

OPTions

How the **new anti-spam law** affects communication from OPTrust

Canada's anti-spam law went into effect on July 1, 2014. The law states that Canadian organizations and individuals must have consent from anyone to whom they send electronic communication and they must provide a no-cost, easy way to unsubscribe from these messages.

Because OPTrust is designated as a benefit plan administrator and we do not sell anything, we are exempt from obtaining consent when sending electronic communication to conduct the business of the pension plan. We have always offered an easy way to unsubscribe from our email communication and will continue to do so.

Members and retirees have a number of options for updating how they want to receive communication from us – through their personal *Online Services* account, by email, phone, mail or fax.

This law is meant to reduce and eliminate “junk” email. It does not cover messages:

- within a business that relate to the activities of the business
- that are in regard to a legal obligation such as a product safety recall
- within an existing “family relationship” or “personal relationship”
- from registered Canadian charities. □

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Special Pullout Section Inside

**A Strong Foundation.
A Sustainable Future.
Report to Members 2013**

- ▶ Want to know how your pension plan remained fully funded? Interested in how OPTrust is delivering sustainable pension security for the long term? Looking for the latest on OPTrust's investment performance?

Just turn to the special pullout section inside this newsletter to read the *Report to Members 2013*. There you'll find key statistics on the financial performance of the OPSEU Pension Plan and news on how we serve you and our 84,000 other members and retirees.

Facts about... Service delivery standards

Delivering excellent customer service to over 84,000 members and retirees – who count on us to provide a sustainable pension in retirement – is our first priority at OPTrust.

Whether it's helping you understand your pension options and plan for retirement, or providing prompt, efficient service tailored to your individual needs, our focus is to help you maximize the value of your pension throughout your membership.

Our Member Services staff works hard to respond to your questions, provide the information you need to make an informed decision, and process various transactions ranging from joining the Plan to starting your pension.

We strive to handle your request in a timely manner and have established standards to deliver on our commitment for service excellence.

The table below shows the standard time it takes to complete various service requests.

Service standard times for a request include OPTrust's processing time, plus gathering information from all employers who help complete the request by providing or confirming important data about your requests.

In 2013, our staff completed more than 42,000 individual pension transactions, ranging from simple requests such as beneficiary changes to more complex buybacks and pension transfers. Of these transactions, 96% were completed to our service delivery standards, with the remaining 4% adjusted to ensure accuracy. □



Learn more about our service standards online at optrust.com under About OPTrust.

SERVICE	STANDARD
Buyback while on leave of absence	3 business days
Enrolment	5 business days
Retirement	30 days before pension effective date
Termination options statement	10 business days
Transfer to the Ontario Pension Board (OPB)	5 months
Transfer to other pension plans	6 to 18 months

Your pension data health check



As part of our proactive approach to keep you informed about your pension options, OPTrust is set to begin a pilot “pension data health check” in the fall to confirm our records are up-to-date.

When you’re nearing eligibility for an unreduced retirement pension – age 65, Factor 90 or 60/20 – we will send you a reminder email about sending us the necessary documents and information to process your pension. Getting all the paperwork submitted before retirement will help smooth the process for you.

We know that our members are busy with work and family commitments but count on their pension for retirement security for the long term. That’s why our key focus is to identify areas where we can simplify the retirement planning process for you and your family.

In the meantime, you can conduct your own pension health check online and verify that OPTrust has the correct information on record for you. Simply sign in to your secure *Online Services* account to:

- confirm your marital status
- update your beneficiary information

- use the pension estimator to calculate your pension at various retirement dates
- confirm your home and e-mail addresses.

GETTING READY TO RETIRE?

Retirement is a major life change. Preparation and planning will help with a smooth transition to this next phase of your life.

To get started on your retirement plans, download our booklet *Your Pension and Planning Your Retirement* available online or in print. While online visit the Member area on our website to access the detailed section on planning for retirement.

