

State of Alabama



Department of Finance
Office of the Comptroller
Montgomery, Alabama 36130-2602

TO: All Agency Accounting Contacts

DATE: July 28, 2016

SUBJECT: IMPORTANT CHANGE – All Agencies Closing Accounting Periods in STAARS

In an effort to meet vital agency needs, the Comptroller's office will start closing accounting periods in STAARS throughout the fiscal year. Accounting periods will be "soft" closed immediately after the nightly cycle finishes on the last day of each month and then "hard" closed after 5 business days. After a period is "soft" closed only JVIN, JVP, FRJV1, and FRJV1I documents can be posted to the prior accounting period with sufficient override authority.

A benefit of closing accounting periods is to allow report results to remain static after the accounting period has closed. Thus, the ending balance of one month is the beginning balance for the next month. This makes it easier to reconcile cash.

As part of this effort, controls are being tightened to prevent agencies from using past or future record dates, accounting periods, or fiscal years on many documents. Agencies should refrain from hard-coding accounting periods and dates on the Header page of all documents other than for the 13th accounting period, as it could result in document errors. In addition, agencies should not populate accounting period on their inbound interfaces except for the 13th accounting period, thus allowing STAARS to infer the dates and accounting periods. If an Accounting Period is entered on a document during periods 1-12 that is submitted near the end of a month, the document will reject if the final approval occurs after the beginning of the next month.

There are select documents that will still allow past or future record dates, accounting periods, and/or fiscal years to meet business requirements. A list of documents which allow these exceptions are listed below:

- Allows Prior Record Date: JVIN, JVR, JVP, FRJV1, FRJV1I, and all RE type documents
- Allows Prior Accounting Period: JVIN, JVP, FRJV1, & FRJV1I
- Allows Future Record Date: JVIN, JVR, RQM, RQN, and all budget documents
- Allows Future Accounting Period: JVIN, JVR, RQM, RQN, and all budget documents
- Allows Future Fiscal Year: RQM, RQN, and all budget documents

Closing of accounting periods for FY16 will be phased in. FY16 period 1-3 will be "soft" closed on **August 8, 2016**. An additional FY16 accounting period will be "soft" closed each subsequent Monday until we are caught up closing accounting periods. Accounting periods will not be "hard" closed until after this transition period.

Please contact the Mike Hudson at mike.hudson@comptroller.alabama.gov or Serena McMurtrey at serena.mcmurtrey@comptroller.alabama.gov with any questions regarding the accounting period close.

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