www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

Single Public Service Pension Scheme

Your Scheme Information Booklet

Members of the Judiciary

September 2020

An Roinn Caiteachais Phoiblí agus Athchóirithe
Department of Public Expenditure and Reform

Important

Please note this booklet is for the Judiciary who are members of the Single Public Service Pension Scheme. The following scheme member categories have different pension terms and are not covered in this booklet:

- ***Members of the Oireachtas including the President;***
- ***Fast Accrual Uniform grade members should refer to the online Scheme Information Booklet available in the Member area of www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie;***
- ***Comptroller and Auditor General and other qualifying and designated office holders;***

Standard Accrual grade members should refer to the online Scheme Information Booklet available in the Member area of www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie.

Legal Disclaimer

This guide is a summary of the benefits payable to a Member of the Judiciary under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme. It is not a contractual document and gives no right to benefit. Nothing in this guide or any other communication issued to you confers any entitlement to benefits in excess of those provided under the Single Scheme. In case of any discrepancy in this guide, the provisions of the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012 and associated regulations shall at all times apply.

All references to Contributory State Pension rates are based on the rates applying at the date of publishing. All references to legislation or official circulars are based on the legislation and circulars in existence at the date of publishing.

All references to tax are based on the interpretation of the position at the date of publishing this guide. Benefits and contributions are taxed at the rate and the manner actually in force at the relevant time.

Acknowledgement

The images in this booklet relating to the Judiciary have been provided with the kind permission of The Courts Service.

Contents

Contintued Overleaf

Overview of Your Pension Scheme

The Single Public Service Pension Scheme (*"Single Pension Scheme"*) started on 1 January 2013.

If you joined the Public Service for the first time on or after 1 January 2013 and are working in a pensionable position, this is generally the Pension Scheme that applies to you.

Your Scheme is a Public Service *Defined Benefit Pension Scheme*. Your contributions are not invested in the stock market and the Exchequer supports the payment of your benefits under the Scheme.

The Single Pension Scheme is based on a *career averaging* model. This means that your retirement benefits are based on a % of your pensionable earnings throughout your public service career as a member of the Scheme. Your retirement benefits are only payable at retirement if you have completed the relevant *vesting period*. The *vesting period* for this Scheme is 24 months.

Every time you receive pensionable remuneration (pay plus any pensionable allowances) in a pay-period, you build up an amount towards your retirement benefits. The total of all these amounts built up over your pensionable employment to retirement determines how much your final retirement benefits will be. These amounts are adjusted upwards on an annual basis where there has been an increase in inflation.

Your normal retirement age under the Scheme is the same as the age as that at which you may become eligible to claim the Contributory State Pension from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. This is currently 66 years of age .

Your Scheme also has additional benefits that are payable if you die while you are a member of the Scheme. This usually includes the payment of a lump sum on your death and, depending on your individual situation, a possible pension to your surviving spouse/civil partner and eligible children.

This booklet aims to provide you with general information about the key benefits of your Scheme including how much you must contribute as a member of the Scheme and when your benefits may be paid.

Key Terms Explained

Pensions can be complex. Some of the key terms that you may come across in this booklet are explained below.

Abatement

If a Public Service pensioner is in receipt of any Public Service pension and is re-hired in any paid capacity by a Public Service Body, payment of their existing pension may be reduced or suspended (abated) for as long as they are in receipt of any post-retirement pay. Under public service pension rules, a pensioner cannot earn more in retirement (between their combined public service pension *plus* new public service pay) than if they had not retired from their original post.

Accrual Rate

This refers to the rate at which your retirement lump sum and pension benefits, known as *referable amounts*, are built up. In this Scheme, it is a % of your pensionable remuneration (earnings) for all of the periods that you pay into the Scheme.

