



# **Employer Reporting Overview**

The primary purpose of eSERS is to support the employer reporting process. The employer reporting process is used to send enrollment, contribution, and ARP data to SERS during your payroll cycle.

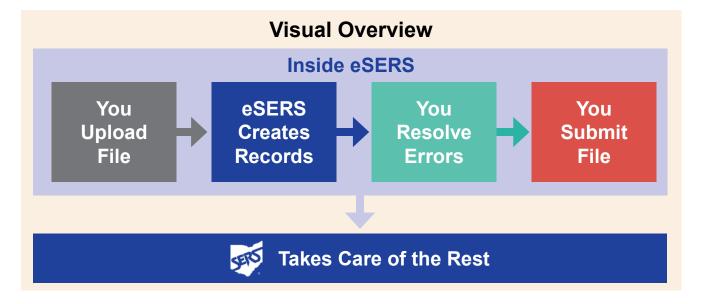
An employer report is a collection of individual member transactions reported to SERS by the employer. There are three different types of employer reports:

- Contribution: Submitted within five business days of each pay date (can include adjustments).
- **Enrollment:** Submitted at any time, but required prior to submission of the first contribution.
- Alternative Retirement Plan (ARP): Submitted monthly. Available only for full-time college and university employees.

Reports can be submitted by uploading a file in the required format or manually entered in eSERS. Once the reports are processed, you are notified on your eSERS Message Board.

### **Terms and Definitions**

Header	A summary of an employer report, either for contribution or enrollment.
Payroll Detail	A detailed record of an employee payroll information submitted with the report (e.g., contributions, earnings, employment information).
Error and Warning Messages	Problems identified by eSERS with the information being submitted that must be corrected before being posted.
Informational Messages	Has no effect on a record being submitted. It is to draw attention to an event that may require a follow-up.



# **Earnings Code Overview**

Processing employer reporting data that contains contribution records can be done by uploading a file or manual entry.

There are specific earnings codes for the different types of contribution reporting. They are:

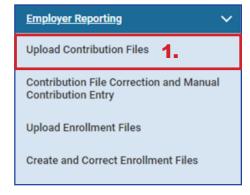
Earı	nings Code	Туре
01	Regular Contribution	Regular wage and contribution record for the Employee.
02	Supplemental	Allows a report with supplemental employees with more days than the earnings period allows, such as coaches, on a regular report only if they are being paid on the same pay date.
03	Retro Pay	Allows a retroactive pay increase to be reported on a regular report, using a current pay date, and the prior earnings period. It will not be accepted if the current earnings period is entered
04	Stretch Pay	Wages that are paid to the member for a non-working period. This is normally for employees who only work during the school year and are off for the summer months.  Please Note: These are not extra wages to the member.
05	Grievance Pay	Employee filed a grievance, and payment is due to the employee from the employer. <b>Before</b> sending the payment, SERS requires that a copy of the grievance settlement be provided for review.
51	Adjustment to Regular Contribution	This is an adjustment record to '01'.
52	Adjustment to Supplemental	This is an adjustment record to '02'.
53	Adjustment to Retro Pay	This is an adjustment record to '03'.
54	Adjustment to Stretch Pay	This is an adjustment record to '04'.
55	Adjustment to Grievance Pay	This is an adjustment record to '05'.
91	Missed Regular Contribution	Report any regular wage and contribution record that was not reported for a prior period. If the missed contribution record is for a prior fiscal year, call Employer Services for assistance at toll-free 877-213-0861.
92	Missed Supplemental Contribution	Report any supplemental contribution that was not reported for the prior period.
94	Missed Stretch Pay Contribution	Report any stretch pay contribution that was not reported for the prior period.

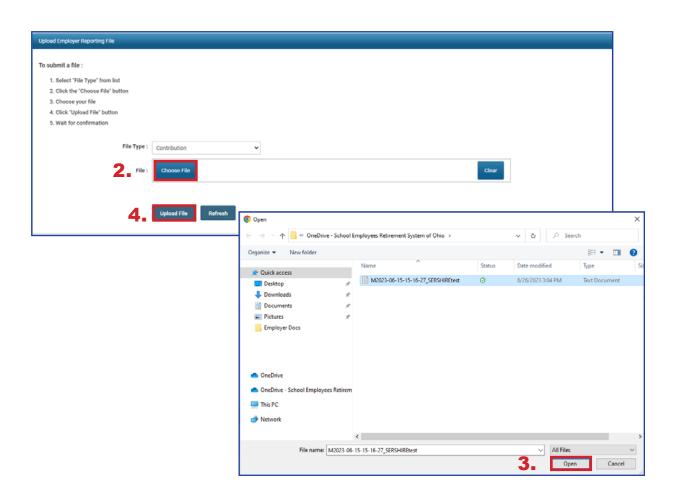
# **Upload Contribution File**

You can upload a contribution file by going to the Upload Contribution Files menu item. From this screen, you also can view and track files as their status is updated during the posting process.

#### Steps:

- Select the Upload Contribution Files menu option.
- 2. On the Upload Contribution Files screen, click **Choose File**.
- 3. Choose the file you want to upload from the file explorer; click **Open**.
- 4. Click Upload File.
- 5. Once uploaded, you will receive a confirmation message at the top of the screen.



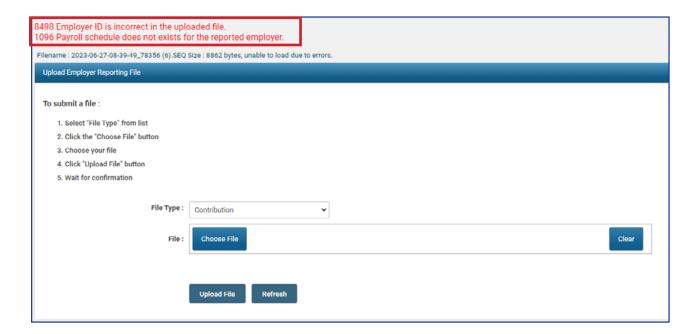


# **Upload Contribution File Errors**

When uploading contribution files, you may receive one or more error messages. These error messages pertain to the file you are trying to upload and indicate something is structurally incorrect in the uploaded file. If you receive an error message, you must correct the data in the file.