SIX MONTHS BEFORE RETIREMENT

When you’re nearing retirement, we recommend you take these four steps to start the process:

- 1 Inform your employer and OPTrust of your retirement date
- 2 Attend an OPTrust Direct Contact pension information session
- 3 Complete your employer’s forms and OPTrust’s *Termination of Membership* form
- 4 Check that OPTrust has all the necessary documents from you to process your pension:
 - *Statement of Marital Status* form
 - proof of birth for your spouse, if applicable
 - proof of marriage or common-law relationship, if applicable
 - a VOID cheque for the deposit of your monthly pension payment.

Pensions matter

What does your pension mean to you? Does it mean security and stability in retirement? For most members and retirees, a pension from the OPSEU Pension Plan is one of their biggest assets and a valuable pillar of their financial future.

In a new video, three OPTrust members share their story about why their pensions matter. View the video at optrust.com.



Online pension estimator paints retirement picture

Finding out when you can retire is even easier with OPTrust's enhanced online pension estimator. The estimator is a great tool that does the math for you and helps to illustrate how your pension fits into your financial future.

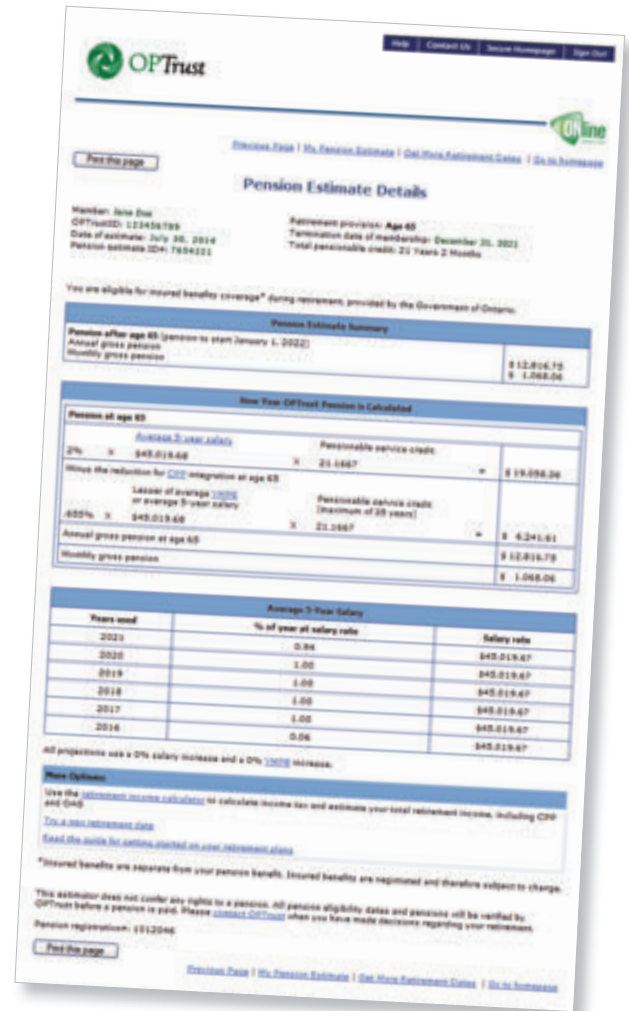
It allows you to calculate your pension based on a range of different retirement dates using your current personal pension data.

When you login to your secure *Online Services* account, click the "My Estimates" tab from the home page. Simply sign in to view it. You'll need your OPTrust ID, plus your password.

WHILE ONLINE YOU CAN FIND OUT:

- how your pension is calculated
- when you can retire
- your annual pension before and after age 65.

While you may be years or even decades away from retirement, you don't need to wait for your *Annual Pension Statement* every spring to get the big picture of how your pension adds up. □



Louise Tardif joins the Board of Trustees

Louise Tardif was appointed to the OPTrust Board of Trustees by the Government of Ontario in February 2014. She brings a wealth of experience in the financial sector as well as on non-profit boards of directors.

In 2008, Ms. Tardif retired from National Bank Financial, where she managed over \$100 million in assets and, as manager of the Ottawa branch she oversaw the management of over \$600 million in assets.

Ms. Tardif has extensive board experience, including a recently completed mandate as a director on the Board of Governors of the University of Ottawa, where she chaired the Finance and Treasury Committee

overseeing a \$1 billion budget. She was also a member of both the Executive Committee and the Investment Committee for the university's pension plan.