Annual Benefit Statement

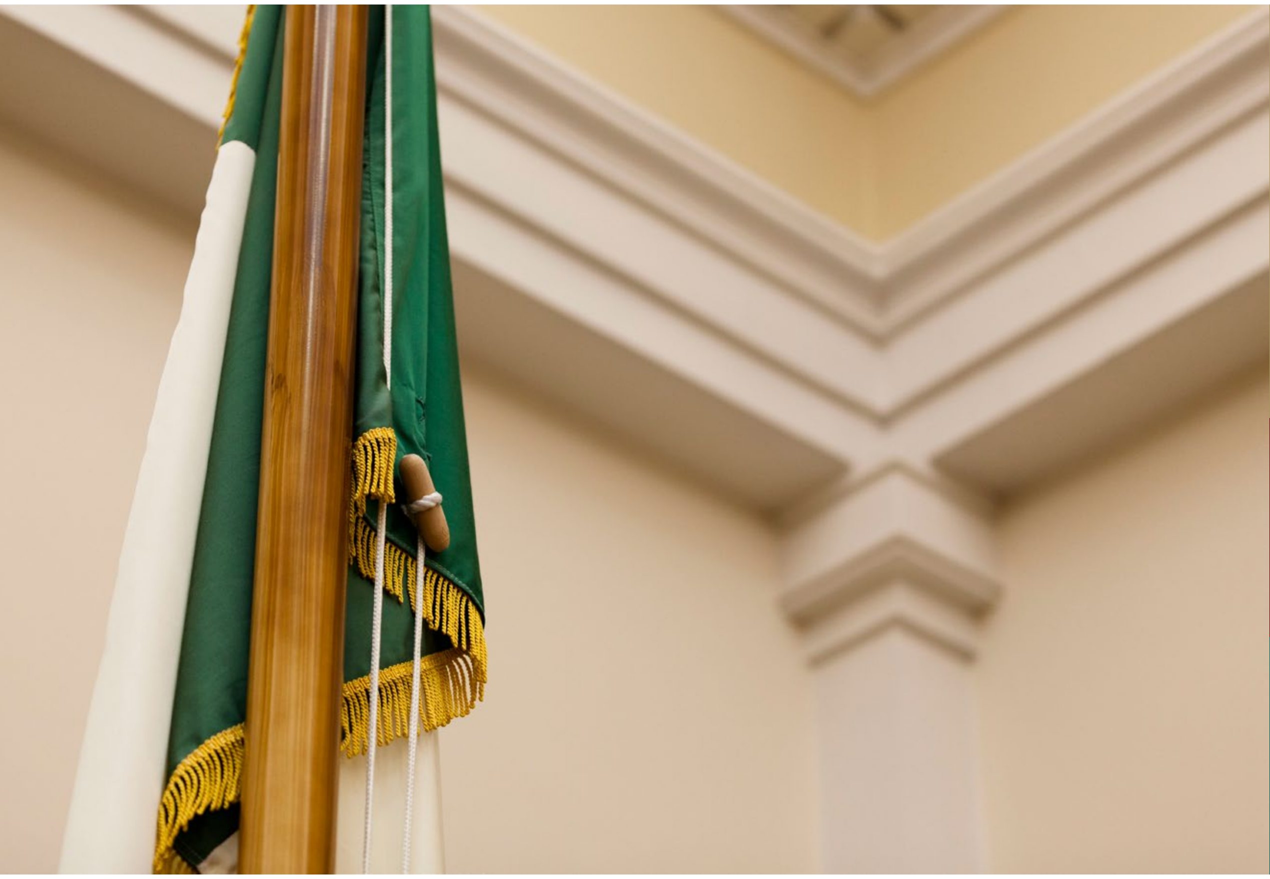
The Annual Benefit Statement is an important pension document. It is administered by the 'Relevant Authority' which is the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform in the case of members of the judiciary. It is a summary of your benefits at 31 December in the previous year. It will provide you with information on:

- The amount of pension contributions that you paid into the Scheme for the previous year with the Relevant Authority issuing the statement

Under this type of Scheme, the value of your benefits on retirement is based on your pensionable remuneration (earnings) throughout your public service career. This is a type of Defined Benefit Pension Scheme.

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

CPI is a calculation that is made by the Central Statistics Office. It is used to measure inflation in Ireland by seeing how the average level of prices that we pay for goods and services changes over



time. Where there is an increase in CPI from one year to the next, the *referable amounts* that you may have built up in prior years under the Scheme will also increase at the same rate as any CPI increase. After retirement, your pension may also be increased at the same rate as any CPI increase.

Contributory State Pension (CSP)

This is a pension that you may receive from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, depending on the record of social insurance (PRSI) contributions you have made over your working career generally. If eligible, as determined by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection, it is payable in addition to the retirement benefits that you are entitled to receive under the Single Scheme. Where CSP is referred to in this booklet, it means the rate for a single adult without dependants. The current CSP rate can be found on www.welfare.ie.

