

ARIS SOLUTIONS



EMPLOYER HANDBOOK

VOICE

“VETERAN’S OPTIONS FOR INDEPENDENCE, CHOICE & EMPOWERMENT”



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ARIS Solutions is a Vermont based non-profit financial services organization. We provide efficient, low cost financial services to other non-profit organizations. Additionally, we provide payroll services for over 4000 individual employers through a variety of programs. We support these employers with all payroll related needs so they may focus on the important task of assuring that care is being provided. Our fee for this service is \$110.00 per month.

We are proud to support so many individuals in living more independent lives at home.

ARIS SOLUTIONS EMPLOYER HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

ARIS Solutions is a Fiscal Agent (payroll agent) contracted by Independent Living Center, Inc. ADRC to serve Veterans opting for the VOICE program. ARIS Solutions provides payroll services for individuals who will be hiring and supervising employees to provide care for participating Veterans funded through the VOICE program.

Becoming an employer is a very serious and important undertaking. An employer must be willing and able to hire, train and supervise employees, along with making sure that all related paperwork is completed. The role ARIS Solutions plays as the payroll agent for the employer is entirely dependent upon the employer's ability to comply with State and Federal regulations and requirements.

As an employer you are responsible for hiring staff, assigning their work, and, ultimately, for assuring that they are paid in a timely manner in keeping with Department of Labor standards. Staff at ARIS Solutions are available to provide support and assistance so that you may more easily meet this very important responsibility.

EMPLOYER ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES

- √ Understand and follow program requirements
- √ Understand what services are funded and managed by you, the employer
- √ Have the ability to respond to questions from the Payroll agent regarding wages and hours worked
- √ Recruit and select qualified employee(s)
- √ Interview applicants and carefully check references before offering anyone employment
- √ Advise selected employee(s) of their responsibilities
- √ Assure that employment forms are completed and submitted to the payroll agent, ARIS Solutions
- √ Train employee(s) to perform specific tasks as needed
- √ Develop a work schedule for your employee
- √ Arrange for substitute or back-up employees as needed
- √ Complete, authorize and submit employee(s) timesheets to ARIS Solutions in accordance with the provided payroll schedule. (Maintain copies of all employee(s) timesheets)
- √ Provide ongoing performance feedback to employee(s)
- √ Terminate employee(s) when necessary
- √ Notify the payroll agent of any necessary timesheet changes
- √ Review regular statements issued by ARIS Solutions to assure that funds are available to pay employees
- √ Pay employees out of pocket if there are no funds remaining, if the participant Veteran's budget ends or has no funds remaining

DEFINITIONS

Participant: This is the Veteran who is receiving care or services.

Employer: This is the person who hires employees to provide care for the consumer. In most cases the participant (Veteran) will also be the employer. The employer is responsible for hiring, scheduling, training, supervising employees or providers. The employer submits timesheets to ARIS Solutions according to the payroll schedule.

Employee: This is the person hired to provide care or services for the Participant (Veteran).

Budget: The budget is the total amount of dollars available to pay for goods and services provided for the participant.

Employer Tax Rate: This is the cost of matching Social Security and Medicare taxes paid by the employer. Additionally, the Employer tax rate includes the cost of State and Federal Unemployment taxes. The current rate is 10.32%, including 7.65% for Social Security and Medicare taxes, 2.07% for State unemployment and .6% for Federal unemployment taxes.
The amount of the Employer tax is based upon the gross wages paid to each employee.

Workers' Compensation: Workers' Compensation is an insurance policy which pays for the cost of an employee's medical expenses and lost wages in the event of a work related injury. Alaska labor law requires that all employers obtain a Workers' Compensation policy to cover their employees. ARIS Solutions assists employers to obtain Workers' Compensation policies.

Getting Started!