Ms. Tardif holds a B.Comm and an M.A. from the University of Ottawa. Since her retirement, she has been working on a Ph.D in philosophy at the University of Ottawa, as well as contributing to her community through volunteer work. □

Leaving your employment – checklist

Leaving your job can mean big changes – and important decisions – about your career and your financial future. For OPTrust members, one major decision you may have to make is what to do with your pension.

When you stop working for an employer that participates in the OPSEU Pension Plan, your plan membership ends. Depending on your circumstances, you may have different options for the pension entitlement you have earned.

At the time your membership ends, we will provide you with detailed information about your personal pension entitlement and the options that are open to you. If there are several choices available, you may want to get independent financial advice to determine which is best for you. Among the factors you should consider are: your life and career goals, your family situation, your financial plan for your retirement and your interest in managing your own investments.

THE PROCESS – FROM LEAVING YOUR EMPLOYMENT TO THE CALCULATION OF YOUR PENSION ENTITLEMENT

Step 1 Setting your termination date

Your last day of employment is established either when you give your resignation notice to your employer or when you receive a notice of termination (hopefully not the latter). This becomes your plan membership termination date for calculating your pension benefit entitlement.

Step 2 Completing the paperwork

Your employer will give you a package containing the following forms. All members must complete these forms at termination:

- *Termination of Membership – Application for Entitlement* (OPTrust 1012). This form must also be signed by your employer.
- *Pension Beneficiaries* (OPTrust 1015)
- *Statement of Marital Status* (OPTrust 3007)

We will also need copies of the following documents. If we do not already have them in our files, you will need to provide copies before we can process your entitlement:

- your spouse's birth certificate (if applicable)
- birth certificates for any minor children (if applicable)
- proof of your spousal relationship, in addition to the *Statement of Marital Status* form. OPTrust requires either: i) a marriage certificate, or ii) three documents showing that you have a common-law spouse.

Step 3 Submitting your documentation

Your completed *Termination of Membership* form must be sent to OPTrust by your employer. You can send all other confidential documents directly to OPTrust. When we receive the required information, we will review your file and check your pension data. If there are any discrepancies or missing information, we will contact you or your employer. We will then calculate the value of your pension and determine what options may be available to you, depending on your circumstances.

Step 4 Considering your options

Once we have verified your pension data and calculated your pension entitlement, we will send you a personalized *Termination Statement*. This statement shows how your pension entitlement is calculated and explains the options that are available to you.

Note: You must complete Steps 1-3 before OPTrust can send you a *Termination Statement* confirming your pension options.

Step 5 Making your decision

You should consider your options carefully to determine which choice is best for you. Depending on your circumstances you may wish to consult an independent financial advisor. Once you have made your decision, complete the appropriate forms and return them to OPTrust. We will then process your entitlement according to your instructions.

Note: OPTrust cannot provide you with financial advice.

For more information, download the full fact sheet *Leaving Your Employment* and forms at optrust.com. □

YOU asked...



NEW FACT SHEETS OUTLINE YOUR BUYBACK OPTIONS

If you plan to take a leave of absence or want to buy back past service, OPTrust's new fact sheets outline the process for you. The two fact sheets replace our booklet *Your Pension and Buying Back Credit*.

• Buying Back Pension Service

Are you a new OPTrust member? Have you taken an unpaid leave of absence recently? If so, applying to buy back pension service in the Plan could be one of the best financial decisions you can make.

• Leaves of Absence and Your Pension

Taking an unpaid leave of absence can affect your pension. That's why the OPSEU Pension Plan gives you two options to help you maximize your OPTrust pension: contributing to the Plan during your absence, or buying pension service once you return to work.

For more information on buybacks, visit the Member section at optrust.com where you can download fact sheets and forms, and learn how to apply. □

PROPOSED CHANGES TO INSURED BENEFITS

Question: I have less than 10 years of pension service in the Plan. How will I be affected?

Answer: If you will have 10 years of pension service in the Plan as at January 1, 2017, you will remain eligible for post-retirement insured benefits, however if you start your pension on or after January 1, 2017 you would be required to pay 50% of the premium cost of these benefits to participate if this proposal is implemented.

