Plan Sponsor Contribution Schedule Guide

The Plan Sponsor Contribution Schedules screen in PARK is designed to make it easier for plan sponsors with apportioned or modified direct billing to compare their monthly payroll files with the preliminary and final contribution files of the General Board. This ensures accuracy in salary data and pension contributions for the plan sponsor's participants. With this tool, the plan sponsor can more efficiently inform the General Board to any discrepancies in a participant's data, and the General Board can work with the plan sponsor to eliminate them.

Note: The plan sponsor bears the responsibility for updating their participant records in PARK in the event of a discrepancy between their payroll information and the General Board's records.

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Contribution Schedule Process

1. The preliminary contributions schedule for the current billing period is generated and placed on PARK for the administrator to view or download.

2. The administrator may download the preliminary contributions file.

3. Using the downloaded file, the administrator may make edits or corrections and then save the file.

4. The administrator uploads the saved file to PARK using an option from the Plan Sponsor Contribution Schedule screen.

5. Any changes are reconciled with the information that the General Board has on record. **Note:** changes to the contribution schedule **do not** constitute a change to the participant record in PARK. **Participant records must be changed in PARK by the conference administrator.**

6. Five days from the end of each month, the current or updated preliminary contributions schedule file for the given billing period is locked and no longer available for changes. The final contribution schedule is generated and made available on PARK within five (5) business days of the end of the month. (An e-mail notification will be sent when final contribution schedules are available.)

Contribution Schedule User Instructions

Screen Definitions

Maintain Plan Sponsor E-mail Notification Addresses: Allows you to specify up to five (5) e-mail addresses to which notifications are sent when preliminary and final billing is generated on PARK.

Period: Displays the begin and end dates for each billing period.

Status: Displays the status of the file. Valid values include: Initial Load Complete, Downloaded, Updated, Reported, Final Bill Generated, Final Bill Downloaded.

View Preliminary Detail: Shows the full billing record for all participants in the plan.

Download Preliminary Detail: Allows the user to download the preliminary detail file in a variety of delimited text files.

Upload Preliminary Detail: Allows the user to upload a modified detail file.

Accept Preliminary Detail As Is: Allows the user to accept the preliminary detail file without any modifications.

View Comparison Report: Shows only the billing record(s) for participants who have been updated from the preliminary report.

View Final Detail: Shows the final contribution schedule for the particular month including adjustments.

Download Final Detail: Allows the user to download the final billing record for the given month. Note that no changes can be made once the final bill has been generated.
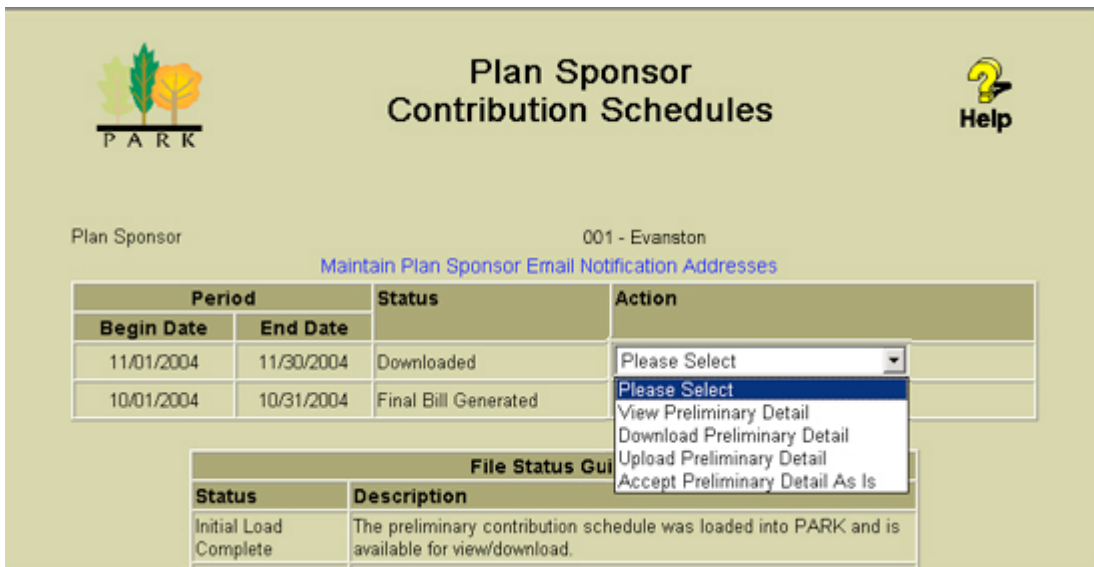
Step-by-Step Guide

1. Log into PARK and click on the **Contributions Schedules** link under the *Conference Downloads* heading. This takes you to the *Plan Sponsor Contribution Schedules* screen (shown below):

2. You have multiple view and download options for each monthly file. By using the pull-down menu for a given month, you can select from the displayed options below:

3. If you select to download (either preliminary or final detail), the download screen (shown below) will appear.

4. Select a delimiter option and click the "begin download" button. The file will appear in a new window.

5. Save the file as a text file (.txt) by clicking **File > Save as** in the browser menu. **The file must be saved as text in order to upload it back into PARK later.**

6. Use the downloaded file to make any changes, if necessary (for file specifics, see the following section, **Contribution Schedule File Information**).

7. If uploading a changed file, make sure that the file is a text (.txt) file and select the **Upload Preliminary Detail** option from the drop-down menu.

