords remain active longer than 200 days.

Secure Your PC

It is the responsibility of each individual to secure their personal computers. When you step away from your computer, it is important to lock or turn it off so that unauthorized persons cannot use your computer to masquerade as you and gain illegal access.

Password Lockout

If you type your password incorrectly more than three times, you will be temporarily locked out of the ERSNet system. If you are locked out or suspect that your password may have been compromised, contact the password administrator (312) 751-4992.

Password Termination

When an employee who has access to this system, leaves your company, notify the RRB to terminate their access by completing Form BA-12, Application for Employer Reporting Internet Access. Forms should either be mailed to the address listed under Section E or faxed to (312) 751-7123. If you suspect an employee is, or may become, a security problem, immediately call the password administrator at (312) 751-4992. The RRB has the capability to lock out users on a temporary or permanent basis.

Session Timeout

For security reasons, a session will not remain open indefinitely. Twenty minutes of inactivity will result in an open session being deleted. Any data entered to a screen but not “updated” or “approved” depending on the options for that screen, will be lost when a session is deleted.

Privacy and Law Enforcement Investigations

The RRB is committed to protecting privacy. Any personal information you provide as part of the application process will be used only for the purposes described. Your logon and password control confidentiality of employer data by making available only information you are authorized to receive. System administrators will not read files unless absolutely necessary in the course of their duties and will treat the contents of those files as private information at all times.

The ERSNet system maintains statistical information concerning network traffic flow and volume including date, time, Internet protocol, type of browser and operating system. We do not collect personal information about you *just because you visit the site*. An attempt to identify individual users will be made if, and only if, illegal behavior is suspected.

For site security purposes, we have software that can identify users. If illegal behavior is suspected, this software could be used to:

1. trace the source of an attack designed to disrupt the site,
2. trace the source of an unauthorized attempt to modify information stored on this system, or
3. prove whether fraud has occurred in connection with a law enforcement investigation.

Use of this system constitutes consent to such tracing and auditing.

Unauthorized or Fraudulent Use

Any person who knowingly and willingly:

1. Makes any representation that is false
 - a. to obtain information from RRB records and/or,
 - b. intended to deceive the RRB as to the true identity of an individual; or
2. Obtains unauthorized access and/or modifies information on this site, could be punished by a fine or imprisonment, or both.

Cookies

This site uses temporary session “cookies” to give you a single, uninterrupted session when you are online. This allows you to move from one secure section to another without having to re-enter your logon and password. We do not use persistent “cookies” which are permanent files placed on a visitor’s site to allow a website to monitor a visitor’s use of the site. To the extent we use any cookies; they expire and are immediately deleted no later than the closing of the Web browser.

ATTACHMENT 3

Explanation of Access Levels

Access is to Specific Forms

When the RRB was developing requirements for the Internet system, some employers required that the work of a department remain private within that department. As a result, we developed a “roles-based access” which provides access on an individual form basis. An employee’s access is expected to be specific to their role, or work, at their company. If a form is used only by one department, access can be limited to employees in that department.

Two-Step Update and Approval Process

Again, when developing requirements, some employers required that a manager review and certify service and compensation reports completed by their staff. Others indicated that the person authorized to complete the report was also authorized to certify and file the report without additional review. No employer required a review of forms other than BA-3, BA-4, and BA-11 as these are the only forms which change the RRB record of an employee’s service and compensation.

The RRB access system was designed to account for all of these differences. A separate update function was developed for Form BA-4. If you wish to use a second person as a reviewer, assign update access to the staff that prepare the BA-4’s and assign approve access to the staff that review and certify BA-4’s to the RRB. If you do not wish to use a second person as a reviewer, do not assign update access. Rather assign approve access to the staff that prepare and certify the BA-4’s.

Update Access

This access is used only with forms that change the RRB’s record of service and compensation, as explained above. Update access allows a person to complete or update a Form BA-4, but not to submit the form to the RRB. The form is updated to the system where it will await approval. The form appears in the “outstanding items” list with a status of “awaiting approval.” Only a person with approve access can submit or certify the form to the RRB. While the form is pending approval, it can be modified by the original updater. Once the form has been approved, it is no longer available on the system and no further changes are possible.

Approve Access

Only a person with approve access can certify and submit forms to the RRB. For most forms, the person with approve access will also be the person who completes the form. In the case of a BA-4, the person with approve access may be approving a form completed by an updater, as explained above, or may prepare and certify their own BA-4’s. A person with approve access can delete a form created by an updater. A person with approve access can also modify a form created by an updater; however, the form must be updated again before it is approved. This is a security measure so that all the updates can be recorded for the appropriate person.

Read-Only Access

This access is used with forms that have summary reports. Read access to Form BA-4 is access to the BA-4 summary report, not to pending Forms BA-4. Read access does not include access to pending work on the system whether initiated by the RRB or by the employer. There is no read access to Forms BA-6a or GL-129a as these forms do not include reports.