

News From



A Publication for GMS Accounting and Revolving Loan System Clients

GMS, Inc. • 10559 Metropolitan Ave., Kensington, MD 20895 • (800)933-3501 • Fax (301) 933-3502 • www.gmsactg.com

Volume 19, No.10

October 2007

Getting Ready for W2s – What You Can Do Now

Although three months remain before you need to prepare W2s, here are some things you can do now to get ready.

- Make sure that the year-to-date payroll information is correct. Don't wait until after the last payroll of the year is completed to verify this information. Use your YTD Payroll Control Sheet to verify amounts. Make sure that any adjustments for deductions deferred from taxable wages were entered correctly.
- Make certain that terminated employees have a T under their employee status.
- Understand your special W2 requirements particularly for issues such as pension, deferred compensation, dependent care and group life insurance over \$50,000. You may need to check with the IRS or your CPA.
- Be familiar with any appropriate federal and state magnetic media reporting requirements that must be met.
- Order W2 forms, and, if you need to, arrange for W2 printing or magnetic media preparation with GMS.
- Review the W2 processing section in your Help files. These instructions are located under Payroll/Annual.

Please Note: W2, 1099 or 1098 forms will not be sent to any clients whose accounts are in arrears. Forms will be sent in December to all clients who have paid their balances due as of October 31, 2007. Those agencies requesting that GMS print forms or prepare magnetic media for 2007 also must not have an overdue balance.

Please Note: Since all DOS contracts will be discontinued as of 12/31/07, there will NOT be any DOS software revisions sent for W2's, 1099's or 1098's this year. The software will not be compatible with the revised forms for 2007, therefore no forms will be sent to any client in December that is still using the DOS software.

Have you Installed the Latest Windows Accounting Revisions?

You should have received an email from GMS on September 24, 2007, that included instructions for downloading and installing the latest revisions.

It is important that revisions are installed in a timely manner. We find that service calls are sometimes placed for issues that were resolved in a recent revision. Also, it is important that all staff working with the accounting system read through the list of changes that is included with every revision so that everyone is aware of new or changed items.

Do You Need to Stock Up On Office Forms?

GMS partners with American Solutions for Business to make GMS related forms available to our clients. Should you need laser or dot matrix checks, multi-purpose forms, RLSS Payment coupons or payroll direct deposit stubs, American Solutions for Business provides forms which are compatible with your GMS software. For more information, click on Links to GMS Partners on our website at gmsactg.com. A product brochure, pricing information and an email address for placing orders are available on the GMS website. More information about American Solutions for Business is available on their website at americanbus.com.

In This Issue: Windows RLSS Reports...Correction-New Service Hours...Supplement #416...

Can You Zip and Unzip Files?

One of the things your staff needs to be familiar with is zipping and unzipping files. Software used in zipping and unzipping files comes from an outside source, not GMS, and it is extremely helpful if everyone using GMS software is familiar with their program and the procedure for zipping and unzipping files.

GMS regularly posts revisions of our software to our website, and a part of the instructions for installing the revisions is to be able to unzip the file to a specific location. If you are using a program that you are not familiar with and it is different than the one being used by the GMS service representative, it is difficult for us to walk you through the steps. You must be able to select the correct location of the resulting file after unzipping.

Another instance where you need to be familiar with the zip program you use is when being asked to zip your database. Sometimes when talking with a GMS service representative you will be asked to zip your database and send to us or put it on our ftp site. Again, you need to know how to use the program on your computer in order to zip the files to send to us.

Installing GMS Accounting or GMS RLSS on New Computers

If you are going to install GMS on a Vista computer, you need to turn off the UAC (user account control) first. You can locate the UAC from the Control Panel. After turning off the user control account, the computer must be restarted before installing GMS.

All computers using GMS must have the Microsoft Service Packs up-to-date and all critical updates installed or else errors may occur when operating the software. Be sure to log onto Microsoft.com, click on Downloads & Trials, and then click on Microsoft Updates to ensure all critical updates are in place.

Should you need to install your GMS program(s) on new or additional computers we will be happy to email you the complete instructions for doing so.