Deferred Benefits

If you have been in pensionable employment for 24 months or more and leave pensionable employment before your *Normal Retirement Age* you will have an entitlement to the payment of *Deferred Benefits* (pension and lump sum benefits) from the Scheme at the deferred age. Your deferred age is, in general, higher than your normal retirement age.

For Single Scheme members deferred benefits are normally payable – on application by the member – from the same age that you can claim the CSP from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (if eligible). Using your date of birth is the easiest way to figure out from which age your deferred benefits will be payable under the Scheme.

Defined Benefit Pension Scheme

The Single Scheme is a type of Defined Benefit Pension Scheme. This means the way benefits build up are defined in the rules of the Scheme. Your retirement benefits are based on a % of your pensionable remuneration for the entire period that you have been a member of the Scheme.

Employee Contributions

Every member is required to pay contributions towards their benefits under the Scheme. As your contributions are calculated and deducted every pay period, it is your responsibility to ensure that information you provide to your HR contact is accurate. If you feel your contributions are being incorrectly calculated, you should contact the relevant HR point of contact as soon as possible with any queries.

Gross Pensionable Remuneration

This is your basic pay plus any pensionable allowances you may be in receipt of. You pay pension contributions on your pensionable earnings every time you get paid as a member of the Scheme. If you receive an allowance as part of your pay, your contract and/or terms and conditions of employment will usually confirm if your allowance is pensionable.

Leaver Statement

An important pension document that you are entitled to receive within six months of finishing pensionable employment other than through retirement or death. It will provide you with information on:

- The total amount of pension contributions that you paid into the Scheme in the year of departure.
- The total amount of retirement benefits that you built up in the Scheme in the year of departure.
- The total amount of retirement benefits that you built up in the Scheme in previous years.

Normal Retirement Age

Your normal retirement age under the Scheme is the same as the age as that at which you may become eligible to claim the Contributory State Pension from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. This is currently 66 years of age.

Provided the terms and conditions of your employment allow, you can decide not to retire and access your benefits at your normal retirement age and instead keep working up until your 70th birthday. If you do so, you will continue to build up retirement benefits.

Pay Period Frequency

This refers to how frequently you are paid, which is monthly for members of the judiciary.

Preserved Benefits

See *Deferred Benefits.*

Referable Amounts

These are the money amounts that you build up over time as a member of the Scheme. Every time you are paid, you contribute to the Scheme and you build up amounts towards your retirement lump sum and your retirement pension. The sum of these amounts, with some adjustments for increases in inflation, determine what your retirement benefits will be.

Relevant Authority

This term means a body with responsibility for administering the Single Scheme for members of the Scheme. The Relevant Authority responsible for administering the Single Scheme for the Judiciary is the Department of Public Expenditure & Reform.

Single Public Service Pension Scheme

The Single Public Service Pension Scheme may also be referred to as the 'Single Scheme' or 'the Scheme' throughout this booklet.

Standard Accrual member

The majority of Single Scheme members are Standard Accrual members. Standard Accrual members build up Single Scheme benefits at lower rates. They currently have a normal retirement age of 66 years of age and a compulsory retirement age (70 years of age).

Vesting Period

The vesting period is a time length of 24 months as a Scheme member which must pass before a person is eligible for full Scheme benefits. The period of 24 months of Scheme membership may be non-consecutive, although any periods in respect of which a refund of contributions has been received will not count towards vesting (unless the refunded contributions are subsequently repaid with applicable compound interest.

Membership of the Scheme

Am I a member of the Scheme?

The Single Public Service Pension Scheme started on 1 January 2013. If you joined the Public Service for the first time on or after 1 January 2013 and are working in a pensionable position, this is generally the Pension Scheme that applies to you.