In the example below, a user uploaded a file and received the error message that the contribution cycle code does not exist for the reported employer. This means that the contribution cycle code in the uploaded file is not valid.

Due to this error message, the file will not be processed any further. Please contact Employer Services for assistance.



After correcting the file, you will need to upload the file again.



Please Note: Before the updated file can be uploaded to eSERS, the **Unique ID** needs to be updated. Once this is complete, the file can be uploaded to eSERS.

#### What is a Unique ID?

The Unique ID is a time stamp in the header record of the file that is being uploaded. Unique IDs were created to ensure a file would not be uploaded twice in error.

## **What Happens Next?**

Once your file has uploaded successfully, you will receive a message on your message board stating the upload was successful or there were errors.

The message below indicates that the file was **uploaded successfully** and has posted.



Once the file posts, the employer needs to make the contribution payment in the Payment Remittance application.

## What if there are Errors or Warnings?

If the file was uploaded but there were detail records that needed to be reviewed due to errors and warnings, you will receive a message like the one below indicating "Action Required" and stating that **Some of the Detail records have either errors or warning messages.** 



The next step is to review the detail records that are in question and correct the errors to have the file post successfully.

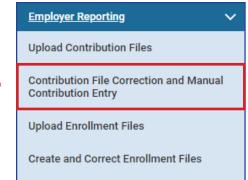
For more information on clearing errors and warnings from your Contribution Report, please refer to the Correcting Contribution Records section.

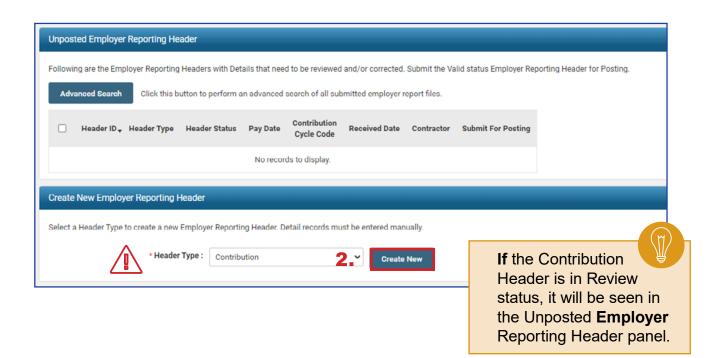
# **Manual Contribution Entry**

When contribution records not part of an uploaded file need to be created, you can go to the Contribution File Correction and Manual Contribution Entry menu item to create them manually.

#### Steps:

- 1. Click on the Contribution File Correction and Manual Contribution Entry menu item.
- 2. Click Create New.







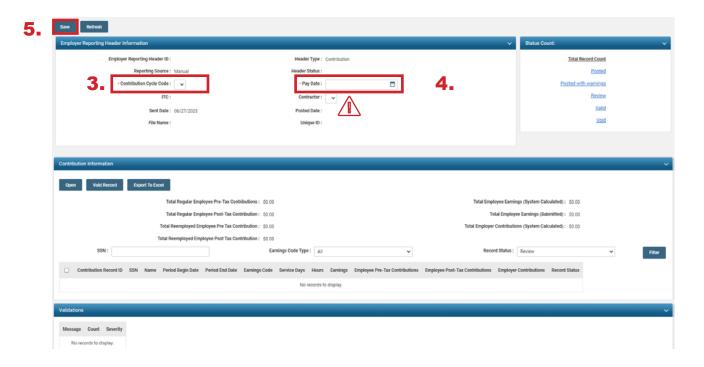
#### **Header Type Drop-down:**

For colleges and universities, there will be the option of 'contribution' or 'ARP' based on which type of report you are creating

The system brings up the Employer Reporting Header Maintenance screen.

#### Steps (continued):

- 3. Select **Contribution Cycle Code** from the drop-down menu. The cycle code is created from the payroll schedule. If your district has multiple payroll schedules, all of the cycle codes for the active payroll schedules will populate this drop-down.
- 4. Enter the Pay Date of the period.
- 5. Click Save.





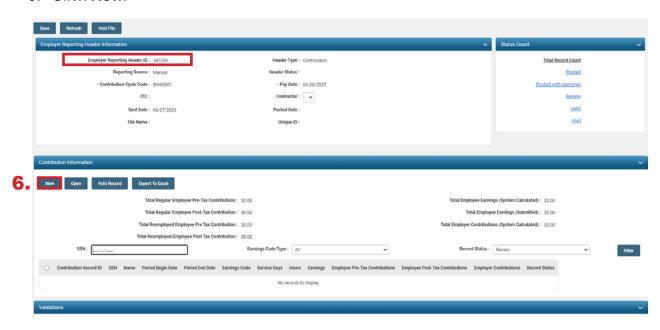
Please Note: When submitting a contribution report for a contractor, select the contractor from the contractor drop-down menu.

Upon clicking Save, two things change:

- An Employer Reporting Header ID is assigned to the record.
- The **New** button appears in the Contribution Information panel.

### Steps (continued):

6. Click New.



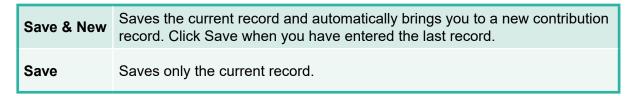
## **Contribution Maintenance Screen**

This brings you to the Contribution Maintenance screen. Enter the contribution detail information.

