CalPERS

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Date: **April 18, 2002**
Reference No:

Circular Letter No: **600-026-02**
Distribution:

Special:

TO: **FINANCIAL OFFICERS AND HEALTH BENEFIT OFFICERS OF CONTRACTING PUBLIC AGENCIES**

SUBJECT: **NEW PUBLIC AGENCY HEALTH BILLING PROCESS AND AUTOMATED COMMUNICATION EXCHANGE SYSTEM (ACES) APPLICATION**

In September 2001, as part of our commitment to improving customer service, CalPERS initiated communications to inform Financial Officers and Health Benefit Officers from Contracting Public Agencies, about the new Public Agency Billing process. This new process will be implemented on July 1, 2002, and the first invoice will be generated on July 15, 2002 for the August 2002 coverage period.

BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS:

New business requirements will be initiated with the new invoice process. These requirements are as follows:

- With the implementation of the new billing process, CalPERS will generate invoices on the 15th of each month (July 15th for the August invoice). Employers will no longer receive a detailed participant list with their invoice. Instead, each public agency will receive a one-page invoice and payment coupon (coupon to be returned with the payment).

- All invoices must be paid as billed. Adjustments will be applied to future invoices.

- The new billing process will not allow Public Agencies to submit enrollment transactions with your remittance of payment. Please submit your enrollment transactions via a Health Benefit Plan Enrollment Form (HBD-12) or through the Automated Communications Exchange System (ACES). Please be sure to submit your enrollment transactions accurately and timely to ensure the transactions will be reflected on your invoice.

- If you are NOT currently using ACES, you will NOT be able to view a detailed list of your participants (for more information on getting access to ACES, see page 2). Reconciliation of your internal records with CalPERS data will be done through the new Public Agency Billing function in ACES as outlined in the January 28, 2002 Circular Letter.

- Regardless of whether you reconcile, you will be required to submit payment for the full amount invoiced by the 10th of the following month.

- Any payment received after the 10th, or not paid in full, is considered delinquent and subject to a late fee.

- CalPERS has undertaken an initiative to enhance its statutory and regulatory authority regarding late fees.

For clarification on these **business requirements**, please contact the same representative that you currently use for your Public Agency Billing questions.

Although the new business process is not effective until July 1, 2002, **agencies can now access the ACES Public Agency Billing function** (for more information on getting access to ACES, see below). Early access has been made available to provide ACES users sufficient time to become acclimated to the new functionality. Please use the system as a **"PREVIEW" of the functionality ONLY**.

Agencies will continue to receive the detailed hard copy report of all their participants and should continue normal reconciliation of their bills until receipt of the August 2002 invoice. Please **DO NOT** attempt to reconcile your **current invoice** with this new "PREVIEW" functionality.

WHY EMPLOYERS SHOULD NOT BEGIN INVOICE RECONCILIATION NOW:

- CalPERS' has a "clean-up" effort underway to ensure that all data is updated and correct by July 2002. Attempts to reconcile invoices based on one of the ACES Public Agency queries will result in discrepancies.

- "School" employers navigating through the reports, can view participants, however the query will display a N/A (Not Available) for the plan code column and $0.00 in the deduction column. The deduction history information is currently in the system, but the ACES Public Agency Billing function will not be able to read the data until June 2002.

- Public Agencies who submit transactions to CalPERS on behalf of other agencies, will be **unable** to receive ACES Public Agency Billing access at this time. (Currently, this could only be done by assigning a separate login for each agency, which isn't consistent with the other ACES functions).

- There is a configuration change that may need to be made for the Agencies that use Internet Explorer 6 in order to refresh the printer friendly button.

1. Under the "Tools" tab, select "Internet Options"
2. Under the "General" tab within the Temporary Internet files section, select "Settings"
3. In "Settings", under Check for newer versions of stored pages, Select the radio button "Every visit to the Page"

GETTING ACCESS TO PUBLIC AGENCY BILLING THROUGH ACES:

To use the new Public Agency Billing function, you must have access to the ACES application. The ACES application **is free** to CalPERS business partners and can be accessed directly through your desktop computer with an Internet web browser.

