13 DATA ENTRY TIPS

Display on Time Input Roster (IDTC) depends upon EDB Time Reporting Codes

In order for an employee record to appear for time reporting in OPTRS, the employee record must be updated in the EDB with one of the following codes at the appointment level (EAPC screen/ Time Reporting Code field):

Z:
*Positive Time.*
Appointments in the code “Z” category require time reporting data entry in order for payment to be processed. If no time is entered, payment is not rendered.

R:
*Exception Time.*
Appointments in the code “R” category do not require time reporting data entry. Any time entered against the account distribution data is defined as a variation and replaces preset regular time for that employee. If no time is reported, payment is still rendered automatically according to the PPS pay distribution. Always verify prelisted time to ensure that each employee is to be properly paid.

Other code (P or T):
If any other code (such as P or T) appears in the Time Reporting Code field, you cannot extract that employee’s payroll data for display in the online time reporting system.

Display on Time Input Roster relates to other codes in EDB

The way pay is displayed on the Time Input Roster relates in part to the code entered in the EDB on the PPS appointment line (Rate Code field)(Fixed/Variable indicator).

Hourly-Rated Employees
*Rate code H in the PPS appointment.*
Time for hourly-rated employees is listed on the Time Input Roster in terms of hours for pay.

Salaried Employees
*Rate code A in the PPS appointment.*
Time for salaried employees is listed on the Time Input Roster as a percentage of the month for pay.

By-Agreement Employees
Rate code B in the PPS appointment.
The by-agreement means there is no applicable time factor listed on the Time Input Roster. A lump sum for payment is listed in the rate field of the Time Input Roster.

Fixed Appointment
*Fixed/Variable code F in the PPS appointment.*
Time for an employee with a fixed appointment is prelisted on the Time Input Roster.

**NOTE:** Use caution in establishing ‘F’ (fixed appointment) indicators for casual status employees. The system will estimate “holiday” pay, which may not be appropriate in certain cases.

Variable Appointment
*Fixed/Variable code V in the PPS appointment.*
Time for an employee with a variable appointment is not prelisted on the Time Input Roster.

Pay Period Ending Date vs. Pay Date

The distinction between Pay Period Ending Date and Pay Date is important when scheduling transactions, extracting the Time Input and Leave Input rosters, and creating payments or adjustments for prior pay periods.

**PAY DATE**
Pay Date is NOT a data entry field. When a transaction is initiated through a data entry screen or scheduling criteria, the Pay Date is automatically displayed as reference information. The purpose of the pay date is to inform the timekeeper of the exact date on which the results of a transaction will appear.

**PAY PERIOD END DATE (PPE)**
*For scheduling a transaction:*
Pay Period End Date is a data entry field. Pay period end date is used primarily for scheduling payroll transactions. For every type of transaction, you must designate a pay cycle and pay period end date in which the transaction will be processed. (Refer to the Hot News for Application PPS screen for next available scheduling dates.)

*For which services are performed:*
The PPE within the adjustment transaction is independent of the PPE and cycle for which the adjustment transaction is being scheduled. The PPE within the transaction describes the period in which services were actually performed or leave time was used.

**Entering Pay Period End Date in Adjustment Transactions**

**REMEMBER**
If the pay cycle processing “window” has already closed, a message informs you that the pay period ending date you used for scheduling has already passed. Always verify the reporting deadline has not passed by reviewing the window end date (last day to enter time) on the Payroll Calendar.
It is important to note when preparing an adjustment transaction that if a PPE and cycle cutoff has already passed, OPTRS will not allow you to schedule the adjustment using the expired selection criteria. If time reporting window for that cycle has already closed, the following error message is displayed: *Pay end date entered has already been processed.*

**Retrieving Distribution Data from EDB (EDAP and EDLR screens)**

Distribution information from the EDB is the basis for both the Additional Payment (AP) and Late/Reduce Payment adjustment transaction types. As a shortcut, you can copy ('retrieve') employee distribution information directly from the EDB for data entry on the EDAP and EDLR screens. After retrieving distribution data, you need only change or add data on these screens as applicable.

**NOTE:** A second single distribution cannot be retrieved until the first one is updated. Use of the retrieve procedure for multiple distributions also reduces the need for the preparation of multiple PAN notices.

**Short Retrieve (single distribution)**

Use the short retrieve procedure if you know the specific distribution number from an EDB record that closely matches the transaction you want to prepare. If you do not know the distribution number, use the nested retrieve procedure.

