

Title 5. Education. Division 3. Teachers' Retirement System.

All new text to be added to the California Code of Regulations follows, under new Article 1 in new Chapter 3.

Chapter 3. Employer Reporting

Article 1. Employer Direct Reporting

§ 27700. Definitions.

(a) As used in this chapter:

- (1) Unless otherwise specifically named, "board" means the Teachers' Retirement Board.
- (2) "County" means the county superintendent of schools.
- (3) "County governing authority" means the county board of education, or, if in possession of the relevant authority to perform the activities specified in this Article, the county superintendent of schools.
- (4) "Direct report" means an elementary, high school, or unified school district, or a community college district, that is approved to report directly to the system such information as that the Teachers' Retirement Board may require in the administration of the State Teachers' Retirement Plan.
- (5) "District" means an elementary, high school, or unified school district, or a community college district.
- (6) "System" means the California State Teachers' Retirement System.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22207, 22213 and 22305, Education Code. Reference: Section 23004, Education Code.

§ 27701. Effective date.

- (a) The regulations shall be effective for districts that are currently approved as direct reports and to those that apply or are in the process of applying to become direct reports to the Defined Benefit Program on or after January 1, 2016.
- (b) The effective date of becoming a new direct report shall be July 1 of the year specified in the resolution adopted by the district governing board.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22207, 22213 and 22305, Education Code. Reference: Section 23004, Education Code.

§ 27702. Prerequisites to approval.

- (a) A district may apply to be a direct report to the system. The Teachers' Retirement Board may approve or may deny a district as a direct report based on the criteria in subdivisions (b) and (c).
- (b) An applicant to become a direct report shall be in compliance with all of the following requirements. Failure to comply with the requirements of this subdivision shall result in the denial of the application to become a direct report.
 - (1) The district has submitted the applicable resolutions by the district's governing board and the county governing authority required under Section 27703, and there has been no change to the accuracy of each of the declarations therein.
 - (2) The district has demonstrated the ability to successfully transmit the following files to the system:
 - (A) An encrypted sample file formatted according to the F496 file format specifications incorporated by reference pursuant to Section 27000.
 - (B) An encrypted file containing member information related to accounts receivable to identify that a member is set up with automatic deduction to purchase service time through the employer.
 - (C) An encrypted file containing physical address details associated with the member.
 - (3) If the district was previously terminated as a direct report, more than five fiscal years have elapsed since the effective date of the termination.
 - (4) In the 36 months preceding its application to become a direct report, the district had an audit conducted by the system that demonstrated full compliance with reporting the following consistent with the Teachers' Retirement Law:
 - (A) Mandatory membership.
 - (B) One-time or limited-term payments reported to the Defined Benefit Supplement Program.
 - (C) Outgrowth activities as creditable service.
 - (D) Information regarding the compensation to be paid to employees, including, but not limited to, employment contracts, written agreements, salary schedules, and board minutes.
 - (5) A review conducted by the system demonstrates sustained compliance with all of the following over the 12-month period preceding the district's application:
 - (A) Responding to the system's requests for adjustments within 60 days.
 - (B) Providing acceptable annotations to employer-approved edits in the F496 file format electronically in an encrypted format provided by the system.
 - (C) Reporting full-time minimum standards consistent with a written agreement with an exclusive representative.
 - (D) Providing the system with information regarding the compensation to be paid to employees within 30 days of a request by the system.
- (c) The board may deny an application to become a direct report if it finds any of the following:

- (1) The district has any outstanding or unresolved audit findings from the system at any point during the application process.
- (2) There are any accounts receivable 30 or more days past due to the system attributable to the district at any point during the application process.
- (3) If the district was previously rejected by the system from entry as a direct report due to an audit or review finding under these regulations, and the rejection occurred within the previous five fiscal years.
- (d) The board may, at its discretion, defer consideration of an application until a future fiscal year.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22207, 22213, 22305 and 23004, Education Code. Reference: Section 22458 and 23004, Education Code.

§ 27703. Documentation required with application to become a direct report.

- (a) An applicant to become a direct report shall submit the following documentation with the following content:
 - (1) If contributions required to be paid by a member are picked up for the sole purpose of deferring taxes as authorized by Section 414(h)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (26 U.S.C.A Sec 414(h)(2)) and Section 17501 of the Revenue and Taxation Code, a resolution adopted by the district’s governing board certifying its intent to pick up member contributions in compliance with those provisions and the Teachers’ Retirement Law.
 - (2) A resolution adopted by the district’s governing board resolving to become a direct report to the system and certifying each of the following.
 - (A) “[District] hereby elects to become a direct report to the California State Teachers’ Retirement System, effective on July 1, [effective year].”
 - (B) “[District] has a payroll system independent of the county.”
 - (C) The district is fiscally accountable, fiscally independent, or both, as demonstrated by including the relevant statements from either of the following subdivisions:
 - (i) For a school district: “[District] is [fiscally accountable as defined in Section 42647/ fiscally independent as defined in Section 42650/ both fiscally accountable and fiscally independent as defined in Sections 42647 and 42650] of the Education Code.”
 - (ii) For a community college district: “[District] is [fiscally accountable as defined in Section 85266/ fiscally independent as defined in Section 85266.5/ both fiscally accountable and fiscally independent as defined in Sections 85266 and 85266.5] of the Education Code.”
 - (D) “[District] has the ability to be in full compliance with the F496 File Specifications.”
 - (E) “[District] is responsible for submitting contribution data and remitting contributions in accordance with the Teachers’ Retirement Law.”

