Introduction to Employee Self-Service (ESS)

General Information

Employee Self-Service (ESS) is a web-based service within the ***Self-Service Portal*** that provides employees with the ability to view and update information related to their employment with the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). This employee data is used by the Human Resource Office for the purpose of paying your salary and administering your human resource programs, including your employee benefits.

The ability to directly view your personal and payroll data in the PASSHE Human Resource/Payroll System provides an excellent opportunity for you to ensure that the information is correct and kept up to date. This information can affect the accuracy of your employment data, including the pay you receive and the benefits that you are provided through your employment with PASSHE. It also can affect PASSHE's ability to contact you or your designated emergency contact in the event of an emergency.

One of the major advantages of the ESS system and the resulting information is that the data is displayed in **real-time**. In other words, when you view your information in ESS, the most current information is being displayed directly from the Human Resource/Payroll System. If comparing the information from your most recent printed pay stub to the information available in ESS, the information in ESS may be more up to date.

If any of the information you view in ESS appears to be incorrect or if you have questions about the information that is provided, please contact your Human Resource Office immediately.

A. Common Terms

Human Resource/Payroll System
An integrated software application that supports the system-wide operation of human resource and payroll functions for the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE). These functions include specialized components such as Organizational Management, Personnel Administration, Time Management, Benefits, Standard Human Resource reports, Ad-Hoc reporting tools and Payroll/Finance integration.

Employee Self-Service
Employee Self-Service (ESS) is a web-based service that provides employees with real-time information related to their employment with PASSHE.

Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) Portal
A "doorway" that organizes an assortment of information and tools into an accessible and user-friendly presentation.

SAP
(Systems, Applications and Products in Data Processing) Based in Germany, SAP is the leading company that produces a suite of client-server business software. The US branch is called SAP America. The SAP software is the tool that PASSHE uses to electronically conduct business. The Human Resource/Payroll System is one of the SAP software applications being used.

Browser
A program, such as Internet Explorer or Netscape, that accesses and displays files and other data available on the Internet.

Personnel Number
The unique identifying number in the Human Resource/Payroll System assigned to each employee and identified as "EMPLOYEE ID" on the employee's pay statement. The number is automatically assigned consecutively upon creation of an employee in the system and may be up to a maximum of eight characters in length.

B. Acceptable Use of Employee Self-Service (ESS)

Employee Self-Service (ESS) is available to all employees of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE) to provide employees with information related to their employment, including the opportunity to view data that is resident in the PASSHE Human Resource/Payroll System.

Your User ID and Password

In order to access information in the Human Resource/Payroll System, employees will use their own individual user identification (ID) and password. This user ID and password gives you access to view your personal data in the HR/Payroll System. For this reason, employees are advised to maintain their user ID and password in strict confidence.

Each University and the Office of the Chancellor has an Acceptable Use Policy, which addresses the acceptable use of personal computers. This policy applies to the use of ESS and should be carefully reviewed and followed. Careful attention should be paid to the password standards provided in those policies. In particular, user IDs and passwords should never be shared with anyone. Always ensure that your computer desktop is locked if you are away from your computer for any length of time. Leaving your computer desktop unattended and unprotected could allow someone to access your information in ESS. To protect your password, do not write it down and do not use a combination of letters and numbers that someone else could guess, such as your name or date of birth. To protect your computer desktop, either log off when you leave or use a password protected screen saver.
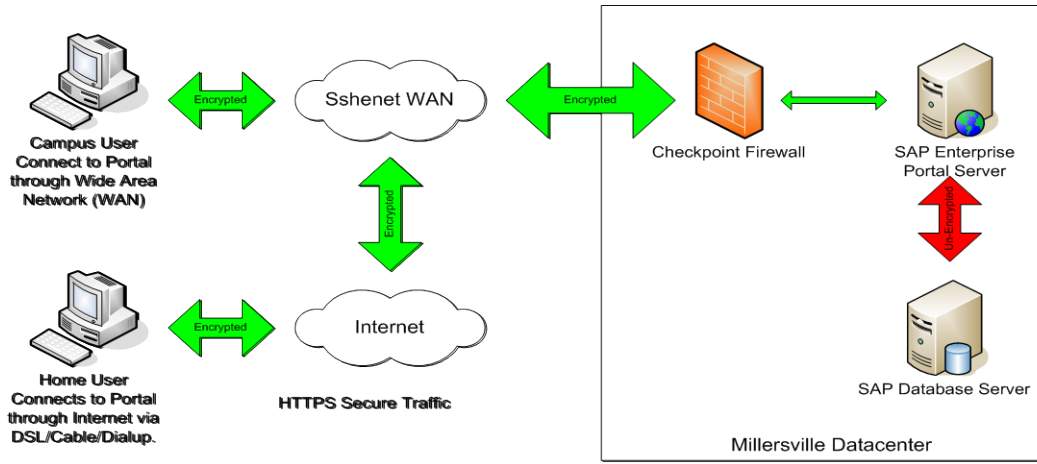
Use of ESS during Work-Time

All employees of PASSHE are strongly encouraged to use ESS to access and ensure the on-going accuracy of their data in the HR/Payroll System. As such, employees will be allowed a reasonable time during work hours to access and use ESS provided the time spent does not conflict with the maintenance of efficient university or Office of the Chancellor operations. Ensuring the accuracy of HR/Payroll data is critical to the administration of human resource programs, such as the various employee benefits plans, and critical to having correct wages, salary and deductions in payroll. For the convenience of employees, ESS may be accessed at work, from home or from any other location with internet access. Employees who do not use a personal computer in their work environment will be provided with instructions from their Human Resource Office as to how they will gain access to ESS.

C. ESS Data Confidentiality and Security

Your personal data in the PASSHE HR/Payroll System is maintained at the highest level of security protection available. ESS connectivity uses the same technology that is used to access secure sites on the internet for activities such as shopping or banking. Access to the HR/Payroll System is carefully monitored and limited only to those employees who have a legitimate need to use that information for their work. Employees that have been given access to the HR/Payroll System as part of their work requirements also must adhere to policy ensuring the strictest confidentiality of this data.

Security is maintained in the HR/Payroll System through the assignment of "roles" that control access to every data element maintained in the system. Every employee of PASSHE is assigned the ESS role in the HR/Payroll System. Through this security mechanism, employees are only able to access and view their own employee data resident in the HR/Payroll System.

The data in the HR/Payroll System is maintained in an SAP Database Server that is protected by a "firewall" that restricts unauthorized access. This "firewall" also protects the data as it is transmitted to the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Portal Server. ESS provides connectivity to the data behind the "firewall" using the same technology that is used to access secure sites on the internet for activities such as shopping or banking. Data accessed using ESS is encrypted as it leaves the "firewall" and moves across either the PASSHE intranet to the campus user desktop or the internet to the home user desktop. Once it reaches the desktop, however, it must be secured by the user through strict adherence to computer use and confidentiality policies as referenced above. The diagram below further demonstrates the way data is secured.

Campus User
Connect to Portal
through Wide Area
Network (WAN)

Sshenet WAN

Checkpoint Firewall

SAP Enterprise
Portal Server

Home User
Connects to Portal
through Internet via
DSL/Cable/Dialup.

Internet

HTTPS Secure Traffic

SAP Database Server

Millersville Datacenter

Traffic is encrypted using SSL between the client's web browser and the SAP
Enterprise Portal Server located in the Millersville Datacenter.

Traffic is not encrypted between the SAP Enterprise Portal Server and the SAP
Database Server. Not needed, all communication is behind the firewall.