#### Steps:

- 1. Fill in the member's:
  - SSN
  - First Name and Last Name
  - Period Begin Date
  - Period End Date
  - Earnings Code Drop-down
  - Service Days
  - Hours
  - Employee Pre-Tax or Post-Tax Contributions (10%)
  - Employee Earnings (Submitted)

#### 2. Click Save or Save & New

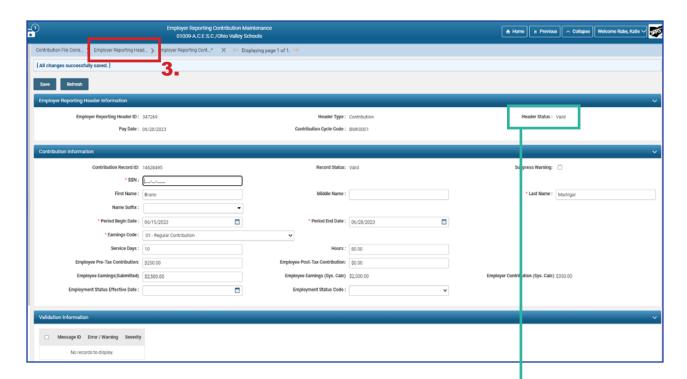




After clicking Save on the final contribution record, you are ready to submit the file for posting.

### Steps (continued):

3. On the Employer Reporting Contribution Maintenance screen, click on **Employer Reporting Head...** in the navigation path.



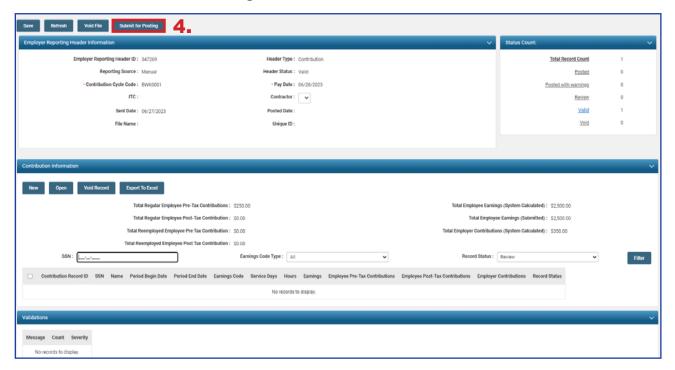
## **Possible Header Statuses**

Valid	All records within the header are valid, and the header can be submitted for posting.	
Review	One or more records within the header have errors or warnings that must be addressed before the record can be posted. All detail records must be in a Valid status before the header will be updated to a Valid status.	

The Employer Reporting Header Maintenance screen is populated with information based on the detail records that were created.

### Steps (continued):

4. Click the **Submit for Posting** button.

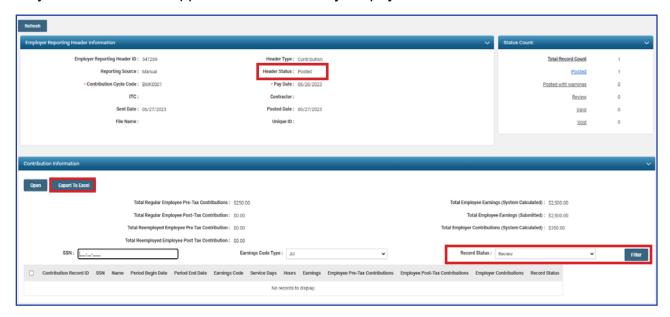


## Reminders

Record Status Filter	You are able to filter the view of the Contribution Information panel by changing the record status that you would like to view in the Record Status drop-down menu. eSERS automatically defaults the Record Status to Review.	
Void	There are two void buttons on the screen. If you would like to void the ENTIRE file, select the Void File button at the top of the screen. If you would like to void one record out of the file, check the box next to the Contribution Record ID and select the Void Record button in the center of the screen.	
Status Count Panel	·	
Contribution Information	The Contribution Information panel allows a User to view and filter specific information within the file.	

Once a header is submitted for posting, it becomes read-only, and the header status will change to **Posted** once information is processed.

Once your Header Status shows that the file has been posted, you can now go to the Payment Remittance application and submit your payment.





**Tip:** By filtering the record status to **All** and then clicking the **Export to Excel** button, the system will export the contribution record details into an Excel spreadsheet.

This is a great way to create historical records for your organization of contributions submitted.



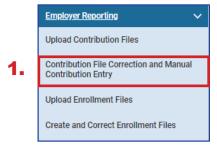
Submitting contribution records will result in a member's account reflecting a *pending* transaction. The dollar amounts will not be considered available in the member's account until the employer submits both the contribution record and payment for the corresponding liability created.

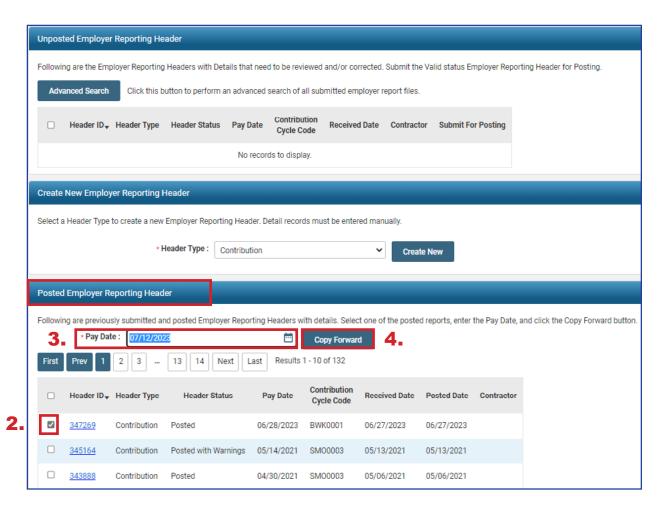
# **Contribution Copy Forward**

The copy forward function is useful when you need to create a new contribution header, and all the information is the same from the previous cycle to the current one. In order to start this process, go to the **Contribution File Correction and Manual Contribution Entry** menu item.