> **If your agency IS currently using ACES**, your designated ACES Account Administrator has the ability to grant Public Agency ACES access to themselves or any other staff at their agency. If you are the current Account Administrator and need specific instructions on how to grant this access, please refer to the "Account Administrator" information listed on the next page. If your agency currently uses ACES and needs to establish an additional Account Administrator specifically for Public Agency Billing, please complete the attached Employer Security form, write "additional Account Administrator" on the top of the form and fax to (916) 658-1277.

> **If your agency IS NOT currently using ACES,** please check the following:

> Verify that the PC for each ACES user meets the following minimum requirements:

> - Windows 95/98 OR Windows NT 4.0
> - Microsoft Explorer 4.0 or higher OR Netscape Navigator 4.5 or higher (but not Netscape Version 6.0)
> - High speed LAN connection OR 56K modem or better
> - 128-bit SSL encryption software

> If you meet the minimum requirements:

> - Log onto our Web Site: **http://www.calpers.ca.gov/aces**
> - Click on the fourth link - **Log On To ACES**
> - If you **can access the ACES Login screen** and it prompts you for a Username and Password, then you have met the minimum requirements and are ready to fax the Account Administrator(s) Employer Security Agreement to (916) 658-1277.

If you **CAN'T access the ACES Login screen**, please talk to your Information Technology Specialist and give them the minimum requirements mentioned above. Once your PC is updated, then you may fax the Account Administrator(s) Employer Security Agreement to (916) 658-1277.

The **Account Administrator** will have the following rights: to grant ACES access to all users within their agency, reset password, unlock accounts, and disable accounts. CalPERS will set up one Account Administrator and one user (a security form is required for each). If you send two forms, please indicate which person is the Account Administrator. The completed Employer Security Agreements must be faxed to (916) 658-1277. The "**authentication word**" on the security agreement is used by CalPERS to verify a user if they need to call CalPERS to reset their password and/or unlock their account; therefore, this word should be something the user will remember. This field can be anything. **This is a MANDATORY field that is needed to set-up a new users account.**

If you are the current Account Administrator and need specific instructions on how to grant access, please refer to our Web Site for a copy of the ACES User Guide. When granting PA Billing access, **please be sure to grant BOTH PA Billing and Participant Inquiry access.** To download the User Guide, search for our Web Site: http://www.calpers.ca.gov/aces/guides.htm, click on the link "ACES User Guide," when the 148 page document opens, go to the Table of Contents and scroll down and click on the link for "Account Administrator Guide," then print entire section.

TRAINING

Once access has been granted, a CalPERS Account Administrator will call your agency Account Administrator to provide a short training session (over the phone) on how to access the ACES system. This training will include:

- how to log on to ACES;
- how to navigate through ACES;
- how to grant ACES access to staff in your agency;
- how to use the ACES Employer Assistance Center at 1-888-225-7377; and
- how to download an ACES Public Agency Billing User Guide.

CONTACT INFORMATION

The ACES Information Web Site **(http://www.calpers.ca.gov/aces)** contains useful information regarding the Public Agency Billing function. To view and copy the ACES Public Agency Billing User Guide, please refer to the ACES Web Site **(http://www.calpers.ca.gov/aces/guides.htm).**

To sign up for the ACES Public Agency Billing function, please follow the "Getting access…" instructions. For inquiries of the name of your current Account Administrator, please call the ACES Employer Assistance Center at 1-888-CalPERS (225-7377)

Press Option 2, then
Press Option 4 for ACES PA Billing

For general questions regarding the Public Agency Billing **function or process**, please call the ACES Employer Assistance Center at 1-888-CalPERS (225-7377)

Press Option 4, then
Press Option 4 again, then

Press Option 2

NOTE: Since we are still in the process of cleaning up data, **please DO NOT press Option 1 (Public Agency Enrollment Transactions)** for assistance with your enrollment transactions. Please continue to follow your normal reconciliation process.

For clarification on Business Requirements, please contact the same representative that you currently use for your Public Agency Billing questions.

We appreciate your support and patience while CalPERS strives to provide our business partners with technology that provides you with a new ACES PA Billing function that interfaces with our internal COMET Health Enrollment System.

Sincerely,

Tom Fischer, Chief
Health Benefit Services Division

Attachment: Employer User Security Agreement (AESD-43) (PDF, 63kb)