



FACTSHEET: Members Retiring Soon

Introduction

This factsheet explains what your options are if you are retiring:

- on or shortly after 1 October 2009 and before you have been given the opportunity to make 'Your Pension Choice',
- between 1 July 2009 and 1 October 2009, or
- are a Mental Health Officer or Special Class member and are approaching your 65th birthday

This factsheet does **not** explain your options if you have applied for ill-health retirement and are still awaiting the outcome of that application. For more information on ill-health retirement please read the ill-health retirement factsheet which can be found on the website.

If you have already agreed a retirement date with your employer of 1 October 2009 or later they will give you some important information to read about 'Your Pension Choice'. You must read this information **and** complete the 'You are retiring soon' form **before** you complete your retirement application form – AW6.

What is 'Your Pension Choice'?

You have a very important decision to make. You are a member of the HSC Pension Scheme 1995 Section. On 1 April 2008 a new section of the Scheme was introduced, called the 2008 Section.

An exercise is currently taking place to offer all members of the 1995 Section the option to transfer to the 2008 Section. Members being given this option are being sent an HSC Pension Choice Pack to help them decide whether they wish to transfer sections. These packs include a personalised Choice Statement.

'Your Pension Choice' is only applicable to members who joined the HSC Pension Scheme before the 1 April 2008.

This is an important decision and because 'Your Pension Choice' is expected to run from October 2009 until January 2010, there will be members of the Scheme who retire before they have received their Choice Pack. Consequently, we have introduced separate arrangements for members who retire on or shortly after 1 October 2009 and before receiving their Choice Pack.

Are you retiring on or shortly after 1 October 2009?

If you are due to retire shortly from the 1995 Section and you have not yet been sent an HSC Pension Choice Pack, you are eligible to transfer sections before you retire if you wish to.

Do you want a personalised Choice Statement?

You have to decide whether you want to receive a personalised Choice Statement or continue with your retirement from the 1995 Section. If you choose to receive a personalised Choice Statement you will receive details of your 1995 Section benefits compared to what they would be worth in the 2008 Section.

What next?

Once you have decided what you want to do you must complete the 'You are retiring soon' form which is available from your employer.

The form will ask you to decide between:

No - You do not want you receive a personalised Choice Statement

If you have decided that you do not want a personalised Choice Statement, you can continue with your retirement from the 1995 Section. Your employer will complete form AW6 with you and your pension benefits will be paid accordingly.

Your Pension Choice: Factsheet

You must understand though that by doing this you are declining the opportunity to transfer to the 2008 Section and that this decision cannot be reversed later.

OR

Yes - You do want to receive a personalised Choice Statement

If you have decided that you do want to receive a personalised Choice Statement, your employer will forward your signed declaration to HSC Pensions and a Choice Statement will be issued to you within 10 working days.

You need to be aware that until you have received your personalised Choice Statement and made 'Your Pension Choice' we cannot pay you any pension benefits. If the payment of your pension is delayed whilst you are making 'Your Pension Choice' no interest will be paid for late payment.

Please note too that the benefits in the two sections have many differences, including the normal pension age and the way that benefits are earned and taken. A summary of the differences is available from your pension scheme member's guide, which is on the website. You should make yourself aware of the differences and consider how they may affect you.

How long will I get to make this decision?

You will be given up to 4 months to make your decision. The deadline date will be clearly shown on your personalised Choice Statement.

What if I'm retiring after 1 July but before the start of the Pension Choice Exercise

It is important to realise that if you retire before 1 October 2009 you will not be given the opportunity to transfer to the 2008 Section.

If you are considering retiring before 1 October 2009 you will only be included in the HSC Pension Choice Exercise if you delay your retirement until on or after 1 October 2009.

If you wish to delay your retirement date you must discuss this with your employer. HSC Pension Service cannot delay your retirement. Employers are under no obligation to extend a person's retirement date however, we hope that your employer will work together with you.

HSC Pension Service are providing guidance, through their website, to employers on the importance of identifying Scheme members who should be made aware of the implications of retirement before, and soon after, 1 October 2009.

What if I'm a mental health officer or special class member approaching age 65 on or after 1 October 2009?

All mental health officers and members with special class status must cease to be in the Scheme at age 65. It is extremely important therefore that if you are age 65 on or after 1 October 2009 and you have not yet received Your Pensions Choice Pack that you contact your employer. This is so that your employer can arrange for a HSC Pension Choice Pack to be issued to you urgently.

The HSC Pension Choice Exercise is only open to contributing members of the Scheme, it is vital therefore that HSC Pension Service has the opportunity to issue you with a HSC Pension Choice Pack before your 65th birthday. Every effort will be made by HSC Pension Service to identify you from our database however, if have not received your HSC Pension Choice Packs until after your 65th birthday then please bring this to the attention of your employer. Further information on mental health officers and members with special class status can be found on the HSC Pension Service website in the 'Your Pension Choice' section.