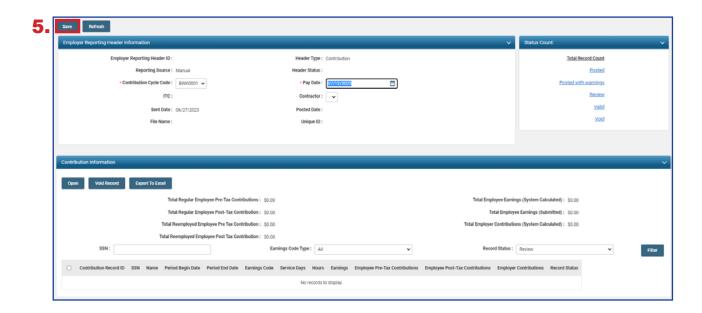
#### Steps:

- 1. Select the Contribution File Correction and Manual Contribution Entry menu item.
- In the Posted Employer Reporting Header panel, check the box next to the Header ID you wish to copy forward.
- 3. Enter the **Pay Date** for the cycle for which you are creating this header.
- 4. Click Copy Forward.





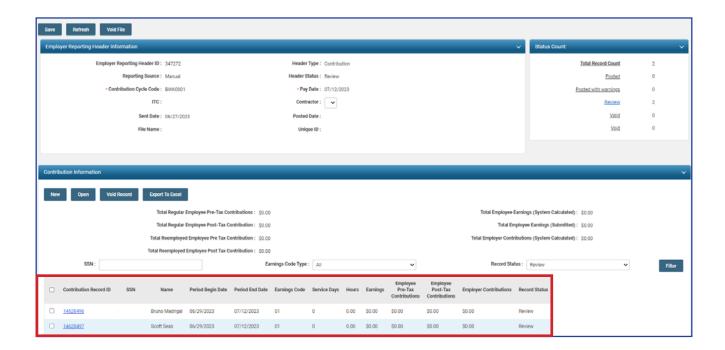
5. Click **Save** (this will populate information).



Once you click Save in the previous step, the system carries over the information from the prior header that you are copying, and populates detail records, as shown below, in the Contribution Information panel.

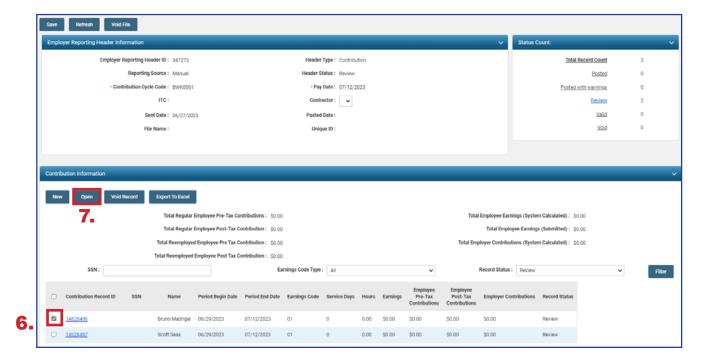
The Social Security numbers, last names, period begin and end dates, and earnings codes are all populated for you. The information not populated are the dollar amounts of earnings and contributions. Zeros are reflected in the detail records, as well as in the totals above the detail records.

New	Use this button if you need to add an additional record that was not reported during the last payroll cycle (was not carried over when you copy-forwarded the header).
Void Record	Use this button if an individual populated from the last payroll cycle and they are not being reported with this new file. Check the box next to the <b>Contribution Record ID</b> and click <b>Void Record</b> .



### Steps (continued):

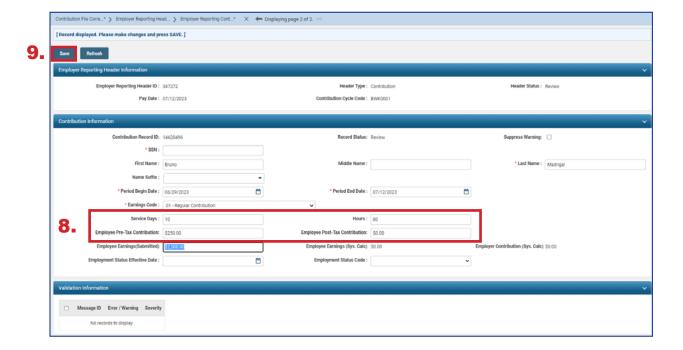
- 6. Check the box next to the record(s) you wish to update in the Contribution Information Panel.
- 7. Click Open.



The employee's SSN and last name are already populated, along with the period begin and end dates and the earnings code.

### Steps (continued):

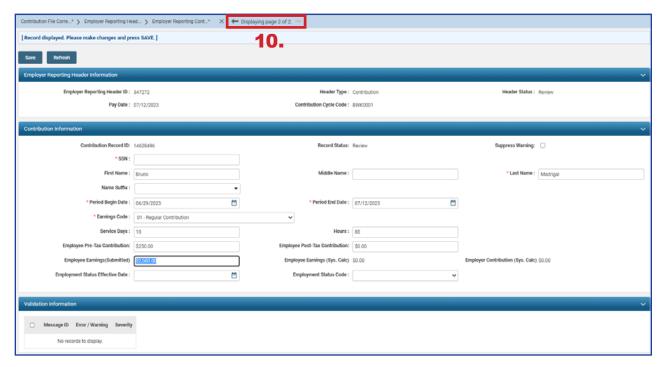
- 8. Enter the following information:
  - Service Days
  - Hours
  - Employee Pre-Tax or Post-Tax Contributions (10%)
  - Employee Earnings (Submitted)
- 9. Click Save.



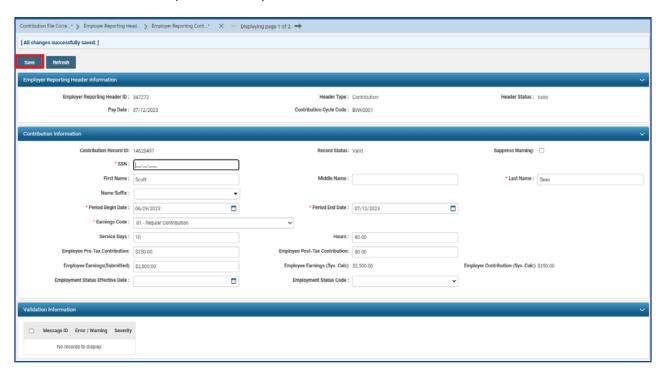
Once the record is saved, it will display any errors or warnings in the Validation Information panel. Once the errors or warnings are resolved (if applicable), continue to the next record(s).

