



RETIREMENT PLAN DATA FIELDS – PREFERRED INDUSTRY PRACTICES FOR HCM/PAYROLL SERVICE PLATFORMS



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REDUCE EXCEPTION REQUESTS WITH PREFERRED INDUSTRY PRACTICE ADHERENCE

This VIEWPOINT lists the data elements that employers and their HCM/payroll platforms exchange with retirement plan service providers. The paper formulates recommendations based on the practices of most retirement plan service providers of the Coalition. These recommendations apply to all defined contribution retirement plans (401(k), 403(b), government 457, 401(a) Money Purchase and Profit-sharing plans. By extension, these recommendations apply to associated accounts such as 409(a), 457(bb), 457(f) non-qualified deferred compensation arrangements and Health Savings Accounts. This report summarizes findings from earlier, more specific reports.

Employer and, their HCM/payroll platforms will benefit from including these elements in their 180 defined contribution retirement plan data exchange templates. Indeed, including all elements in the data feed template will reduce the number of custom requests and associated labor.

INDISPENSABLE CONTRIBUTION FIELDS

The six indispensable contribution amount fields to include in the 401k/403b/457 plan data exchange template are:

- 1. Pretax employee contribution**
- 2. Roth employee contribution**
- 3. After-tax employee contribution**
- 4. Pre-tax catch up contribution**
- 5. Roth catch-up contribution**
- 6. Employer contribution**

COMPENSATION AMOUNT FIELDS

Compensation must be provided as it is defined in the Defined Contribution plan document. Many employers base 401(k) plan contributions on a definition of compensation other than W2 compensation. The difference

A preferred practice is to provide either of these two fields, but not both:

- 7. Period compensation (plan definition)**
- 8. Year-to-date compensation (plan definition)**

can be meaningful for employers with a workforce paid with incentives, tips, bonuses, travel budgets, home-office expense allowances and other non-salary compensation.

PLAN LOAN DATA

Data feed templates need to provide for loan repayment amounts.

Loan repayment fields in the 401k/403b/457 plan data feed templates

- 9. One payment amount field per loan**
- 10. Unique plan loan number**

INDICATIVE DATA

Indicative or demographic data may be exchanged at every pay period along with contribution and compensation and loan data. Alternatively, the exchange of indicative data may be handled separately, either by periodic submission of flat files on a secure server or through an Application Programming Interface (API) that transmit demographic information changes weekly, daily, or as they occur.

Ten universally requested data points:

- 11. Social Security Number**
- 12. Employee/Participant ID**
- 13. Full Name (or First Name)**
- 14. Address Line 1**
- 15. Address Line 2**
- 16. City**
- 17. State**
- 18. Zip**
- 19. Date of Birth**
- 20. Original Hire Date**

Fifteen Indicative data fields requested by a majority of recordkeeping service providers:

- 21. Pay Date**
- 22. Termination Date**
- 23. Rehire Date**
- 24. Last Name (separately from "First Name")**
- 25. Work Email Address**
- 26. Personal Email Address**
- 27. Mobile phone number**
- 28. Division Code**
- 29. Gender**
- 30. Marital Status**
- 31. Payroll Frequency**
- 32. Plan Code / Plan Number**
- 33. Employee Status**
- 34. Hours Worked**
- 35. Union Status**

AUTOMATIC PLAN FEATURES

Automatic plan features are a recommended practice to set participants on track to achieve retirement success. Plans that take advantage of automatic enrollment and automatic deferral increases require enhanced data feeds. Many plans vary automatic features among various employee groups, making it necessary to collect data at the individual level. Automatic plan feature data (or changes) can be exchanged along with indicative data.

One field required to properly administer automatic increases:

36. Date of automatic increase trigger (e.g. hire date anniversary, plan set date e.g. 01/01 merit increase date, participant choice, other)

ABOUT THE COALITION

The mission of the Coalition is to advocate for payroll administration excellence, to define payroll administration excellence, and best practices and finally, to encourage employers and their payroll providers to adopt those best practices. At its Annual Meeting, the Coalition sustains the dialogue between retirement plan service providers and HCM / payroll platforms to fulfill its mission statement. Armed with information from deliberations, members of the Coalition for Payroll Excellence are better able to set themselves apart from other players.



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