



#### **Business Services Organisation**

## **HSC Pension Service**

Welcome to the HSC Pension Service Member Newsletter



This newsletter is for all active and deferred members of the HSC Pension Schemes and contains important information about your HSC Pension Scheme Benefits

## January 2020



## **One to One Consultations**

One to one pension consultations have proven very popular and have been in very high demand. As a result these are fully booked, for the most part, up to the end of March 2020.

HR will issue communication to all staff once dates for the new financial year are available to book. Please submit/re-submit your request form via <u>1to1@hscni.net</u> when said dates are released. Applications received prior to dates being released by HR <u>will not be actioned</u>

The Southern Trust has a different Application Process and all one to one consultations are booked through HR using <u>pension.sessions@southerntrust.hscni.net</u>.

N.B In the last quarter 23 one to one consultations were not attended and no prior notice given to HSC Pension Service. As these appointments are in such high demand, it is important to inform us (by email or telephone) if you are unable to attend. This allows us to allocate the appointment to another member of staff.



#### **Pension Application - Reminders**

HSC Pension Service would just like to re-iterate the Pension Application process and the timescales involved.

In order to apply for your pension you must complete an AW6 form (Application for Scheme Retirement Benefits). Form AW6 is available from the "scheme forms" section of our website <u>www.hscpensions.hscni.net</u>. Please ensure you use the version currently available from the website.

Forms should be completed and submitted to your employer **<u>no less than 4 months</u>** prior to your intended retirement date.

When you complete your application form, it is sent by your employer to the Payroll Pensions Team (PPT) who will accurately calculate the pensionable pay used to calculate your pension benefits.

Applications are accepted and administered in order of date received by HSC Pension Service. Our service level agreement states that HSC Pension Service administration team will administer your pension within 3 months of receiving your application form i.e. we have 3 months from the date the completed AW6 and all appropriate information is received from the PPT. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that members adhere to the 4 month timeframe to help ensure your pension benefits are paid on time.



## **Annual Allowance Update**

In our last Newsletter we informed members of how we were establishing our new Annual Allowance Team to deal with all current and outstanding Annual Allowance queries.

This team has now been fully implemented and have been making good progress in resolving queries.

We have also made the Annual Allowance data view available to members via the Member Self -Service (MSS) portal which provides Pension input history for the last 6 years. This data view is a 'Live' representation of your Annual Allowance figures. If you have submitted a query you may see these figures change as we are working on your record. Once your calculations have been completed and verified, a member of the Team will email you to confirm and you can then view the final outcome.

If you would like to contact the Annual Allowance Team please call 02871 319111 option 5 or at <u>AAqueries@hscni.net</u>



# Are Your Personal Details Up to Date?

If you have a change to your personal details, e.g. you have moved house or your marital status has changed then you should, in the first instance, update via HRPTS. You can also forward details to: hscpensions@hscni.net.

Employers send information on a monthly basis to HSC Pension Service which updates your pension record electronically. Therefore, if HRPTS does not hold your most recent address, marital status or name, the out of date information will overwrite any previous updates to your pension record.

### **Transfer of Pension Benefits**

If you have recently joined HSC NI and wish to move previously built up pension rights to the HSC Pension scheme you need to let us know by completing an <u>Application for Transfer In of</u> <u>Pension Rights.</u>

You will also find the <u>Transfer in Guide</u> informing you of what pension rights that you can transfer and the rules that apply.

The most important thing for you to remember about transferring in your pension is that you only have <u>12 months</u> from the day you join the HSC Pension Scheme to apply. Please remember that if you confirm on your Joiner Questionnaire you have service you wish to transfer this does not equate to a transfer request. The Joiner Questionnaire is returned to HR and will not be sent to HSC Pensions so you must follow the guidance above to ensure your Transfer is actioned.

HSC Pension Service recommends that you consider taking independent financial advice before making a decision about transferring benefits.



### **Protection of Pay**

There are two provisions under which a member can protect their pensionable pay:

Protection of pay through no fault of the member (both Sections of the Scheme) Voluntary Protection of Pay (1995 Section only)

#### Protection of Pay (through no fault of the member)

A member, who has at least two years qualifying service and suffers a reduction in earnings through no fault of their own, may apply to protect their pension benefits.

Examples of accepted reasons for protection of pay are:

- A change in the nature of the duties performed, for example due to ill health
- A move to a lower paid post because of pending or actual redundancy.
- Being transferred to other employment with an employer.

To apply a member must complete Form <u>PROPAY1</u> and submit to their employer <u>within 3</u> <u>months</u> of the date their pay reduced.

#### **Voluntary Protection of Pay**

If a member of the 1995 Section of the Scheme has attained minimum pension age and chooses to 'step down' to a less demanding role where their new or remaining duties are less demanding and carry less responsibility than their previous duties, they may be able to apply for voluntary pay protection, if their pay reduces by at least 10%.

To apply a member must complete Form <u>PROPAY1</u> and submit to their employer <u>after 12 months and within 15</u> <u>months</u> of the date their pay reduced.

HSC Pension Service will assess each application to ensure it meets the eligibility criteria and notify the member of the outcome.

Further information on protection of pensionable pay can be found at: <a href="http://www.hscpensions.hscni.net/membership-contributions-and-pay/">http://www.hscpensions.hscni.net/membership-contributions-and-pay/</a>







## **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 4.00pm – 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