To retrieve employee distribution data while in EDAP or EDLR screens (do one of the following):

1. Type **R** (Retrieve) in the **C** (command) field to the left of the transaction.
2. Tab to the Dist. field and type the distribution number from the EDB record that best matches the transaction you want to prepare.
3. Press `<Enter>` to retrieve the distribution data.

OR

1. Tab to the Command Line (**===>**) at the bottom of the screen.
2. Type **R nn**, where "nn" is the distribution number from the EDB record.

**Short Retrieve (multiple distributions)**

To retrieve multiple distributions or multiple copies of the same distribution (do one of the following):

1. Type **R** (Retrieve) in the **C** (command) field to left of as many transactions as you need to prepare.
   
   You can select up to a maximum of three transactions per page.
2. Tab to the Dist field of each transaction and type the distribution number from the EDB record that best matches each transaction.
3. Press `<Enter>` to retrieve the distribution data for each transaction.

OR

- On the Command Line (**===>**), type **R nn, nn, nn**, where nn is each distribution number, or the same distribution number repeated.
Retrieving multiple distributions results in a separate transaction for each distribution number entered (up to a maximum of three).

If a specified distribution does not exist for the selected employee record, the System displays an error message.

**Nested Retrieve**

Use the nested retrieve procedure if you do not know the distribution number associated with an EDB record that closely matches the transaction you want to prepare.

**NOTE:** Be sure to 'sensitize' the transaction before nesting out to PPS Inquiry so that you can be returned directly to your update from the nest.

1. Sensitize the transaction by typing any character in one of the fields.
   
   If you do not sensitize the transaction, the System forces you to log on again and reschedule the transaction after you exit the nest.
   
   By nesting correctly, the System returns to the original OPTRS transaction as soon as you exit the nested PPS screen.

2. Press <F9 JUMP> to place the cursor in the Function field at the bottom of the screen.
   
   Ignore any errors that may be displayed at this time.

3. Type **IAPT** to display the IAPT screen in EDB, then press <Enter>.
   
   The message: *Update in progress* in the lower-right corner of the screen indicates you are nesting correctly.

4. Note the distribution number associated with the employee record.

5. Press <F12 EXIT> to escape the nest and return to the update in progress.

6. Use the Command line (===>) retrieve procedure to retrieve the data from the distributions you noted.

**NOTE:** Typing R (retrieve) in the C (command) field to the left of the transaction will not work unless the update in progress is first cancelled.

For detailed retrieve procedures, see previous sections: **Short Retrieve (single distribution)** and **Short Retrieve (multiple distributions)**.

For additional information and procedures on Nesting, refer to the PPS Online Procedures Manual.

**Copying Adjustment Transaction Data**

When performing different adjustment transactions (Additional Payment (AP), One-Time Payment (FT), Late/Reduce Pay (LX/RX)) for the same employee, data element values are often repeated. For example, the account/fund/sub field value is usually the same for an employee, regardless of the transaction type. To facilitate data entry, you can copy data from an existing transaction to a new transaction.
Should the timekeeper desire to copy the updated adjustment to prepare a subsequent adjustment, it can be accomplished by placing a "C" in the C (command) column at the left of the updated transaction to be copied.
Copying to a new transaction in the sequence

To copy data to a new transaction (new page and sequence number):

1. Verify the transaction was successfully updated.
   A transaction cannot be copied until it is updated.
2. Type C to the left of the transaction lines you want to copy.
3. Press <Enter>.
   The copied transaction has a different sequence number from the
   original transaction. Otherwise, both transactions are identical. As a
   precaution, note the sequence number of the copy before changing data.
4. Add, change, and delete data (such as a pay period ending date) for the new transaction as
   necessary, then press <F5 Update>.
   When you update the new transaction (after preparing the PAN notice),
   both the new and the original transactions are displayed. You may
   repeat the procedure to copy both transactions at once and create two
   additional new transactions to update.

Deleting Data from a field

To delete data from a field: (one of the following)

- Type an asterisk (*) in the first position of the field, then press <Enter>.
  It is not necessary to "space over" the remaining text in the field.

IDTC transactions:
Once an IDTC transaction is updated, the DOS code cannot be deleted.
However, a transaction can be canceled (by pressing <F2-Cancel>)
before it is updated.

EDAT transactions:
To delete an EDAT time report and its corresponding DOS code
together, type an asterisk (*) in each field, then press <Enter>.

NOTE:
Data cannot be deleted from any fields in an updated EDAT menu transaction.

- Press <F5 Update>.
  Initiating an update clears the field to all blanks.