If you will have less than 10 years of pension service in the Plan as at January 1, 2017, the eligibility criteria will change if the proposal is implemented. You would now need 20 years of pension service and must retire to an immediate unreduced pension (i.e. Factor 90, 60/20 or age 65). Even if you have met these eligibility requirements, you would also need to pay 50% of the premium costs of these benefits to participate.

Question: I have a buyback in progress that will get me to 10 years of pension service but I am financing it and will not finish paying until after 2017. How will I be affected?

Answer: When you buy back service, pension service is credited to you as it is paid for. If your buyback will add enough pension service to get you to 10 years you may want to consider completing the purchase before January 1, 2017 which would make you eligible for post-retirement benefits under the current eligibility terms.

If you have accrued less than 10 years of pension service on or after January 1, 2017, you will need to meet the new eligibility requirements of 20 years of pension service and retirement to an immediate unreduced pension if this proposal is implemented. In all cases under the proposal, if you start your pension on or after January 1, 2017, you would need to pay 50% of the premium cost of these benefits to participate.

Question: If the proposal is implemented and I retire on or after January 1, 2017 and have to pay half the premium to get post-retirement benefits, how much will that cost?

Answer: Based on rates in effect today, the annual cost would be approximately \$1,500 for family coverage or \$800 for single coverage. It's important to remember though, that premium costs can change over time, so those figures are just an estimate.

Question: How can OPTrust make these changes to my pension?

Answer: Post-retirement insured benefits are not part of the pension plan. They are a separate benefit provided by the Government of Ontario. For more information, please contact your employer or OPSEU. **Note: The Government of Ontario pays the full or matching share of the premium cost.** □

Direct CONTACT

BRINGING YOUR PENSION PLAN TO YOU

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE OPSEU PENSION PLAN?

OPTrust Direct Contact sessions are a great way to learn more about your pension – directly from an OPTrust representative. Non-members who are eligible to join the Plan (e.g., fixed term or casual employees) are also welcome to come and learn more about enrolling in the Plan.

GETTING READY TO RETIRE EVENING SEMINARS

Our evening seminars are tailored for members who are within 10 years of retirement, but all members are welcome to attend.

Topics include:

- how your pension grows over your career
- how your pension is calculated and when can you retire
- what your options are if you leave your job
- what “CPP integration” means and how it affects you
- how to buy back pension service
- what other benefits are available, and more...

UNDERSTANDING YOUR PENSION LUNCH & LEARN SEMINARS

OPTrust staff also offer shorter lunchtime seminars in workplaces across Ontario for members at any stage in their careers. Special sessions for fixed term/casual staff who may be interested in joining are also an option.

To book a lunchtime seminar for your workplace, you or your human resources representative can contact us at infosessions@optrust.com.



Direct Contact sessions are designed to give you an overview of the OPSEU Pension Plan. OPTrust staff cannot provide personal financial advice.

FUTURE SESSIONS WILL BE SCHEDULED FOR COMMUNITIES ACROSS ONTARIO.

To view a complete, up-to-date schedule and register online, visit the OPTrust website at optrust.com. □

OPTrust wins two United Way awards



OPTrust was recognized for its 2013 United Way employee campaign, winning a United Way Spirit Award. The Spirit Awards recognize excellence in community giving among United Way's dedicated volunteers, donors and over 700 workplace campaigns.

OPTrust was also the winner of a United Way Exemplary Achievement Award, which recognizes campaigns that have topped \$100,000 in donations. Only 15% of workplace campaigns in Toronto achieve this accolade. OPTrust's employee campaign total reached \$121,000, setting a new record for staff at OPTrust. □

OPTions is a newsletter for members of the OPSEU Pension Trust. Its goal is to provide useful and timely information about the OPSEU Pension Plan.

If there is any conflict between statements in this newsletter and the legal documents of the OPSEU Pension Plan, the legal documents will prevail. Please direct any questions about your personal benefits under the Plan to OPTrust. You should contact OPTrust before making any pension-related decisions.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us.

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