



HSC Pension Service

Provided by



Business Services Organisation

EMPLOYER TECHNICAL UPDATE

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HSC (P) 01-19

June 2019

1. Foreword

The June 2019 Employer Technical Update (ETU) includes important information on changes of functions and procedures within HSC Pension Service and provides reminders on important legislative matters concerning the HSC Pension Schemes.

A number of functions previously carried out by Payroll Shared Services (PSS) including the processing of Benefit Applications has transferred to a new team set up within HSC Pension Service. Relevant HR Managers within HSC have been informed of the transfer of functions and are now liaising directly with the new team.

HSC Pension Service has recently revised the procedure for requests for pension estimates. as a result of the introduction of the 2015 Scheme and the provision of various on-line support mechanisms. Members are made aware of these changes through the quarterly Member Newsletter and the ongoing Pension Workshops and Seminars.

Reminders are included in this ETU of the regulations governing potential Forfeiture of Benefits and the recent increase in the Employer Contribution rate. At this point Employers should have in place mechanisms to facilitate the change in contribution rate applicable from 01/04/2019 and also have in place procedures to identify and report potential forfeiture cases.

2. Transfer of Functions from Payroll Shared Services

A new Payroll/Pension Team (PPT) has been set up within HSC Pension Service from 1st May 2019. A number of pension related procedures are transferring from Payroll Shared Service (PSS), on a phased basis, to the new team which will include the processing of Retirement Applications, Death Benefit Applications etc.

HR Teams have been informed of the transfer of duties and have been provided with the contact details of the team for submission of applications.

Action for Employers: Going forward, ensure HR Teams submit all benefit requests to the PPT in Waterside House



3. Employer Contribution Rates

Following the completion of Department of Health Consultation on proposed changes to Scheme Regulations the Employer Contribution rate in the HSC Pension Scheme has increased to 22.5% with effect from 01/04/2019.

Actions for Employers: Mechanisms should be in place to facilitate the change of employer rate.

4. Reduction or Forfeiture of Benefits

The HSC Pension Scheme Regulations allow for HSC pension benefits to be reduced or forfeited under certain circumstances.

Employing Authorities should make HSC Pensions aware of any legal proceedings in respect of a loss to public funds as a result of a Scheme member's criminal, negligent or fraudulent act or omission.

Where there is a loss to public funds as a result of a Scheme member's criminal, negligent, fraudulent act or omission their HSC pension benefits may be reduced to recover the loss. Where an Employing Authority has suffered a financial loss, HSC Pensions may reimburse them directly by offsetting the member's HSC pension benefits once these have been claimed. Please note that the loss to public funds does not include any investigation or legal costs incurred by the employer.

When contacting HSC Pensions, Employing Authorities should provide as much information as possible including:

- The amount of loss to public funds and whether any of the loss has been or is to be repaid by other means.
- Details of how the loss to public funds has occurred.
- Copies of the Certificate of Conviction if applicable.
- If the amount of the loss to public funds is disputed, a copy of the Court Order enforcing the member's obligation to repay the loss.
- Where the amount of loss to public funds is not disputed by the member, HSC Pensions will require the member's consent to offset benefits in order to recover the loss



4. Reduction or Forfeiture of Benefits - cont

Forfeiture

Where an active or deferred Scheme member has been convicted of any of the following offences some or all of their HSC pension benefits may be forfeited:

- An offence in connection with employment which is certified by the Secretary of State either to have been gravely injurious to the State or to be liable to lead to serious loss of confidence in the public service.
- An offence of treason.
- One or more offences under the Official Secrets Acts 1911 to 1989 for which the member has been sentenced on the same occasion to a term of imprisonment of, or to two or more consecutive terms amounting in the aggregate to, at least 10 years.

Survivor and/or dependants benefits may be subject to forfeiture if the survivor or dependant has been convicted of the murder, manslaughter, or unlawful killing of the member.

Action for Employers: Any correspondence/queries should be sent to John Coyle, Pension Liaison Manager at HSC Pensions preferably by recorded delivery.

5. Member Estimates

As a result of the introduction of the 2015 Scheme, the roll-out of Annual Benefit Statements and the development of On-Line calculators, from 01/04/2019, estimates of benefits will be restricted to members within 1 year of their normal retirement age and more than one request of an estimate per year will cost the member £45 per estimate - administration charge.

Estimates for serious Ill Health retirement /Death in Service will not be affected by this change.

Action for Employers: None required. Members are informed via Member Newsletters and at Pension Seminars/Workshops.



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 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: hscpensions@hscni.net