#### Steps (continued):

10. Click on the **left arrow or right arrow**.



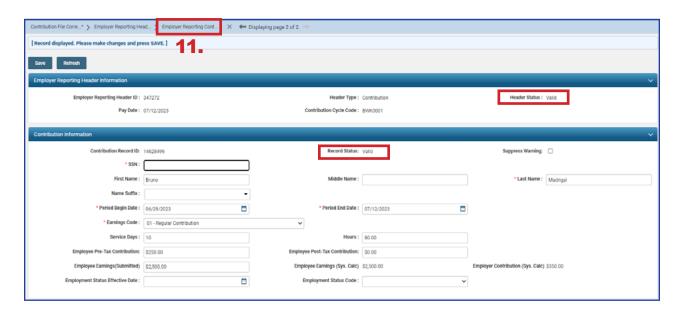
The system brings up the next record. Repeat these steps until all records are updated with the required information. If you have multiple individuals who need contribution information, follow the previous steps.



On the final record, both the header and detail records will change to a valid status once you have updated the required fields and clicked **Save**. This means you are ready to submit this file for posting.

#### Steps (continued):

11. Click on Employer Reporting Head... in the navigation path to take you to the Employer Reporting Header Maintenance screen so you can submit your file for posting.



The Employer Reporting Header Maintenance screen is populated with information based on the detail records that were created.

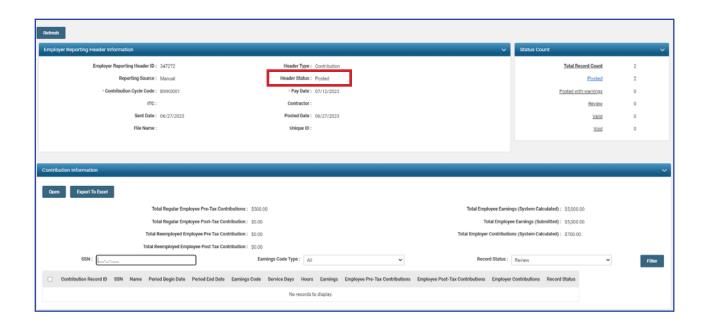
### Steps (continued):

12. Click Submit for Posting.



Once a report is submitted for posting, it becomes read-only. The header status changes to **Posting in Progress**, and will change to **Posted** once information is processed.

Once your Header Status shows that the file has been posted, you can now go to the Payment Remittance application and submit your payment.



Submitting a contribution record will result in the member's account reflecting a pending transaction.

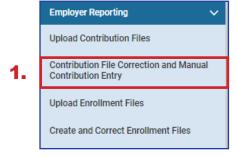
Dollar amounts are not considered available in the member's account until the employer submits both the contribution record <u>and</u> payment for the corresponding liability created.

# **Submitting a Zero File**

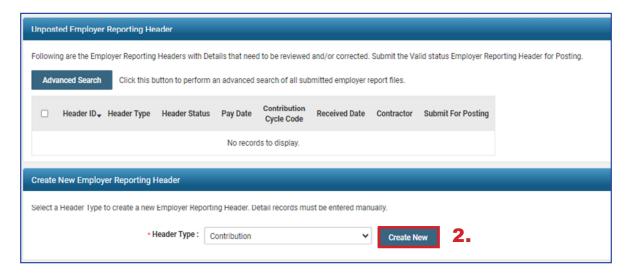
Districts are required to submit zero files for earnings periods listed in the payroll schedule that will not have reporting sent to SERS. This creates a record that there were not any SERS contributions for this time period. If a zero file is not submitted, penalties will generate off the missing information.

#### Steps:

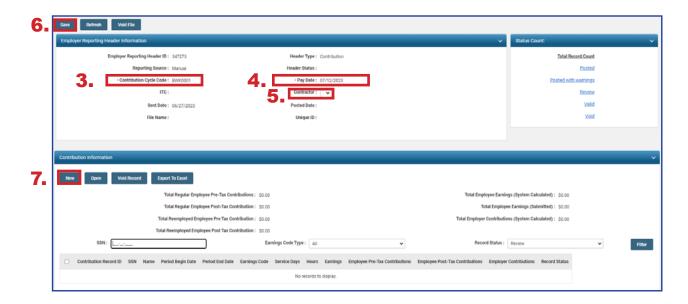
1. Select Contribution File Correction and Manual Contribution Entry.



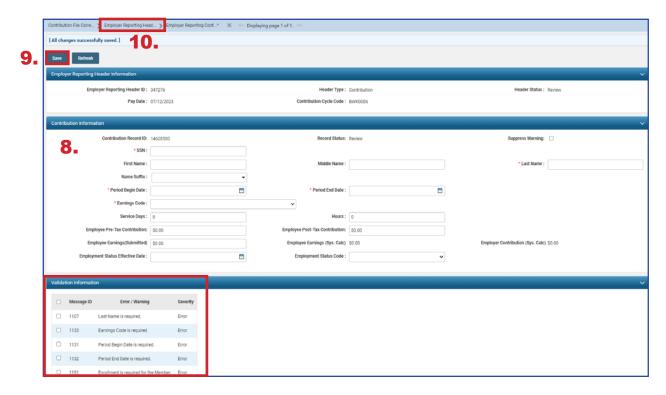
2. Click Create New.