Four separate steps must be taken in order for ARIS Solutions to be able to issue paychecks for your employees. Three of these steps are the responsibility of the employer. The fourth step is the joint responsibility of the funding source and the employer. These steps are as follows:

1. **Become an Employer** - In order for ARIS Solutions to pay your employees, we must have information about you. There are several forms you must complete and send to ARIS Solutions. These forms include:
 - a. Employer Appointment of Agent - The purpose of this form is to give ARIS Solutions the legal ability to act as your Payroll Agent. Without the completion of this form, ARIS Solutions is not legally able to act as your payroll agent. Please be sure you complete sections #2, #3, #4 and sign the form.
 - c. Employer Identification Number - This form establishes you as a legal employer. It is required for all individuals who will be managing funded services.
 - d. Tax Information Authorization - The purpose of this form is to allow ARIS Solutions to have interaction with the IRS on your behalf as needed.
 - e. Workers' Compensation information - This form is required in order to begin the process of obtaining a Workers' Compensation policy for each employer. **Employees may not work or be paid until a policy has been obtained.** It may take up to two weeks after the employer completes the required paperwork for a policy to be issued.
 - f. Participant Information - This form is needed so that ARIS Solutions may connect you with the funding source. Please include the name, birth date and social security number of the participant (Veteran).

2. **Hiring Employees**: An employee hiring packet must be completed for each person you hire. Please remember, you are an employer. As with any employer, whether the employer is McDonald's, the local school system or IBM, there is paperwork that must be filled out by the new employee and you, the employer. Employees are unable to be paid until this paperwork is completed. **The forms needing completion are required by the State and Federal Government.** New hiring paperwork must be completed for any employee who has not been paid for a period of one year or more.

Employee forms include:

- a. Employee Hiring Notice - This form tells ARIS Solutions who you are hiring and what their name, address, telephone number and Social Security number is. This form also tells ARIS Solutions what date the employee will begin to work for you. As employer, you must sign this form.
- b. W-4 Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate - This form tells ARIS how to process Federal Income Taxes for your employee. The employee must complete this form. They must complete at least Sections 1, 2, 3, and 5 and sign the form.
- c. Employment Eligibility and Verification form - This form is required by the Federal Department of Immigration and Naturalization. The employee must fill out and sign Section 1.

As the employer, you must fill out Section 2. *You* must write down under List A, **or** List B **and** List C information from your employee's forms of identification. For example, if the employee is showing you his/her social security card and Driver's License, you must write down their social security number as it appears on the card as well as the employee's driver's license number. You will find a full page list of Acceptable Documents along with this form. Please remember to sign this form under Section 2.

- f. Direct Deposit form. **This is a required form.**
All employees paid through the VOICE program must be paid by direct deposit into the employee's bank account.

Background Checks

Background checks are run only when requested by the employer. You are strongly urged to interview applicants and carefully check references before you offer anyone employment. As an employer, if you decide to check a potential employee's background, please contact ARIS Solutions for appropriate authorization forms and they will be forwarded to you.

Employee Restrictions

- A Veteran's **EMPLOYER** may **not** also be a paid **EMPLOYEE** for any services for that consumer.

2. Timesheets. It is the responsibility of the employer to submit timesheets for employees. Employers are provided with a payroll schedule. Employers must be sure to submit timesheets according to the schedule. Timesheets **must** be in the ARIS Solutions office according to the payroll schedule in order for staff to have sufficient time to process the timesheets for payroll. Please be sure to include all required information on the timesheets. Should you have questions when filling out timesheets, do not hesitate to call ARIS Solutions for assistance. Timesheets must include, at a minimum, the participant's (Veteran) name, the employee's name, the last four digits of the employee's social security number, the dates and hours worked by the employee, the employee hourly pay rate, the employee's signature and the employer's signature.

Unfortunately, timesheets that are lacking the employee or employer signature must be returned to the employer for correction. Payroll cannot be processed until timesheets are properly signed.

Employers are encouraged to maintain a copy of all timesheets for their records. It is very useful for the employer to have these timesheets available in the event of questions on a payment to an employee or for auditing purposes.

3. Payroll on Holiday Weeks Payroll is processed as usual in accordance with the payroll schedule, including those weeks in which a holiday occurs. In order to assure the payroll deadline is met, ARIS Solutions staff may work on holidays.

We are unable to assure that timesheets arriving late on a payroll week will be paid. Please be sure you follow the payroll schedule.

Wages: Employers determine the hourly wage to pay employees. Wages must, however, be in keeping with the Alaska Department of Labor regulations. At present, minimum wage in the State of Alaska is \$9.80 per hour effective 1/1/17. Employees **may not** be paid less than this hourly rate.