*Present versions of Windows
Software are:*

Accounting: 1.2.254 RLSS:1.0.303

Correction - New Service Hours and Other Service Information

In the September newsletter the Friday service hours were omitted. We are rerunning the new service hours announcement and including other service information below.

Beginning September 1, 2007, the telephone service hours changed to 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. EDT Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday. The on-line chat room will remain attended from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. It is GMS policy to respond to every service call within two hours of receipt (unless another arrangement is made).

Service calls are responded to on a first come-first served basis. There are times when the most appropriate response is to reply to your service request by email so please check your email if you have not received a telephone response within two hours from the time you placed the service request. We normally send an email if we need to send you a document in order to provide the needed information, or if we are unable to reach you by phone and your question can be answered in an email. If for some reason you never want to have a service call responded to by email, please specify that in your service call message.

You may place your service call by phone (800) 933-3501, extension 1, by fax (301) 933-3502, via the website at www.gmsactg.com or by email to service4gms@gmsactg.com. For quick answers to easy questions you can use the Service Chat via the web, the link is on our website. Remember to log into the chat room with your name or nickname and client number. No password is required.

Plan Now to
attend the 23rd
Annual GMS Financial
Management conference

April 21-25
in Buffalo,
New York!

Supplement #416 Check Signatures

Are you looking for an alternative to handwritten signatures on your checks or check signing machines? For whatever reason, you now have the opportunity to order Supplement #416 Check Signatures which was released over 1½ years ago. It allows an authorized user to include scanned images of signatures to be printed on accounts payable, payroll and manual checks. A setup form is maintained to assign designated signatures and authorize specified users for each General Ledger cash account. There are also print options that can be set up to reflect your agency's policies regarding the dollar amount of the checks when the scanned images can be or can not be used. When a user is ready to print checks, it compares the user name of the person logged in to the check signature file to see if they are an authorized user of the signature for this account. If they are, a message will be given stating "This GL account has signature files. Do you wish to include signatures?"

This supplement is designed to only be used by agencies whose authorized users of scanned signatures have their own identifying user name and password. High security of scanned signatures must be in place in order to maintain a tight internal control. Be sure to read over the GMS recommendations and Things You Should Know sections in the Help Manual for this supplement if you are planning to order it. You may also want to contact your auditor to discuss any additional precautions that should be taken or considered in accordance with the fraud and internal control questionnaire they usually fill out during the audit.

1-2 Users: \$160.00/24.00

3-4 Users: \$200.00/30.00

5+Users: \$250.00/37.50

Don't forget, supplements can be ordered from the GMS website at www.gmsactg.com.

Saving Historical Information From Your DOS System

On December 31, 2007, all DOS license/warranty and service/support contracts will be discontinued. Clients who are still using the DOS software for retrieving historical records such as YTD Payroll Detail (or any other information you routinely research in DOS) may want to consider beginning to write these reports to file so they can be stored for the purpose of retrieving the information once the DOS license has expired. We recommend that you save these files with an xls extension so they can be opened in Excel. The files should not be saved in pdf format as they will not open using Adobe Acrobat Reader.

Please Remember to Back Up Your Database!

We continue to receive service calls from distressed clients who need to restore their database from a backup and haven't been backing up regularly. Although we wish we could pull a miracle out of our hat, under these circumstances all that GMS service staff can do is assist with copying and pasting the backup copy of the database into the appropriate folder and making certain the program is working properly. If your backup is not current, all the data entered since the last backup has to be re-entered. Accounting clients using Microsoft Access should use the Backup Utility to compact and repair their database and also to make both on site and off site backups daily. SQL server clients should use the utility to create daily backups. Accounting clients who run payroll in house should backup the database both before and after payroll preparation into the appropriate payroll backup folders. RLSS clients are asked to back up at least weekly. We can't stress strongly enough the importance of backing up your database regularly.

