SHARP-SHOOTER

TAKING AIM TO BETTER SERVE THE CUSTOMER

SHARP Y2K STATUS

The Y2K testing and preparation of SHARP by staff from the Divisions of Personnel Services, Accounts and Reports, and Information Systems and Communications was successful. SHARP successfully rolled over to the year 2000 and continues to operate with no Y2K related problems. Our thanks to all of the staff involved in ensuring that Y2K was not an issue for SHARP.

Inside This Issue

This issue will focus on business process changes involving:

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Tax Tips

This is the time of year that many employees reevaluate their tax withholding status. Here are a few tips to keep in mind as you are assisting employees with tax issues:

1. Agency personnel should not offer tax advice to the employee, but should refer them to a tax professional. Good web sites to refer employees: www.irs.gov (Internal Revenue Service) or www.ink.org/public/kdor/taxpage (Kansas Department of Revenue).

2. The W4 and W5 forms are available in a fillable format so that data can be entered directly into the form online, saved and printed. These are accessible from the Division of Accounts and Reports web site at www.da.state.ks.us/ar/forms/. Please verify the form has been filled out completely and correctly prior to entering in SHARP.

3. Agency personnel can use the online paycheck functionality if employees have "what if" type questions (example: If I change my W4 from M-1 to M-2, how will my withholdings change?). Make sure to delete the "what if" row from the tax data record after the online process has been completed. Refer to the Online Pay Computation section in the Payroll CBT for instructions on using this process.

4. If an employee wishes to have local taxes withheld, refer to the Payroll CBT section Employee Tax Data-Local Tax Data as there are specific setup instructions that should be followed. Currently, the State of Kansas only withholds local taxes for Kansas City, Missouri (i.e., locality 38000).

5. Reminder: Payroll adjustments calculate taxes based on the current row in the tax data record.

February 29, 2000

February 29, 2000 could pose a problem for computers if they are not programmed to recognize the first extra leap year in 400 years. Some computers may not expect a leap day this year and skip ahead to March 1. We will be watching for this and the Constant Readiness Center (CRC) will be activated again on the evening of February 28, 2000 through the first few hours of February 29, 2000 for agencies to contact if there should be any problems.

The Department of Administration has conducted extensive testing of the Statewide Human Resource and Payroll System (SHARP) for all significant Year 2000 payroll cycles, including February 29, 2000. We do not expect problems, but we will be available just in case.

Thank You to Agencies Who Made Security "Check-up" a Success

On November 30, 1999, Human Resource Managers received a list of SHARP operators in their agency. HR Managers were asked to review the list of SHARP operators to determine if the current access level was still appropriate. As a result, the Division of Personnel Services received revisions from several agencies. Some employees may have changed positions within the agency. Additionally, a person may have been given access to an area in SHARP that they found was unnecessary. Finally, there may have been job changes that were not picked up in our monthly queries.

Once per month, the list of SHARP Operators is scanned by the Division of Personnel Services to remove operators that have left state service or switched agencies. Agencies should still be pro-active and complete an Agency Security Selection Form to remove access when an employee terminates or changes assignments that could impact their access. Best practice security measures also dictate that user access be limited to only those areas needed for their position duties.

In a continued effort to improve and maintain the data integrity of the SHARP System, Human Resource Managers should expect a list of SHARP operators on a quarterly basis. Corrections to SHARP access can be made by completing a SHARP Agency Security Selection Form (http://da.state.ks.us/sharp/documents/Agencyform.pdf) for each Operator ID needing changes. All corrections to SHARP access should be sent to: Gina Gray, Division of Personnel Services, 900 SW Jackson, Room 951-S, Topeka, KS 66612.

SHARP Security Guidelines

1. Never share your Operator ID or password with anyone. New employees should obtain their own Operator ID and password before accessing the SHARP system.

2. Change your default password the first time that you sign on to SHARP.

3. Choose a new password that is memorable, but not easily guessed by someone else.

4. Do not leave PeopleSoft open on your computer when you leave your desk (anyone walking by could view confidential information).