Approved Participant Budgets. VOICE, in conjunction with the Veteran's Administration, **must** provide an authorization/budget in order for ARIS Solutions to provide payroll for your employees. This authorization must be received by ARIS Solutions before paychecks can be issued. The authorization informs ARIS Solutions of the name of the approved employer as well as the approved monthly budget for the Participant.

Employer Statements. Statements are issued by ARIS Solutions to all employers on a regular basis. These reports reflect the total funds available, employees paid, total funds deducted from the budget and the ending balance reflecting the remaining available funds and savings. Reports are sent on the week following each pay date. It is very important for

employers to monitor these reports closely. ARIS Solutions cannot issue payment if there are insufficient funds remaining in the budget.

Budget Problems: All employers must be aware that they are responsible to assure employees are paid for all hours worked. If there are no funds remaining in the participant's budget, if participant eligibility for VOICE ends or if the services are not reauthorized annually as required, ARIS Solutions cannot issue payment to employees. Employers must pay their employees with their own funds if employees have been scheduled to work by the employer and there are no funds available to pay through ARIS Solutions. It is the responsibility of the employer to carefully monitor available funds or hours of service when scheduling any employee to work.

EMPLOYER PAYROLL TAXES

All employers are responsible to pay matching payroll taxes for their employees. ARIS Solutions manages these payments for all employers using ARIS Solutions as a payroll agent. The cost of these taxes is deducted automatically from the participant's budget with each payroll. The current rate for employer taxes is 10.53%. This consists of Social Security and Medicare match, State Unemployment tax, and Federal Unemployment tax. Please be sure to include this tax rate when creating your budget. For example, if your employee's gross wage is \$100.00, you will need to multiply these gross wages by the tax rate of 10.53% (.1053). In this example the consumer's budget will have \$110.53 deducted for the employee's pay which includes wage and taxes.

This is the cost of matching Social Security and Medicare taxes paid by each employer. This amount is separate from any taxes that may be withheld from employee's pay.

Fraud

Fraud is committed when an **EMPLOYER** or **EMPLOYEE** is untruthful regarding services provided, in order to obtain improper payment. The Veteran's Administration investigates and prosecutes people who commit fraud. **Fraud is a felony and conviction can lead to substantial penalties including imprisonment up to ten years, a fine up to \$1,000 or an amount equal to twice the amount of the assistance or benefits wrongfully obtained, or both.**

Examples of Fraud include:

- Submitting timesheets for services not actually provided (e.g., signing or submitting a timesheet for services which were not actually provided)
- Submitting timesheets for services provided by a different person (e.g., signing or submitting a timesheet for services provided by a different person)
- Submitting twice for the same service (e.g., signing or submitting a timesheet for services which were reimbursed by another source, or signing or submitting a duplicate timesheet for reimbursement from the same source)
- Requiring an employee to "share" their paycheck with the employer

As required by the ILC, ADRC contract with ARIS Solutions, suspected cases of fraud will be referred to the Veteran's Administration as well as the ADRC overseeing services and may be referred to the local police authorities for further investigation and possible prosecution.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do employees have to fill out new hiring packets if the employer changes?

Yes. The new Surrogate/Employer is considered to be a new company. Each time the company changes, Employees must complete new paperwork. The Federal Government requires that all Employers have W-4 and Employment Eligibility Verification confirmation for all employees. This information is also not transferable between Employers.

2. Will the Employer be notified by ARIS Solutions when all the initial employer and employee paperwork has received?

No. Should the paperwork you have submitted be incomplete or missing signatures, the employer or employee packet will be returned to you for correction.

3. If an Employee is already in the ARIS Solutions system, and they begin to work for a second Employer, must they still fill out all of the hiring paperwork?

Yes. The reason for this is as above in #1.

4. Does ARIS Solutions process payroll for employees before the ILC/ADRC sends ARIS Solutions authorization of available funding for services?

No. ARIS Solutions is not able to process payroll for any Employee unless a funding authorization has been forwarded to ARIS Solutions by the ILC/ADRC. Once the funding authorization is received at ARIS Solutions, Employees are paid in the next scheduled payroll.

