



## Behind-The-Scenes Actions Ensure Payday Is A Happy Day

Rolling with the changes has served Payroll Director Brenda Recobs and her veteran staff well over the years.

“New technology has definitely helped with the payroll process,” said Recobs. “Thankfully, we are not entering data manually as we did in past years, saving much time and effort.”

Still, Recobs’ staff puts forth plenty of time and effort to ensure that every INDOT employee gets paid accurately and on time. Twelve-hour days on Mondays that fall on a payroll week are commonplace for Recobs and her staff of four. Some days have been as long as 15 hours.

“We are here until payroll is correct,” said Recobs, who has 35 years of payroll experience at INDOT. “If one person’s information is not right, it holds up the entire submission to the auditor’s office.”

The process begins on Sunday night during pay weeks. “We run many electronic reports to ensure they are error-free,” explained Recobs. “If I find an employee has not submitted time, for example, I am emailing this employee’s supervisor.” Common time sheet errors include:

- Time less than 75 hours
- No approval or partial approval from supervisors
- Time has been saved in PeopleSoft, but not submitted
- Wrong time reporting code (for example, “REG—Regular Work Hours” submitted on a holiday)

Scenarios like these are part of the reason why the deadline for employees to submit time in PeopleSoft was moved up six hours to 9:30 a.m. every other Friday. Also, the deadline for managers to approve time was moved up from Monday to 1:30 p.m. Friday. Adherence to these earlier deadlines allows Payroll to deliver correct work hours in a timely manner to the Auditor of State.

In Recobs’ case, “deliver” is the truest sense of the word. The payroll file, along with other personal and sensitive information such as an address or exemption change, is always hand-delivered to the auditor’s office to ensure delivery.

Earlier this year, payroll responsibilities were integrated to central office staff. Recobs and INDOT Accountant Roxey Fenwick review central office employee time, while other accountants review district offices. Florence McSwine manages the Greenfield and LaPorte Districts; Patti Mangold overlooks the Crawfordsville and Vincennes Districts, as well as central office changes; and Michael Pote oversees the Fort Wayne and Seymour Districts.



*Your payroll team, from left: Patti Mangold, Florence McSwine, Roxey Fenwick, Brenda Recobs and Michael Pote.*

Recobs appreciates the support she receives for ensuring the payroll is completed. “Issues are usually resolved quickly as we have tremendous support from the executive staff and the district deputy commissioners,” said Recobs. “This encouragement helps the process, so we can all get our payroll out timely and correctly.”

Payroll is a very important aspect to employment, and naturally, affects every employee. That’s why customer service is important to the payroll team. On workdays, from 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. EST, you can always speak to a payroll representative because the staff staggers its work schedules and lunch breaks. Voice mail messages are changed daily, giving the day’s date, so callers will know if the staff member is in or out of the office.

Recobs encourages all employees to look at their payroll information and benefits carefully each pay period.

“Be sure your gross amount, deductions, retirement, deferred compensation, if applicable, and balances – such as vacation, sick and personal time – are all correct,” stressed Recobs. “If there is an error, it’s often easier to fix sooner than later.”

One of the divisions that INDOT Deputy Commissioner of Human Resources Kim Pearson oversees is payroll.

“INDOT’s payroll team is very dedicated, and they truly care about helping people,” said Pearson. “They are often called upon for test programs from the state auditor’s office due to their experience and expertise, and that speaks volumes for the group.”

The American Payroll Association, the professional society for payroll professionals, has deemed September 3-7 as National Payroll Week. It is comforting that INDOT is represented by such true professionals in our payroll division.