



HSC Pension Service

Provided by



Business Services Organisation

EMPLOYER NEWSLETTER

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HSC (P) 03-19

Jan - 2019

1. Final Pay Controls

Final Pay Control is applicable to all Officer and Practice Staff members of the 1995 Section of the HSC Pension Scheme, including 1995/2015 transition members, who retire with entitlement to pension benefits or who elect to transfer out their HSC pension to another scheme. This includes employees of a Trust, GP surgery, Direction body, and non-GP Providers.

From 1 April 2015, if a member receives an increase to pensionable pay that exceeds the 'allowable amount' the relevant employer is liable for a Final Pay Control charge.

Increases in pensionable pay can arise for a variety of reasons including but not limited to Promotion, Incremental Pay Increases, Clinical Excellence Award etc. It is accepted that in many cases, increases in pay will occur as a result of the needs of the business or contractual rules, however such increases still fall under the Final Pay Control regulation.

HR Teams/Finance Officers should make themselves aware of the rules surrounding Final Pay Control and be aware that a significant increase in Pensionable Pay in the last 3 years of scheme membership for a Scheme Member who has benefits accrued in the 1995 section of the Scheme could result in a substantial bill for the employer.

2. Maternity leave, paternity leave, parental leave and adoption leave

A member can continue to be pensionable throughout any period of absence for maternity, paternity, parental or adoption.

You as the employer must provide the member with the necessary information about pension arrangements before they start any special leave for maternity, paternity, parental or adoption leave.

Information regarding these arrangements can be found on the Scheme website at:
<http://www.hscpensions.hscni.net/membership-contributions-and-pay/>



3. Pension Liaison Service

As you may be aware the HSC Pension Service/Trust Liaison service has been made permanent. In addition to the service provided to your employees, the Trust Liaison officers provide you as an employer with a direct link to HSC Pension Service.

Information and guidance can be provided to you regarding complex regulatory or legislative matters. If you have any such queries please contact John Coyle at john.coyle@hscni.net or Monica Smyth at monica.smyth@hscni.net.

Plans are in place to continue to deliver HSC Pension Service Workshops and One to One consultations for members in 2019/20. We appreciate your continued help and assistance in facilitating these services.

4. New Joiner Questionnaire/Re-Joiner Form

Please ensure that if you have a new member of staff or a member who changes jobs and subsequently is allocated a new staff/payroll number that those members complete a New Joiner Questionnaire or Re-Joiner form. This is particularly important for rotational doctors who can change employers on a regular basis.

The New Joiner Questionnaire/Re-joiner Form captures important information pertaining to their membership of the HSC Pension Scheme, for example, was the member contributing to an added years, additional pension or ERRBO contract. If a member moves jobs and starts up a new employment with a new staff number, Payroll Shared Services will not be aware of any additional pensionable contracts which were set up in a previous employment and which may be running alongside standard pension contributions.

HSC Pension Service has recently been contacted by a number of Scheme members who were unaware that payment of additional contributions they had been making in purchasing added years had ceased as a result of their moving jobs. This has resulted in a significant build-up of arrears.



5. Special Class Nursing Status (SCN) / Mental Health Officer Status (MHO)

A number of cases have recently come to light where employers have incorrectly assumed that retention of SCN/MHO should apply to managers, without consulting HSC Pension Service.

In some cases this has caused individual members to have an incorrect expectation that they could retire from age 55 without having to take actuarially reduced benefits.

We would like to remind employers that when considering retention of SCN/MHO for any managers, you must ensure the correct procedure is followed upon each change of employment, duties or promotion. You must also ensure that the rationale for any decision about retention can be evidenced by the relevant job description and personnel specification.

The final decision as to whether SCN/MHO can be retained rests with HSC Pension Service. All applications are considered individually and the outcome is subject to the duties and personnel specification of the post, as defined within the formal job description/specification, along with the applicant's employment history.

Particular care should be taken where retention is being considered for senior managers. All cases must be referred to HSC Pension Service with appropriate evidence and before a member is informed whether they have retained SCN/MHO Status.



6. Contact Us

By writing to us at:-

HSC Pension Service

Waterside House

75 Duke Street

Londonderry

BT47 6FP

Via e- mail at:- hscpensions@hscni.net

By Telephone: 028 7131 9111 (9.00am to 5.00pm – Monday to Thursday; 9.00am to 12.00pm Friday)



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If you have any suggestions for the newsletter or would like a particular topic covered in future publications please do not hesitate in contacting us by emailing: john.coyle@hscni.net