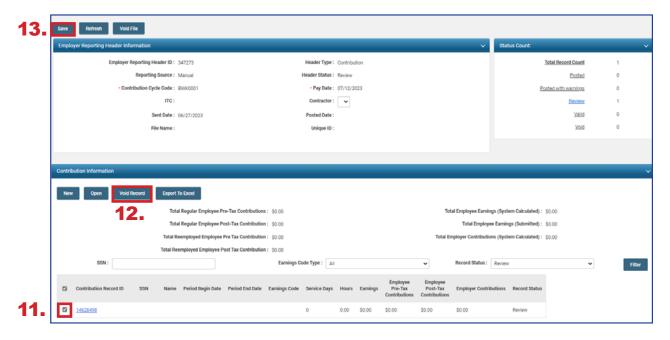
- 3. From the dropdown menu, choose your Contribution Cycle Code.
- 4. Enter the Pay Date for the earnings period that will not have anything to report.
- 5. Select the Contractor from the dropdown menu, if applicable.
- 6. Click Save.
- 7. Select the **New** button that appears in the Contribution Information panel.



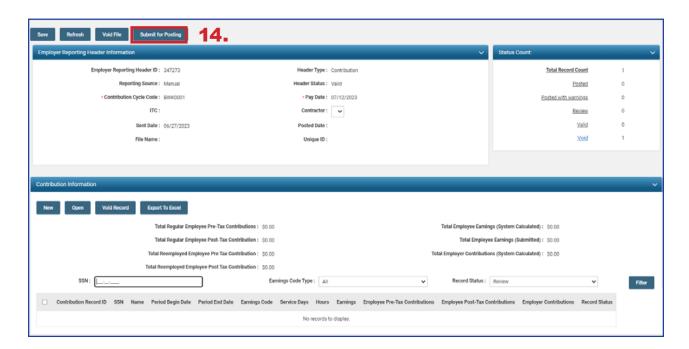
- 8. Enter the Employee SSN
- 9. Click Save.
  - You will get errors in the Validations panel for missing information. These items are not needed and will be taken care of later.
- 10. Click **Employer Reporting Head...** in the navigation path.



- 11. Checkmark the box next to the Contribution Record ID for the record that was created.
- 12. Click Void Record.
- 13. Click Save.



14. When you click Save, eSERS validates the 0 file. You are now able to click **Submit for Posting**.



# **What Happens Next?**

When a zero file is posted, eSERS will recognize that there were **not** any SERS members to report, and penalties will **not** be assessed.

# **Correcting Contribution Records Overview**

When a contribution file is uploaded or created manually, the contribution records will go through a validation process. During this process, the system looks for any information that is inaccurate or questionable, and an error, warning, or message will appear on that record for you to review.

When a file is uploaded that has errors or warnings on any of the detail records, a message will appear on the Message Board to let you know you must correct the records prior to the records posting.

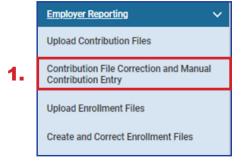


# **Correcting Contribution Records**

If you receive a message on your message board indicating a contribution file has errors or warnings, the corrections must be made before you can submit the file for posting.

#### Steps:

- 1. Select the Contribution File Correction and Manual Contribution Entry menu item.
- 2. The file with errors or warnings will be in Review status within the Unposted Employer Reporting Header panel. Click the hyperlinked **Header ID** to open and correct the file.



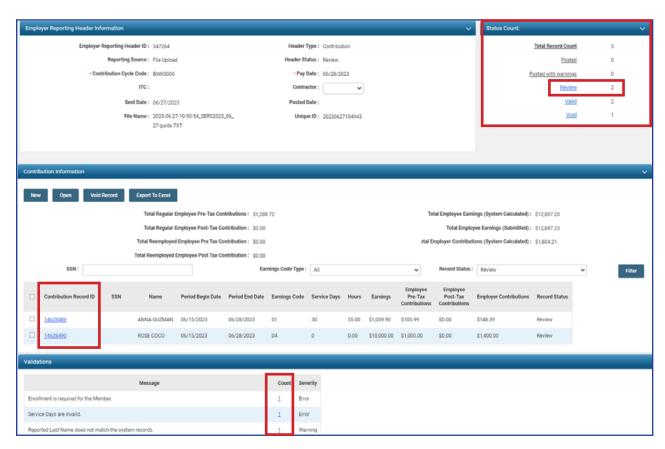


2.

#### **Please Note:**

Advanced Search: If you are looking for a specific header, this button will bring you to a screen in which you can enter detailed criteria, such as header status, posted date, and contractor ID.

This screen gives information for each record uploaded or manually entered into eSERS. A user is able to view records that are valid, need corrected, or have been voided, as well as view a list of all errors for the records within the file.



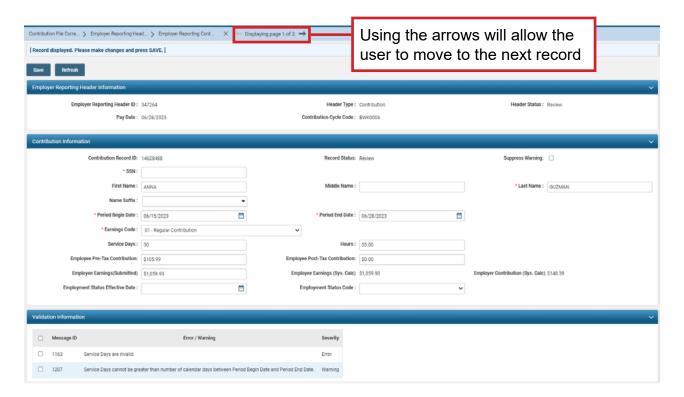
You are able to view records that need corrected by clicking one of the following:

- Review hyperlink in the Status Count panel
- Individual Contribution Record ID in the Contribution Information panel
- Count hyperlink in the Validations panel in the Employer Reporting Header Maintenance screen

In this example of reviewing errors and warnings, we will be using the **Review** hyperlink in the **Status Count** panel. By doing this, the user is able to correct a contribution record, and then move onto the next contribution record without having to bounce in and out of screens.

Once you have clicked on the Review hyperlink in the Status Count panel, the first contribution record that is in error or warning status populates and you are able to correct the information.

This record has both a warning and an error that must be addressed.



