



Pension Newsletter

Issue 29, September 2015

Your Pension Statement: Be Sure to Review the Details

Active (working) members of the pension plan receive an annual pension statement around the end of June. This year, the United Church Benefits Centre sent out notifications if the statements were expected to be sent after June 30. By now most members of the United Church's pension plan will have received their statements, including pension earned to date.

Spouse and Beneficiaries

When you look at your statement, be sure to review the personal information section that details your spouse and beneficiaries. Like a will, the information contained in this section helps to direct the steps that are to be followed in the event of your death, whether that occurs when you have retired or are still working.

Canadian pension legislation requires that when you die, your pension goes to your qualifying spouse if you have one. A qualifying spouse is a legally married spouse or a common-law partner who has cohabited with the member in a conjugal relationship for a specified period of time. The exact definition of "spouse" depends on your province of residence.

That is why the statement specifically lists your spouse. If an ex-spouse is listed as a current spouse, it's important to have that information corrected. If you have a spouse, you should still designate one or more beneficiaries in case you and your spouse die at the same time. If you don't have a spouse, any death benefit payable will go to your designated beneficiary or estate.

All about You

The pension statement also gives you an opportunity to review and confirm the information about you on file: date of birth, Social Insurance Number, spouse and beneficiaries, and your 2014 pensionable earnings. To update or correct any information in this section, please contact the United Church Benefits Centre as soon as possible: 1-866-859-5025.

Safeguarding Your Pension

The Pension Board is working very hard to ensure the continued stability of the pension plan for the benefit of members into the foreseeable future. This issue is discussed in the *Annual Report of the Pension Plan, 2014*, as well as in previous editions of *Foresight*.

Although investment returns were positive in 2014 and exceeded expectations, interest rates continued to decline and liabilities increased faster than assets.

The Risk Assessment Working Group (RAWG), a sub-committee of the Pension Plan Advisory Committee (PPAC), was formed to study longer term financial risks faced by the pension plan and

identify potential risk reduction strategies. The RAWG sent its report to the Pension Board for approval this fall. If the recommendations in the report are approved, they will be incorporated into a framework that can be used to determine when pension improvements can be supported or when pension reductions may be required.

This type of analysis is relatively new. It has been developed in response to volatile investment markets and low interest rate environments.

Marcus Robertson, Chair of the United Church Pension Board, outlines the topics under review on the United Church's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/YGoSpx0qjVU>.

Integrated Pension Option Discontinued

Remember that the option for early retirees to integrate their expected Old Age Security benefits with their pension benefits will not be available after December 1, 2015. (See *Foresight* 28, February 2015, for more detail.)

PR 443: Ministry Personnel Form for Retirement

A new mandatory form, Application to Receive Pension Benefit Payments (PR 443), must be completed by ministry personnel as part of the retirement process. Ministry personnel are able to collect pension from the United Church's plan and work in retired supply roles in pastoral charges. Working and receiving pension at the same time increases your income, so it may have an impact at income tax time. Please consult a financial adviser about this choice to avoid surprises.

Contact Us

To update your e-mail or request the Annual Report (or other printed resources, including ADP forms): MinistryandEmployment@united-church.ca; PensionBoard@united-church.ca.

Addresses

Treasurers: Update active member addresses via the applicable ADP payroll input form (available on request).

Pensioner or Deferred Members: Contact the Benefits Centre directly at 1-866-859-5025.

Questions?

Policy and Governance

Questions are welcomed at the Ministry and Employment Unit, General Council Office: 1-800-268-3781 ext. 3161; by e-mail: PensionBoard@united-church.ca.

Specific to You

Active Members: Call the Benefits Centre at 1-866-859-5025. Have your employee number handy.

Pensioners Only: Direct benefit payment questions to RBCDexia at 1-800-668-1320.