- (F) “[District] is responsible for submitting contribution data and remitting contributions for all adjustments to contributions that relate to service performed prior to the effective date of the direct reporting relationship as requested by the system or as identified by the district.”
- (G) “[District] is responsible for payment of any penalty assessments for contributions and data submitted as a direct report on or after the effective date of the direct reporting relationship.”
- (H) “[District] is responsible for submitting all contribution data and remitting all contributions on and after the effective date of becoming a direct report.”
- (I) “For the last five fiscal years, [District] has been issued an unqualified opinion on its annual financial audit pursuant to Section 41020 or 84040 of the Education Code.”
- (J) The district has maintained a status of acceptable standing with the most current accrediting body by affirming the relevant statement from either of the following subdivisions:
- (i) For a school district: “[District] has not been on probationary accreditation status nor had its accreditation status withheld by the most current accreditation body sanctioned by the California Department of Education in the last five fiscal years.”
 - (ii) For a community college district: “[District] has not been ordered to show cause or been subject to the equivalent strictest sanctions applied from the most current accreditation body sanctioned by the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges in the last five fiscal years.”
- (K) “[District] shall notify the system within three business days if its payroll operations are no longer independent of the county or if its fiscally accountable status or fiscal independence is revoked. If any of these occur, the district shall cease submitting contribution data and remitting contributions to the system directly and shall resume submitting contribution data and remitting contributions through [County] effective on the date following revocation.”
- (L) The relevant statement from either of the following subdivisions:
- (i) For a school district: “[District] shall notify the system within three business days if it is placed on one-year probationary accreditation status or has its accreditation status withheld or an equivalent status by the accrediting body.”
 - (ii) For a community college district, “[District] shall notify the system within three business days if it is ordered to show cause or is placed on an equivalent status or sanction by the accrediting body.”
- (M) “If [district] is terminated as a direct report, [County] shall be responsible for submitting or remitting any missed reports, adjustments, contributions, penalties, and interest associated with the time period that the district was a direct report.”
- (N) “[District] may terminate the direct reporting relationship only when the system, the district, and [County] have agreed to the employer terminating the relationship.”

- (3) A resolution adopted by the county governing authority authorizing the district to become a direct report to the system and certifying each of the following:
- (A) “On [date district’s governing board approved resolution], [District] elected to become a direct report to the system effective on July 1, [effective year].”
 - (B) “[District] meets the eligibility requirements of the system, as specified on a resolution adopted by the district’s governing board to become a direct report pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) of Section 27703 of the California Code of Regulations.”
 - (C) “[County] is not responsible for submitting contribution data and remitting contributions, including adjustments to contribution data and contributions made prior to the effective date of [District] becoming a direct report.”
 - (D) “[County] is not responsible for any penalty or interest assessments for contributions and data submitted by [District] as a direct report on or after the effective date of becoming a direct report for the duration of the direct reporting relationship.”
 - (E) “If [District] is terminated as a direct report, [County] is responsible for submitting and remitting any and all reports, adjustments, contributions, penalties and interest to the system.”
 - (F) “[County] shall notify the system within three business days of revocation should the district’s fiscally accountable status or fiscal independence be revoked, and shall resume submitting contribution data and remittance on behalf of the district on the revocation effective date.”

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22207, 22213, 23004 and 22305, Education Code. Reference: Section 23004, Education Code.

§ 27704. Termination of direct reporting relationship.

- (a) The system may initiate termination of a direct reporting relationship at any time if any of the criteria or requirements for approval or responsibilities as a direct report are not met.
- (b) The system may terminate the direct reporting relationship if the district does not respond through compliance to an audit finding by the system by the due date specified on the audit determination letter, or through appeal within 90 days.
- (c) The district may voluntarily terminate the direct reporting relationship only when the system, the district’s governing body, and the county governing authority have mutually agreed to terminate the relationship, documented by a resolution specifying the effective date of the termination and approved by the district governing body, the county governing authority, and the Chief Executive Officer of the system or his or her designee. The resolution shall certify each of the following:
 - (1) “WHEREAS, [District] desires to terminate the relationship as a direct report that reports Defined Benefit contribution data and remits contributions directly to CalSTRS; and”

- (2) “WHEREAS, the system Chief Executive Officer or his or her designee authorizes the District to terminate the relationship to report directly to the system; and”
- (3) “WHEREAS, [County] does hereby affirm that [County] is responsible for submitting and remitting any and all reports, adjustments, contributions, penalties and interest beginning on the effective date of the termination and covering all time periods, including the period that [District] was a direct report to the system.”
- (4) “THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the California State Teachers’ Retirement System and [County] authorize [District] to discontinue as a direct report to the system.”

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22207, 22213, 23004 and 22305, Education Code. Reference: Section 23004, Education Code.

§ 27705. Review of termination of direct reporting relationship.

- (a) A district may request a review of the system’s decision to terminate the direct reporting relationship by the Chief Executive Officer of the system or his or her designee. The request must be submitted in writing and be received by System Headquarters or by a CalSTRS Field Office or at the following email address: [CalSTRSInternalReview@calstrs.com] within 30 days of the district’s receipt of the relationship termination letter. The resulting decision after such a review shall be final.

Note: Authority cited: Sections 22207, 22213, 23004 and 22305, Education Code. Reference: Section 23004, Education Code.