6. What does ARIS Solutions do if timesheets are not filled out correctly?

ARIS Solutions staff will attempt to contact Employers by phone or email to obtain corrected information. If the Employer is unavailable or does not respond to the phone call or email, the timesheet cannot be paid. ARIS Solutions will return timesheets to the Employer for correction if they are unable to reach them by phone after three attempts. Please remember that timesheets are considered to be legal documents. ARIS Solutions staff are not legally able to make changes or corrections on timesheets without the express direction by the Employer. Unfortunately, should a timesheet be missing the Employer or Employee signature, we are required to return the timesheet to the Employer.

7. Does ARIS Solutions accept faxed or e-mailed timesheets?

Yes.

8. Why must Employers, only, submit timesheets and other paperwork to ARIS Solutions?

This must be done by Employers only as a means of preventing fraud. There have been instances over the past several years in which Employees who have been asked to submit their own timesheets to ARIS Solutions have altered (increased) the number of hours on the timesheet resulting in fraudulent payments.

9. What happens if a Veteran runs out of funds, becomes ineligible for the program or is terminated for services before all employee timesheets are paid?

It is the responsibility of the employer to monitor consumer budgets, to be aware of eligibility and to be involved in any changes in funding made by the agency. If no funds are available through these programs, ARIS Solutions cannot pay employees. It then becomes the responsibility of the employer to pay employees from their own personal funds.

10. Does ARIS Solutions provide private payroll services for individuals who are not eligible for Alaska Veteran's funded programs?

No. In the future, ARIS Solutions may consider providing such services. At present, ARIS Solutions does assist a small number of employers who wish to supplement payments to employees. Such payroll support is provided only as capacity allows, and on a case-by-case basis.

11. Are Employees covered by Workers' Compensation Insurance?

ARIS Solutions assists employers in obtaining a Workers' Compensation insurance policy when enrolling in the program. The cost of this coverage is paid from the participant's budget. A new Workers' Compensation policy must be purchased any time there is a change in employer. Employees may not begin to work until a policy is in place.

12. How does ARIS Solutions process payroll on weeks which include holidays?

Payroll is processed as usual every week, including those weeks in which a holiday occurs. In order to assure that the payroll deadline is met, ARIS Solutions staff may work on holidays. Timesheets must arrive at ARIS Solutions no later than the received date indicated on the payroll schedule.

Please be sure that you follow the payroll schedule to assure that your employees are paid on time.

REASONS FOR NON-PAYMENT OF EMPLOYEE TIMESHEETS

ARIS Solutions staff want to be sure that all employees are paid on time. Staff makes every effort to make this possible. Sometimes it may be necessary for ARIS Solutions to return employee timesheets to an employer. Returning timesheets to employers for corrections will likely result in the employee's paychecks being delayed.

ARIS Solutions has to follow rules spelled out in a contract with the ICL, ADRC and the Veteran's Administration. Sometimes this means that timesheets have to be returned to the employer when the following information is missing:

1. Missing employee signature
2. Missing employer signature
3. Signature of anyone other than the employer of record on the employer signature line.
4. Two Veterans listed for services on one timesheet. Employees must fill out one timesheet per pay period for *each* Veteran they provide care for.

For timesheets submitted without the information below, ARIS Solutions staff will try to call employers by phone or email during the pay week to ask for the missing information. If the employer is unavailable at the time staff call, a voice mail message (when possible) will be left asking for a return call. Staff will continue to seek the needed information up through the time pay roll is processed. If staff cannot get the needed information, the timesheet cannot be paid and must be returned to the employer for correction.

If a timesheet is returned to the employer for one of the above reasons, the employer must complete or correct the identified error, and re-submit the timesheet to ARIS Solutions. The timesheet will be processed and paid in the next pay period following receipt in the ARIS Solutions office. Other required information:

1. Missing employee name
2. Missing consumer name
3. Missing dates of service

Other reasons an employee may not be paid:

1. Late time sheets. Time sheets must be received in the ARIS Solutions office according to the Payroll Schedule. All timesheets are date stamped upon arrival in the ARIS Solutions office.
2. Lack of or incomplete Employer or Employee enrollment forms.
3. Lack of available funds.