

# State of Alabama



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

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TO: All Payroll and Personnel Officers

CC: Accounting Contacts

DATE: January 24, 2017

SUBJECT: IRS W-4 Requirement - Employee Exemption from Federal Withholding

All agencies should have an IRS Form W-4 properly completed and signed by each employee to claim withholding allowances. If an employee **does not** submit a Form W-4, the employing agency is **required** to withhold federal income tax as if he or she is single with zero withholding allowances (Single -0).

W-4 withholding allowances remain in effect until the employee completes a new form **except for** employees who claim exemption from federal withholding.

## **Specific IRS W-4 Requirement for Employees Claiming Exemption from Federal Withholding:**

A Form W-4 claiming exemption from withholding is effective when it is filed with the employer **only for that calendar year**. Each calendar year the employee must give you a new Form W-4 by February 15. If they do not, their withholding reverts to the last W-4 that did not claim an exemption or single with zero withholding allowances (S-0).

For employees in the payroll system claiming exempt that do not have a current W-4 on file, **immediate action** is required.

- Request each employee file a new W-4 for this calendar year
- If the employee does not file a new W-4 **before** the next payroll cutoff date, change their withholding to the last Form W-4 that did not claim an exemption
- If the employee did not claim W-4 withholding exemptions, change their withholding to single with zero withholding allowances (Single 0)

## **IRS Lock-in Letters:**

IRS issues employee Lock-in letters if IRS determines taxpayer withholding is not correct. IRS Lock-in letters supersede employee filed W-4. Agencies are required to change withholding as stated in the Lock-in letter.

A report listing employees in your agency currently claiming EXEMPT for federal taxes is available on the Comptroller's website. It is entitled "**EMPLOYEES WITH TAX CLASS N OR S**" and only available to authorized users.

Contact GHRHS Hotline 334-242-2188 if you have any questions or need additional information.

Sincerely,

Kathleen

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