Changing Data in a field

To change data in a field:

1. Type over the current field value with a new value.
2. Press <Enter>.
3. Press <F5 Update>.

NOTE:
No data can be changed in any fields in an updated EDAT menu transaction.
Keying Decimal Numbers in a field

When keying decimal data:

- It is not necessary to enter the decimal point.

  The system assumes the decimal point corresponding to the data element definition. For example, if the data element is defined as having two decimal places and you enter 100, the system interprets the value as 1.00.

  If you do type a decimal point, the system takes the data as it was keyed. For example, if you enter 100., the system interprets the value to be 100.00.

Rate/Amount decimal placement corresponds to Rate Code

Automatic decimal placement in some fields, such as Rate/Amt corresponds to the value entered in the Rate code field.

- If there is no entry in the Rate code field, data you enter in Rate/Amt is entered as keyed.

- If there is an entry in the Rate code field, and you type a decimal point in the Rate/Amt field, the value you entered is edited against existing the Rate Code value.

- If you change the Rate code, decimal alignment in the Rate/Amt field is automatically changed to reflect the new code type.

| NOTE: | Decimal placement for entry in the H/% field corresponds to the Time Reporting field. However, if no code is entered in the H/% field, any time reported defaults to a percentage (i.e., four decimal places). |

Data Entry in Loc/Act/CC/Fund/PC/Sub field
(EDHC screen)

When performing data entry on the EDHC screen, you can enter individual elements of the Loc/Act/CC/Fund/PC/Sub field (location, account, cost center, fund, project code, and sub-account).

Location, account, fund and sub are required for accounting purposes.
Find' Process on IDTC Rosters

The Find process allows you to search the Time Input roster (EDHC) for a specific employee record. When you request the roster, the first page is automatically displayed. The roster may be several pages long, with employee names presented alphabetically. The Find process saves time by directly accessing the employee record you need, bypassing the need to scroll using the <F8 Forward> and <F7 Backward> commands.

To use the Find process to display a specific employee record:
1. Tab to the Name field in the screen footer.
2. Type one or more characters of the employee's last name.
3. Press <Enter>.

The roster page containing the first employee name that matches is displayed.

A 'match' means the first employee name that equals or exceeds the characters entered. For example, if you type "J", the roster page displayed will contain the first page of selected employees whose last name begins with "J". If you type "JON", the roster page displayed is the first page of selected employees whose last name starts with "JON", (i.e., JONES, JONSTON, etc.)

NOTE: If you enter characters outside the range of employee names contained in the roster (e.g., AAAA or ZZZZ), the system automatically displays the first page of the roster (AAAA) or the last page of the roster (ZZZZ).

System Edits

In order for an OPTRS transaction process successfully, it must pass through three levels of System editing.

Range/Value Edits: values entered in each field are verified; for example, an alpha character cannot be used in a numeric data field. Range/value edit messages are displayed online to the user.

Consistency Edits: relationship of selected data elements to one another is verified. Consistency edit messages are displayed online to the user.

Pay Edits: Transaction scheduling data is verified against current EDB data and actual pay cycle cutoff windows. Central Office reviews a report of pay edits.

NOTE: For detailed information on the Edit process, refer to the PPS Online Procedures Manual which was distributed to departmental PPS EDB maintenance (preparer) personnel.
Always perform Range/Value Edits before Update

Range/value edits are performed with respect to a single data element. The System compares data entered in a field with a permissible range of values for that field, as defined in the System design. For example, a date field entry is edited to verify that it contains an acceptable date (i.e., month entry must be between 01 and 12; day entry must not be greater than the number of days in the month specified).

Perform range/value edits after completing data entry on each screen.

To perform range/value edits:

- Press <Enter>.

  Range/value edit messages are displayed at the bottom of the screen. You must resolve any 'reject' range/value edit problems before continuing to the Update process.

REMEMBER...

Pressing <Enter> initiates Range/Value edits.
Pressing <F5 Update> initiates update process Consistency edits.

Consistency Edits and Message Severity Level

Consistency edits (or Con-edits) test the values of related data elements in the context of one another. Consistency editing occurs automatically after you press <F5 Update> to initiate the update process. During consistency editing, the system examines the employee record, as it would look after the application of the entered data, to detect inconsistencies among groups of data elements. For example, if you entered H (hourly) in the Rate code field, the edit process verifies all other related data elements that require an H rate code entry for consistency.

Each consistency edit in OPTRS is assigned one of the following severity levels: Employee Reject, Warning, or Informational. The message severity level acts as a trigger or "threshold" indicating the 'severity' of the problem. For more information, refer to the PPS Online System User's Guide.