8. On the upload page (see below), choose the delimiter type and use the "Browse" button to select the file to upload.

9. Click the "Upload" button to send the file to PARK.

It is recommended that you use the same delimiter in uploading as you chose when downloading to avoid confusion or potential errors.

10. If the file is accepted, you should see a message on the page that says "Changes Uploaded Successfully"; otherwise you will see an error message describing why the file was rejected.

11. You should be able to see your changes via the **View Preliminary Detail** and the **View Comparison Report** (only available starting the last week of the month) option on the *Plan Sponsor Contribution Schedules* screen.

Contribution Schedule File Information

The preliminary file is used to send apportioned/modified direct billing contribution schedule changes to the General Board of Pension and Health Benefits. When uploading changes, the file must follow this format. Any files not matching this format will result in errors when attempting to upload changes. The preliminary upload and download file formats are the same.

Fields

There are 13 fields that define the preliminary file format. Those fields, in order are:

1. Plan Sponsor (Conference) Number - *must be the same for all records*
2. Period Begin Date (YYYYMMDD) - *must be the same for all records*
3. Period End Date (YYYYMMDD) - *must be the same for all records*
4. Social Security Number (without dashes) - *cannot be changed, only added or deleted*
5. Subplan number of employer - *cannot be changed, only added or deleted*
6. Participant ID Number - *cannot be changed.*
7. Billing Date (YYYYMMDD) - *cannot be changed, only added or deleted*
8. Participant Name (Last, First Middle)
9. Plan Compensation (0.00 if none, up to 9,999,999.99)
10. Plan Compensation Effective Date (YYYYMMDD)
11. MPP Amount (0.00 if none, up to 999,999.99)
12. CPP Amount (0.00 if none, up to 999,999.99)
13. Action Flag *

   * Valid values for the Action Flag are:

      A - Add New Participant
      D - Delete Participant
      R - Restore Original Values

Delimiters

The fields are either fixed-length, in which each field has a reserved number of character spaces to define it, or delimited, in which a specific character is used to denote the breaks between fields. PARK will generate and accept the following delimiters in a text file:

Comma *   ,
Pipe |
Semicolon   ;
Tab *
Tilde   ~

* These Formats for export from Excel

As an example, the record format for a preliminary file in pipe-delimited format would look like this:

001|20040901|20040930|123456789|123456|1234567|20040905|Last Name, First, Middle|9999.00|20040901|300.50|0.00|
001|20040901|20040930|123456790|123457|1234567|20040905|Smith, John Jacob|45000.00|20040901|272.25|0.00|

Editing a File

Once the file has been downloaded and opened, any modifications should be made directly to the participant's record in the file (changing a dollar amount, adding an action flag, etc.). Simply overwrite or add the value in the existing line.

Example: A conference benefits officer needs to update one participant's plan compensation from $32,000 to $35,000, mark another participant for deletion, and add a third participant as new. Using the downloaded file, the CBO:

1. Replaces the 32000.00 in the Plan Compensation field with 35000.00 for the first participant
2. Adds the letter "D" at the end of the second participant's record
3. Creates a new record line with the appropriate information in the fields and includes the letter "A" for an action flag at the end of the new record
4. Makes the appropriate corresponding changes in PARK

File Upload/Download Information

When downloading, please make sure that you save the file as a **text document** (e.g., **report.txt**). Any other format will cause the file to error out when you attempt to upload it back to PARK. If you are importing the data into Excel for editing, you need to save the file as a text file (either Tab-delimited or Unicode) with the **.txt** extension when finished. **PARK will only accept text files with the .txt filename extension.**

Preliminary contribution files may be downloaded and uploaded at any time until five (5) business days from the end of each month. At that time, you will not be able to upload a preliminary file until the next billing period. You will be emailed when your final bill has been generated, after the last business day of the month. At that time you, will be able to view and download the final detail reports.

Additional information on file formats can be found on the PARK download and upload screens by clicking the link entitled "Click here to view Download/Upload File Format."

"Printer Friendly" Viewing and Printing

On the report screens, you have the option of a "Printer Friendly View" (the link in the top right corner of the screen). This is so that you can print a text-only version of the report from the browser window if that is your preference. To print the report properly, you must set your browser's page setup to **Landscape** before printing:

1. From the *Plan Sponsor Contribution Schedules* screen, select a view option for a specific report that you want to print (e.g., View Preliminary Detail).
2. Click the link "Printer Friendly View" in the upper right corner of the screen. This will open the print-friendly report in a new browser window.
3. From the browser menu, click **File** > **Page Setup**.
4. Look for the heading "Orientation" and select **Landscape**.
5. Click **OK**.
6. Click the printer icon or **File** > **Print** to print the report.

Notes

When working with downloaded files, the Participant Name field is ignored **except when adding a new participant record**.

Statuses displayed on the main *Plan Sponsor Contribution Schedules* screen correspond with the status of the respective file (e.g., if the file has been downloaded, the status will display "Downloaded"). Whatever status is displayed will be the last chronologically applicable status in the process.

Contact Information

The following contact information is provided in case you need to get in touch with the General Board or a specific department regarding participant administration:

General Board of Pension and Health Benefits
Help Desk (Help_Desk@gbophb.org)
1201 Davis Street
Evanston, IL 60201
Phone: (800) 870-4442 x4357
Fax: (847) 866-5273