

United States
Railroad Retirement Board

Program
Letter

Office of Programs



Quality Reporting Service Center

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Date: January 17, 2007

TO: Certification and Registration Contact

SUBJECT: Security of Employee Earnings Data Reported to the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board

Please share this information with the appropriate members of your staff who complete and file compensation and service reports with the U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB).

Purpose

The U.S. Railroad Retirement Board (RRB) is very concerned about the protection and security of service, compensation and other employee earnings data that is reported to our agency. We take every precaution to ensure that personally identifiable information (PII) about your employees is kept secure and in strict confidence.

One method the RRB uses to help ensure the safety of earnings data is a review of methods that employers and other parties use to send reports and data files to the our agency so as to minimize of the chance of the loss of private data.

What you can do to Protect Data

To help protect your employees' sensitive personal data which you send to the RRB you should:

- Send paper forms via Facsimile Machine(when possible);
- Send forms, cassettes or cd-rom/diskettes via express mail or US Postal Service using delivery confirmation, certified or registered mail services;
- File your adjustment or address reports via the Employer Reporting System (ERS);
- Send encrypted files using software that offers encryption capability (i.e.WinZip 9.0); and
- Clearly label data cassettes or diskettes with destination and return addresses.

Regular E-mail NOT a secure transmission method

Do **NOT** send personally identifiable information such as Social Security Account Numbers via regular E-mail. Non-encrypted E-mail is not a secure method for sending private information.

Although there are methods to send encrypted e-mails, the RRB has not implemented procedure for sending compensation and service information to our agency. However if you have software with encryption capability, such as WinZip 9.0, you can send encrypted files using regular e-mail.

RRB Actions

The RRB is also reviewing our own methods of data protection and we are exploring use of similar methods as outlined above. We will release more information as soon as we investigate our options.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding this program letter, you may contact the Quality Reporting Service Center. The email address and telephone number are shown at the top of this letter.

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