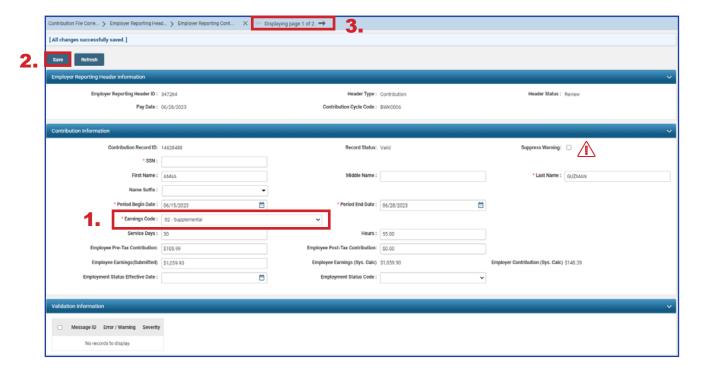
The **error** states that the Service Days are invalid and the **warning** advises that the number of days being reported are greater than the days in the earnings period.

Typically, when this happens, it is for a coach that gets paid once their contract has ended. Users are allowed to report higher days within an earnings period, but the correct Earnings Code needs to be used.

In this example, the 02 – Supplemental earnings code will need to be used. The supplemental earnings code will allow a user to report more days than the earnings period will allow.

#### **Steps for Correction:**

- 1. Change the earnings code to an 02 Supplemental earnings code.
- 2. Click Save.
  - By clicking Save, the information is resubmitted to eSERS and the Record Status will change from Review to Valid.
- 3. If there are multiple records to be corrected, click the **arrow at the top of the screen.** 
  - Depending on what record you are correcting, you will either click the right arrow or left arrow to move to the next record in review.





An **Error** cannot be suppressed. It needs to be corrected prior to submitting your file.

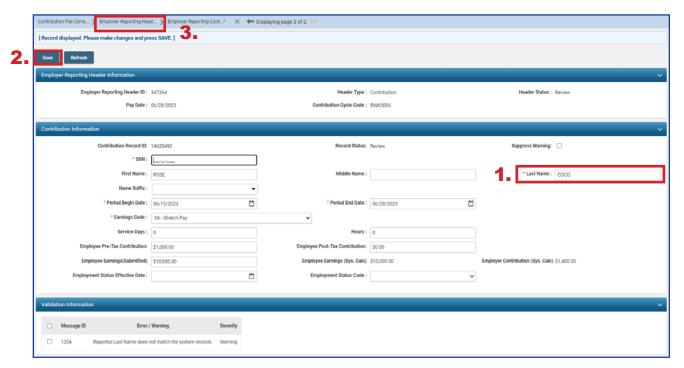
This record has a warning that must be addressed.

The warning references the employees last name and that it doesn't match SERS' records. This can happen when an employee gets married, divorced, or the User entered it in error.

If the employee has gotten married or divorced, call Employer Services. If it was entered in the report incorrectly, you can correct it in the contribution record screen.

### **Steps for Correction:**

- 1. Update the last name on the screen
  - In this example, the first name and last name were transposed.
- Click Save.
- 3. Once you have reached the last record to correct, you will click on **Employer Reporting Head...** in the navigation path.



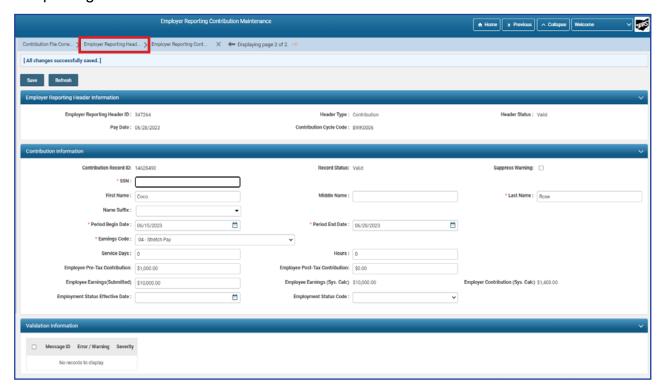
Once the record is saved, both the contribution record and the header will change to a Valid status.

The header will change to a Valid status only if **all** records are in a Valid status. Since this is the last record that needed corrected, the header changed to Valid status upon resolution of the warning.

This file will now need to be submitted for posting.

### Steps (continued):

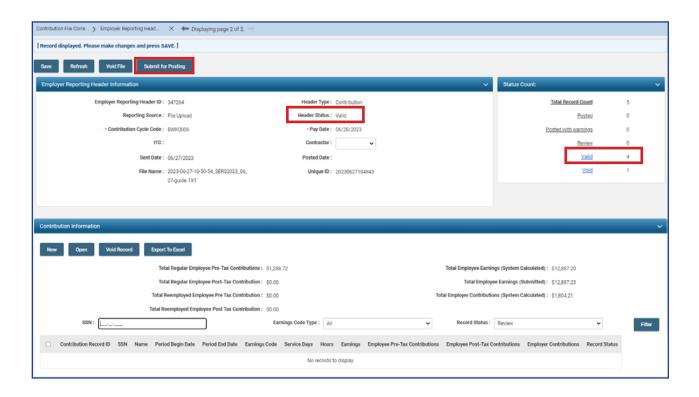
4. Click **Employer Reporting Head...** in the navigation path to get back to the Employer Reporting Header Maintenance screen where you will be able to submit your file for posting.



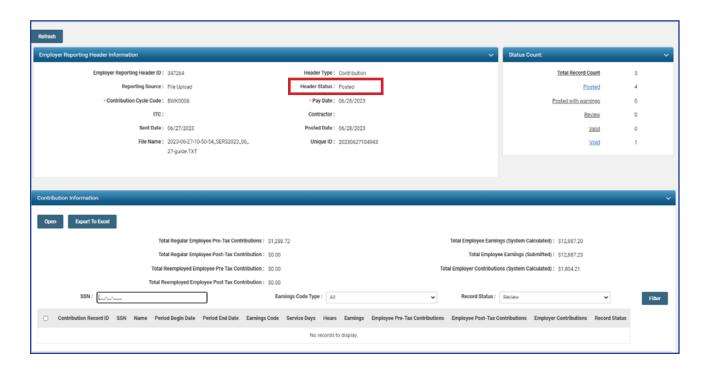
Once the file is valid, a Submit for Posting button will appear on the Employer Reporting Header Maintenance screen.

