



HSC Pension Service

Provided by



Business Services Organisation

EMPLOYER NEWSLETTER

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1. Public Sector Pension Scheme Consultation Update

Following the publication by the Department of Finance to the recent Public Sector Pension Schemes Consultation, HSC Pension Service has distributed information and FAQ's which will help employers and scheme members better understand the outcomes of the consultation.

This document can be found at <http://www.hscpensions.hscni.net/quick-links/public-sector-pension-scheme-consultation-summary-3/>

As and when further information becomes available HSC Pension Service will share this with you.

Further updates will be also be added to the scheme website on a regular basis.

If you receive any questions or queries from scheme members regarding the outcome of the consultation and/or what changes are proposed from 01/04/2022 please refer them to the relevant section of the scheme website at the link above.

2. Retirement Process

HSC Pension Service has recently issued a Retirement Process template. It would be appreciated if you could amend the template to include all relevant contact details, team names etc. relative to your organisation and to issue this document as guidance to any staff who are considering retiring.

If you wish to return a copy of the document to HSC Pension Service we can upload it to the Scheme website for ease of reference for scheme members.

3. Submission of AW6 Pension Application Form

In the 3 quarters to December 2020 48% of retirement applications submitted to the HSC Pension Service Payroll Team were submitted late which has put additional pressures on teams attempting to ensure retiring scheme members receive their benefits on time.

It would be appreciated if employers could forward AW6 application forms to the Payroll Pension Team at your earliest convenience and that a reminder is issued to managers of the importance of completing termination notices on HRPTS for their members of staff who may be retiring.



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 Pension Service, 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.

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.

If you have any cases where you feel forfeiture may be applicable please inform HSC Pension Service as soon as possible including all relevant documentation.

Any correspondence/queries should be sent to John Coyle, Pension Liaison Manager at HSC Pension Service.



5. Coronavirus Act 2020 - Change to Legislation

Following the introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020 a number of temporary suspensions have been made to the HSC Pension Scheme Regulations. These suspensions are listed and summarised below:

- Omission of Regulation 84 of The Health and Personal Social Services (Superannuation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 and equivalent in 2008 & 2015 Schemes
The omission of this regulation broadly means that the rule restricting recent retirees from working any more than 16 hours per week in HSC Employment in the first month following their retirement is no longer applicable.
- Amendment of Regulation 85 of The Health and Personal Social Services (Superannuation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995
The amendment of this regulation broadly means that members of the HSC Pension Scheme who retired whilst holding Special Class Status will temporarily have the restriction on their earnings allowed on re-employment with the HSC removed.

These amended regulations remain in place until notice is given by the Government. HSC Pension Service will inform employers once any changes are to be made.

6. Re-Joiners

Employers must 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 owing to the scheme.



7. 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

10.00 am to 12.00pm / 2.00 pm to 4.00pm - Monday to Thursday

10.00 am 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