Pay Edits

Pay Edits are not visible in the OPTRS user interface. Pay edits are available for review by Central Office Payroll personnel only.

After a transaction is successfully updated, pay edits address computational or other PPS errors occurring in a transaction or group of transactions. Pay edits are issued via an edit/error report the day after the time reporting window closes for each pay cycle.

Various pay edits verify that there are active distributions and appointments in the EDB to support a current pay transaction. Any element in a transaction that is not supported by an EDB Appointment/Distribution will cause transaction failure. Some of the elements examined during the pay edit process are: accounting
information, title code, pay rates, effective dates, and description of service codes, among others.

EXAMPLE: A reduced pay adjustment transaction is scheduled during a payroll cycle in which no other payments are prepared for the individual; therefore, there is no other gross from which to deduct the negative pay. The transaction would fail the pay edit process even though it was successfully updated as a reduced pay transaction.

Re-entering Time after a Blocked Transaction

IDTC: Current time reporting transactions (IDTC) may be blocked from processing if the underlying appointment/distribution data in the EDB does not support the distribution information used to report time on the Time Input Roster. This can occur in the following situations:

- When you make changes to the pre-listed distribution information (e.g., title code, account/fund/sub, pay rate) on the Time Input Roster, a warning informs you that the data you entered does not agree with the information contained in the EDB. If no action is taken to update the EDB with the same information, your transaction will be blocked on the following day. Upon later extract of the Roster, a message informs you that the distribution information you used is ineligible. (See Example 1. Override of distribution information in OPTRS not reflected in EDB at the end of Section 3).

In this case, the distribution in the Time Input Roster cannot be used to report any pay transaction. If time reporting is required, you must use one of the EDAT menu functions.

- Time and/or exception transactions on the Time Input Roster are updated successfully. However, if distribution data in the EDB is updated after your work is complete but before the window closure date for the pay period involved, your transaction may become blocked. This occurs because the distribution information you used to enter your transactions is no longer consistent with the EDB. If you extract the Time Input Roster the day after the EDB distribution is changed, a message informs you that time must be re-entered on the new distribution line. (See Example 2. Pay Rate Adjusted in EDB not reflected in OPTRS at the end of Section 2.)

In this case, the Time Input Roster provides you with new distribution reporting lines which you can use to enter (or re-enter) time data. However, any time data you entered on the blocked transaction will not be processed.

The Central Office Payroll division notifies the Timekeeper of any blocked positive or exception transactions prior to the time reporting window closure day for that pay cycle.
**EDAT:** Adjustment transactions (EDAT) may be blocked after entering the transaction holding file if the Payroll Division determines the transaction should not be processed in the scheduled compute, for various reasons. Time is not re-entered on a blocked EDAT transaction.

**Fixing Errors in an Adjustment Transaction (EDAT) after Update <F5>**

Once a transaction is successfully updated, it is systematically released to the Transaction Holding File (THF). You can no longer retrieve this transaction data via the OPTRS interface.

If it is necessary to change a transaction after update:

1. Prepare an new adjustment transaction to negate the transaction with the error.
2. Prepare a replacement transaction with the correct transaction data.

For example, you would prepare a reduce payment (RX) transaction to negate an incorrect payment. Then you would prepare a late payment (LX) to schedule payment of the correct amount.

**NOTE:** If you cannot reverse an erroneous transaction via OPTRS, contact the Payroll Division. Payroll will evaluate the justification for fixing the error and may intervene to delete the erroneous item. However, Payroll can only intervene when errors are discovered before the closing of the time entry window for that pay cycle.

**Changed data indicator (@)**

If the Payroll division intervenes to change an adjustment transaction (at the request of the Timekeeper), the transaction is re-released to the Transaction Holding File as a 'changed transaction'. When you next display the transaction, the character @ is shown in the display-only field to indicate that data was changed after the update.

**Fixing Errors in a Current Time Reporting Transaction (IDTC) after Update <F5>**

You can change an updated IDTC transaction in the THF up until the time reporting window closes.

If it is necessary to change a transaction after update:

1. Display the transaction.
2. Change any incorrect data as necessary.
3. Use * to delete any unnecessary data.
4. Update the transaction as usual.

For detailed procedures, refer to Positive Time Reporting and Exception Time Reporting sections.
Deleting a Current Time Reporting Transaction after Update

You can delete an updated IDTC transaction from the THF up until the time reporting window closes.

If it is necessary to delete a transaction after update:

1. Display the transaction.
2. Delete the ‘Y’ confirmation indicator (using *).
3. Update the transaction as usual.

No time reported in the transaction will be processed.