Using the GMS FTP Site

The GMS FTP site is used for several things such as GMS staff to put certain files on for clients to download, for clients to put their database on so staff can research problems they are having or for clients to put a backup of their database on. Instructions for connecting to the ftp site can be found in your Help Manual under Operating Information. Whenever you put a file on the ftp site you will want to be sure it is password protected. Otherwise any GMS client could download your database and be able to see all of your data. ***GMS is not responsible for any databases put on the ftp site that are not password protected.***

You should always zip up your database, which is when you would enter the password. The Winzip and 7 Zip programs will allow you to add a password to the file while other software, such as the Windows XP version, doesn't have the capability of adding passwords. Any time you put a file on the GMS ftp site, including saving a copy of your database or DOS directory on the ftp site under Client Backups, you would want it to be password protected so it can only be opened by an authorized person that has been given that password.



**Happy Halloween
from All of Us at
GMS!**

RLSS Windows: Printing and Interpreting Reports

Standard reports within the Windows program include:

- Master File
- Current/Non-Current Balances
- Monthly Activity Report
- Analysis by Fund
- Journal Entry
- Accrued Interest Analysis
- Payment Status Report
- Borrower Profiles
- Aging Report
- Portfolio Statistics

In order for reports to produce accurate information, Loan Master files must contain the data needed to process the report. For example, if Maturity Date is not completed, the Aging Report will be unable to determine when the loan is due to be repaid in full. It is especially important to complete as many fields as possible on the Loan Terms tab of Loan Master files. If a report produces information that you feel is incomplete or inaccurate, review the Loan Master File to verify all pertinent fields contain valid data.

Additionally, the loan history must be correct and up-to-date. An accurate 'next payment due' (completed when loan activity is recorded) is vital to creating accurate delinquency reports. The two primary delinquency reports are Payment Status Report and Aging Report. The number of days a loan is considered late is based on the days elapsed between the 'next payment due' date and the report cut-off date. If, for example, a loan's next payment is due October 1, 2007, and the report cut-off date is October 31, 2007, the loan will appear as 30 days late. This calculation also controls the number of payments delinquent as reported on the Aging Report.

The majority of the reports require a cut-off date. Loan activity with an activity date beyond the cut-off date will not be included in the report. This feature allows you to pull reports retroactively when necessary, especially important as a tool for auditing purposes.

A search criterion on most reports includes fund, county, city, status, loan officer, loan type, and borrower type. If specific criteria is not selected, all loans will be included in the report. The exception is delinquency reports. If the loan balance is zero, it will no longer appear on the report. More than one fund, county, etc. can be included by clicking on the desired selection, then holding down the ctrl key while clicking on subsequent selections.

Once the search criteria has been narrowed by, for example, limiting the funds to be included, it is necessary to

select the process button 'Clear Selections' before pulling the report again. Simply removing the dot from the 'no' box will not clear the previous selections, resulting in a report that likely does not include the information expected. "Clear Selections" will result in the opportunity to begin the selection criteria again. Another way to accomplish this same task is to "Exit" the report screen and select the report again.

Utilizing Master Query can create additional reports. All fields within Loan Master files and optional master fields, as well as pertinent information from the loan history, is available to be searched for specific data. These same fields are available to be included on the report. Master Query uses Excel for the actual report production. This offers the option to add calculations, formulas, edit fields, include titles, etc. Master Query can also be utilized to produce mailing labels.

An additional feature of all RLSS reports is exporting. By using this option, reports can be emailed to staff, clients, or auditors. The data may also be exported into a Word document or Excel. This allows you to print on letterhead, add an inside address, or reformat as desired.

Keep in mind that utilizing any option from the Reports menu, or Master Query, will not alter the data within the database. They simply utilize the existing data. For this reason, feel free to explore the many options offered for reporting. With a little practice, you can become a whiz at producing reports that will benefit your loan counselors, administrators, and auditors.

Windows Software – Things You Should Know....

In order to use the scroll wheel on the top of your mouse to move the pages of a report up and down, you need to left click on the displayed report and then move the scroll wheel and your page will move.

When using Report Writer and you are in the Edit Fields tab, if you have added fields to the result fields and you want to rearrange the order of the fields on your report, click and hold your mouse on the number to the left of the field you wish to move. Move your mouse to the number of the position in which you want the field and release the mouse button. The field you moved will appear in the new order.