#### Steps (continued):

5. Click Submit for Posting.



Once a header is submitted for posting, it becomes read-only. The header status changes to **Posting in Progress**, and will change to **Posted** once the information is processed.



## What Do I Do Next?

Now that the file is posted, the user can go into the Payment Remittance application and submit payment via ACH Debit or EFT.

# **Validation Information**

# **Types of Contribution Errors, Warnings, and Messages**

# **ERRORS**

Error Message	Cause	
Service days and hours	<ul> <li>Service days and hours are required fields for specific earnings codes, such as 01 – regular contribution.</li> </ul>	
must be greater than zero	<ul> <li>Only when the Contribution Record is correct with no days and hours, use the 04 – Stretch Pay earnings code.</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>If a Member Enrollment Record was not entered prior to contributions being reported.</li> </ul>	
	<ul> <li>If it has been more than six months since the member has contributed.</li> </ul>	
	If the Social Security number differs between the Contribution Record and Member Enrollment Record:	
	✓ Check if the Contribution Record has the wrong Social Security number, then correct the number in the Contribution Record, and click Save.	
Enrollment is required for member	✓ Check if the Member Enrollment Record was entered with the incorrect Social Security number. Because a new Member Enrollment Record must be entered in eSERS, call Employer Services to remove the incorrect enrollment. A copy of the member's Social Security card or I9 will be required.	
	<ul> <li>If you receive this error, and the person is a recent retiree who has not returned to work, please call Employer Services for assistance. Do not enter in a Member Enrollment Record.</li> </ul>	
	Please Note: Once a Member Enrollment Record is entered and posted, go back and click Save on the Contribution Detail Record. This resubmits the contribution information to eSERS. Call Employer Services at 877-213-0861 if the error is not removed; do not enter another Member Enrollment Record.	
	<ul> <li>Verify the days being reported are correct.</li> </ul>	
Service days are invalid (error) and Service days cannot be greater than number of days between period begin date and period end date (warning)	<ul> <li>The number of days cannot be greater than the number of days between the period begin date and period end date in a pay schedule.</li> <li>Example: If you are reporting under a biweekly schedule, a biweekly schedule has 14 days between the period begin date and period end date.</li> <li>Change the earnings code to 02 – Supplemental. This allows</li> </ul>	
	a greater number of days to be submitted.	

Retro contributions cannot be reported for the current pay period	<ul> <li>The 03 – Retro earnings code can only be used when there is a retroactive pay increase for the employee.</li> <li>The earnings period begin date and end date must be for a prior reporting period where the contribution would have been reported.</li> <li>Reminder: If you missed reporting a contribution for an employee, use a "Missed Contribution" earnings code (91, 92, 94), and not a Retro Pay.</li> </ul>	
Adjustment cannot be posted without original transaction. For missed contribution use different earnings code	<ul> <li>The regular file must be posted before the adjustment file can post.</li> <li>Once the original file has posted, open the Contribution Record in the adjustment file, and click the Save button. This resubmits the adjustment information to eSERS.</li> <li>A "Pending member account transaction exists for the adjustment" warning may appear. Click Suppress Warning, and then the Save button.</li> </ul>	
Net adjusted value cannot be below zero	<ul> <li>You cannot subtract more than what was reported. Review the original transaction.</li> </ul>	
Service Days, Hours and Contribution must be either positive or negative in a Contribution Record	<ul> <li>You cannot have a positive and a negative in the same Contribution Record.</li> </ul>	
Period begin date and end date do not match any payroll schedule	<ul> <li>The period begin date and/or the period end date in the Contribution Record(s) do not match the payroll schedule.</li> <li>Change the period begin and end dates in the Contribution Record(s) to match the payroll schedule being used, and then click Save.</li> </ul>	
Period begin and end date do not match payroll schedule for the given contribution cycle code and pay date	<ul> <li>A contribution header was created for a pay date and contribution cycle code in which the current begin and end dates for the reporting period do not exist.</li> <li>Review the payroll schedule(s); one may need to be extended to cover future pay periods.</li> <li>If your period begin date and end date do not match your payroll schedule, you may need to change the dates in your contribution file to match the payroll schedule, or you may need to enter a new payroll schedule. Call Employer Services at 877-213-0861 for any assistance.</li> </ul>	

### **WARNINGS**

Reminder: Please review all warnings for accuracy before suppressing the warning.

Warning	Action
Net service days cannot be greater than 92	<ul> <li>Suppress the warning.</li> </ul>
Unreasonable rate of pay	<ul> <li>This is received when there is a large amount of earnings with a small amount of days reported.</li> <li>Was a Compensation Determination completed to determine if the contributions should be reported?</li> <li>Suppress the warning. There will be follow up from Employer Services.</li> </ul>
Reported earnings do not match system calculated earnings	<ul> <li>Verify the contribution submitted is correct.</li> <li>Change the earnings you are reporting to match the system calculated earnings, click Save, and the record will become valid.</li> <li>Suppress the warning, and click Save.</li> </ul>
Reported last name does not match system records	<ul> <li>Suppress the warning, and click Save.</li> <li>Call Employer Services and update the last name to ensure you will not receive this warning on future reports.</li> </ul>
Possible duplicate contribution record for the member. Verify the contribution record for accuracy	<ul> <li>Another contribution record for this member for the same pay period exists.</li> <li>Verify to make sure both records are necessary.</li> </ul>
Contribution type (pre-tax or post tax) is not the same as last received contribution for this member for this employer. Verify the contribution record of accuracy	<ul> <li>The last posted regular contribution record for the member and employer is in a different bucket (pre- tax or post-tax) than the current contribution record.</li> </ul>

For more information on earning codes, visit our website at www.ohsers.org/employers for the *How To: Earning Codes for Contribution Reporting*.