5. Guard the personal information of others as well as you would your own. All information in the SHARP database is confidential. K.S.A. 75-2949f states that "knowingly releasing confidential information from official records" may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6. If changes are needed in your level of access, contact your agency Human Resource Manager, Payroll Manager or your designated SHARP Security Administrator.

7. If you forget your password, contact Gina Gray at 785-296-4314 or gina.gray@state.ks.us.

Open Enrollment for 2000

The Division of Personnel Services is planning for the October 2000 open enrollment cycle. The last two issues of the KANSAGRAM have featured articles on AKSESS, an exciting new automated, employee self-sufficiency solution for the Fall, 2000 open enrollment for Group Health Insurance (GHI) and Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA). AKSESS (Automated Kansas State Employees Service System) will provide employees an Internet website for information about insurance plans, rates and coverage options. In addition, employees will also select and complete their GHI and FSA selections for the new plan year on the AKSESS website.

The Statewide Human Resource and Payroll System (SHARP) uses the PeopleSoft Benefits Administration process to determine an employee's eligibility for the various plans offered during the upcoming open enrollment cycle. Previously, employees have received a customized enrollment worksheet mailed to their homes. Employees recorded their selections on the form and returned it to their agency Human Resource Office. AKSESS will utilize the eligibility determination data residing in the SHARP

Dear Dead Eye…

Q: I have a new employee. How do they complete the SHARP Computer Based Training (CBT)?

A: There are two steps to completing SHARP Training:

1) Read the appropriate CBT. There should be an icon on the employee's Personal Computer (PC) desktop or on the Start menu under Programs titled "CBT-SHARP 7.0." [If the CBT is not loaded, contact your agency technical staff or SHARP Help Desk staff for assistance.] Double click to review a menu of nine CBT books. Select the "Introduction to SHARP" CBT by double clicking. This introductory book explains the navigation buttons in the CBT, discusses which CBT tests to complete, explains SHARP Security and provides general information about SHARP Reports. Once this book is read, each employee should complete the appropriate CBT book for their position (as discussed in the Introduction to SHARP CBT). For example, an employee whose position requires time entry duties would complete the Time & Leave CBT. At the end of each book, a test booklet should be printed. This booklet will be used in step 2 of the training process.

2) Complete Training Activities. After reading the CBT, the employee should locate an icon on their PC desktop titled "SHARP Training". Double click this icon to automatically sign-on to the SHARP Training database. Navigate to the appropriate window (based on knowledge gained from reading the CBT) and complete the activities outlined in the test booklet printed at the end of the CBT. Answer all questions at the end of the test booklet.

As a supervisor or Human Resource Manager, you should be familiar with the procedures for granting your employee Security Access to SHARP. If you need a refresher, security details and a Security Selection form attachment are in the Introduction to SHARP CBT.

All questions for Dear Dead Eye are welcomed and should be directed to "Dead Eye" at the project address, (785) 296-4886, or E-Mail: douglas.quinn@state.ks.us All questions will be answered in the following issue of the newsletter.
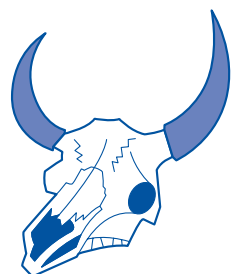
Open Enrollment
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system and make it available to employees on the Internet.

The Division of Personnel Services will continue to provide additional information regarding the AKSESS project and tips on how agencies can prepare their employees for the October 2000 open enrollment cycle. Agencies should ensure that the data residing in the SHARP system is accurate so that GHI and FSA options provided to each specific employee are based on accurate information.

New SHARP Funding Report

By Steve Banning

The Division of Accounts and Reports (A&R) has received several requests from agencies for a SHARP report listing the positions within each position pool, by department. A new report KPAY711, Department Positions and Budget Earnings, is currently in development that will provide this information. The report will be distributed through agency mailboxes on the MVS or on hard copy for paper user agencies. This new report will complement the KPAY710 and should make it easier for agencies to ensure that positions are funded properly.

The anticipated release date for the KPAY711 is March, 2000. A Division of Accounts and Reports' Informational Circular will notify agencies when the KPAY711 release date is known. Informational Circulars are available on the A&R web site at http://da.state.ks.us/ar/infocirc.