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Title: I, Payroll/Personnel Manual
Chapter: 7, Time and Attendance Procedures, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions
Bulletin: TNAINST 04-2, Announcement of System for Time and Attendance Reporting (STAR 4.0 Web-Based Version) and Transaction Code (TC) Descriptors
Date: August 13, 2004
To: Holders of the Payroll/Personnel Manual
Agency Personnel Office
Personnel Officers
Personnel Users Groups
T&A Contact Points

This bulletin announces the implementation of (1) STAR 4.0, a new Web-Based Version of STAR, and (2) TC descriptors on the time and attendance (T&A) report, which are both effective with the processing of Pay Period 17.

STAR 4.0

STAR 4.0 is a T&A application which is used with Internet Explorer 6.0 (or higher) or Netscape Navigator 6.2.3 (or higher) for timekeepers to record T&A data at any time during the pay period, track employee leave data, and transmit data to the National Finance Center (NFC) for processing via the Internet. STAR 4.0 replaces the current version of STAR on the NFC Home Page. Although window behaviors of STAR 4.0 differ from the current version, all functionalities of the current version have been maintained in STAR 4.0. A table is attached which lists the differences between the versions of STAR. Please consult the procedure referred to in this bulletin for additional information. No action is necessary on the part of current STAR Web users to begin using STAR 4.0 starting September 2, 2004. A brochure describing the features of STAR 4.0 is also attached.

Security Requests For STAR 4.0

New users of STAR as a Web-based application must submit access requests via their agency T&A coordinator and agency NFC security officer by e-mail to *nfc.securityofc@usda.gov* or by fax to **504-253-5798**. This request must include the following information:

- User name, social security number, and user ID
- Agency name and contact telephone number
- User role requested (timekeeper, transmitter, application administrator)
- Application name (STAR 4.0)
- Contact point

NOTE: Security requests for STAR 4.0 should be submitted at least 4 weeks, but no more than 6 weeks prior to the desired implementation of a user into the STAR system. For more efficient processing, large groups should be submitted by individual implementation schedules and not submitted at the same time.

Transaction Code Descriptors

With the implementation of STAR 4.0, a TC Descriptor field will also be added to the Biweekly T&A. A TC descriptor is a code that is used in conjunction with specific TCs entered on an employee's T&A. The entry of a TC descriptor is optional. If used, it allows agencies to enforce restrictions and limitations for special uses and also provides for agency, Office of Personnel Management, and Congressional reporting needs.

TC descriptor information may be viewed on the Payroll/Personnel Inquiry System (PINQ) Program PQ025, TA Extensions. It is also reportable through the FOCUS Reporting System in the PAYTA Element Listing as:

- TRANS_DESC (pay status)
- O_TRN_DES_L1 (nonpay status)
- O_TRN_DES_L2 (nonpay status)
- O_TRN_DES_L3 (nonpay status)
- O_TRN_DES_L4 (nonpay status)

NOTE: Agencies using other T&A reporting systems may also submit TC descriptors with their biweekly T&A data.

Procedures

In accordance with this implementation, the following procedures have been revised: (1) Title I, Chapter 7, Section 1, Time and Attendance Instructions; (2) Title I, Chapter 7, Section 5, System for Time and Attendance Reporting (STAR 4.0 Web-Based Version); and (3) Title VI, Chapter 4, Remote Terminal Inquiry Systems, Section 1, Payroll/Personnel Inquiry System (PINQ).

To view and/or print these procedures, go to the NFC Home Page (www.nfc.usda.gov) and click the **Pubs & Forms** icon. At the Pubs & Forms page left-hand menu, click **List By Title/Chapter** and search for applicable procedure on the list provided.

Inquiries

Please refer questions about NFC processing to the Payroll Operations Branch at **504-255-4630**. For questions about policy/regulations, contact your Agriculture Payroll/Personnel User Group (AGPUG) representative or Committee for Agriculture Payroll/Personnel System (CAPPS) representative. Please refer questions about STAR 4.0 to Customer Support at **504-255-5230** or via e-mail at customer.support@usda.gov.



RANDOLPH H. GONZALES, Acting Director
Government Employees Services Division

Attachments

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Star Comparison

STAR Web 3.0	STAR Version 4.0, Web-Based Version
Main Menu driven.	Drop-down menu driven.
Log in displayed the Main Menu.	Log in displays the Contact Point List available to the user.
Tab from field to field.	Upon field completion, the cursor moves intuitively to the next field.
Search to select the current pay period.	Defaults to the current pay period.
Search to select the applicable pay period to roll over to.	Displays the pay period rolled over from and the pay period rolled over to.
Access the Employee List from the Contact Point List.	Employee List is available by double-clicking the applicable contact point.
Employee records accessed via the tool bar on the Employee List.	Easy access to employee records by double-clicking the applicable employee.
Biweekly T&A, T&A Header, Leave Account, and Employee Detail accessed through tool buttons.	Biweekly T&A, T&A Header, Leave Account, and Employee Detail accessed through tabs.
Transaction Descriptors field not available.	Transaction Descriptor field added to the Bi-weekly T&A.
Dollar amounts verified after entry.	Dollar amounts are computed upon entry. No need to verify the amount.
With authorized access, employee records were moved on the Employee Detail record.	With authorized access, employee records are moved by selecting Move Employees on the drop-down menu.
Entries were saved by keystroke.	Entries must be saved by clicking [Save] before accessing another employee record.
No feedback available.	Feedback option available.
No field-level help available.	Field-level help available.
No refresh available.	Refresh option available in drop-down menus.

STAR Web Minimum Hardware and Software Requirements

- A personal computer (PC) with Internet capabilities.
- Access to the Internet with a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser of 6.0 or higher or Netscape with a browser of 6.2.3 or higher.
- Printer capable of printing Web pages.
- An NFC user ID with access to STAR 4.0.

Request for Access

To request access to STAR 4.0, contact your agency NFC Security Officer. The agency Security Officer should e-mail or fax an access request to NFC's Information Systems Security Office.

Procedures

Comprehensive online help is available on each window by clicking **[Help]**. Additionally, field-level help is available by clicking the field name. The help text is also available in procedure format on the NFC

home page (www.nfc.usda.gov). To view and/or print the STAR 4.0 procedure, go to the NFC home page and click the **Pubs & Forms** icon. At the **Pubs & Forms** left-hand menu, click **List By Title/Chapter** and search for Title 1, Chapter 7, Section 5, System for Time and Attendance Reporting, STAR 4.0 Web-Based Version, on the list provided. If you are unable to print from the Web, you can request a printed copy by submitting Form AD-1083, Request for Action for Procedures/Reports, to the address or fax number printed on the form. The AD-1083 may be obtained on the NFC Web site.

Questions about STAR 4.0

To find out more about security, equipment, hardware, and software requirements, contact NFC's Customer Support personnel at:

Customer Support
National Finance Center, USDA
ATTN: CS-0604
P.O. Box 60000
New Orleans, LA 70160-0001
504-255-5230
email: customer.support@usda.gov



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