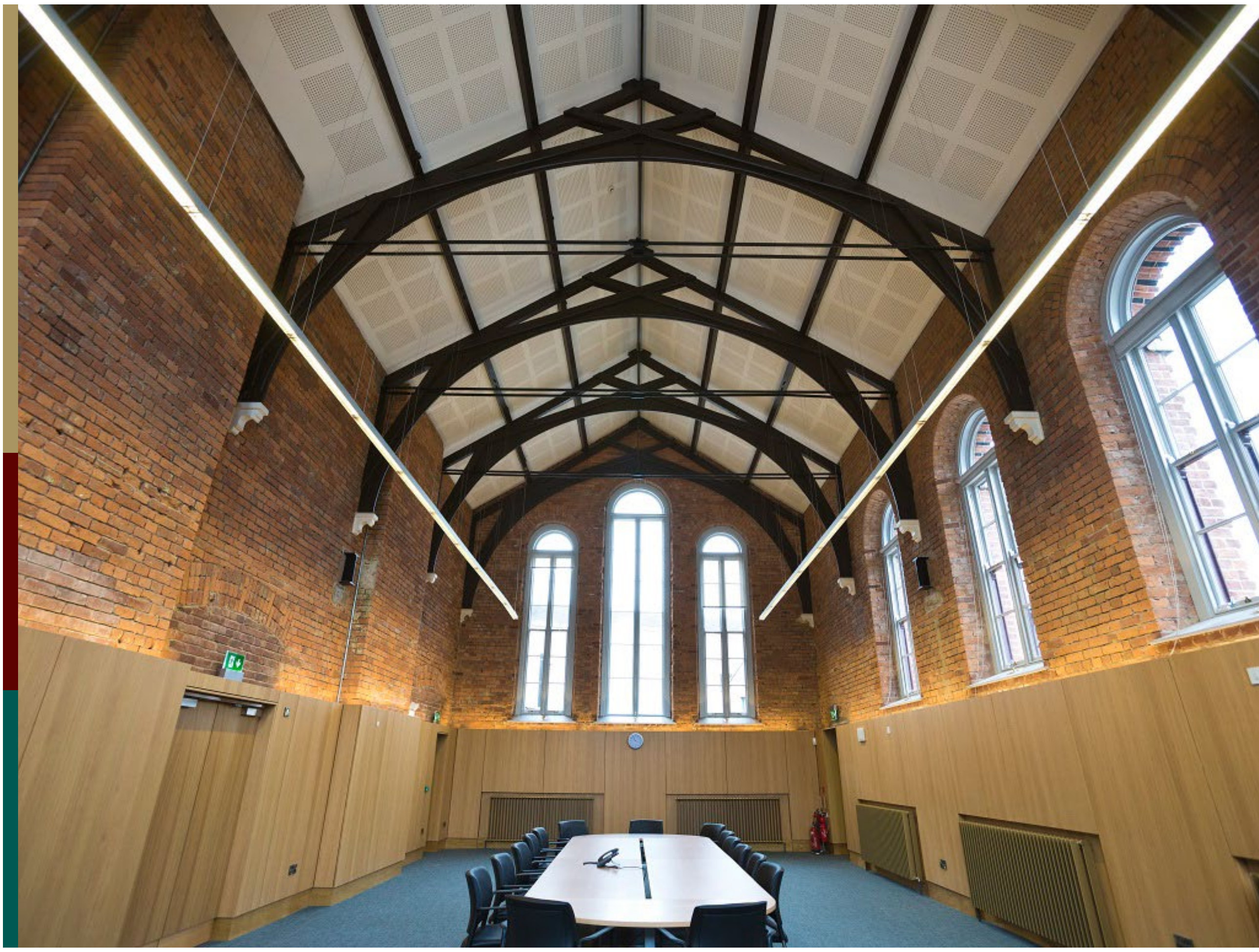
The Scheme also applies if you are a former pensionable public servant who re-joins the Public Service in a pensionable position, on or after the 1 January 2013 and you had a break of greater than 26 consecutive weeks between public service posts.

This rule does not generally apply if you were a member of a pre-existing Public Service pension scheme before 2013 and the break referred to above was an approved period of unpaid leave, for example, career break. In such a case you would continue as a member of your pre–existing Public Service Pension Scheme during and on your return to employment from the approved period of unpaid leave.

If you are not sure if you are a member of the Single Pension Scheme, you should clarify the position with the relevant HR point of contact as soon as possible with any queries. Indicative information may be on your payslip or noted in your Contract and/or Terms and Conditions of employment.

Can I opt out of the Scheme?

No. It is generally a condition of employment that public service employees who are appointed to pensionable positions and meet the above criteria are required to join the Single Public Service Pension Scheme.



Your contributions to the Scheme

How much do I pay?

You are required to pay contributions towards your benefits under the Scheme.

Your pensionable earnings determine what your contributions will be in each pay period. Your contributions are

13% of your **gross pensionable remuneration**

Gross pensionable remuneration is your pensionable pay plus any approved pensionable allowances.

Some examples of how contributions are calculated

On the following pages, you will find some worked examples to help you better understand how your contributions are calculated.

Before turning to these examples, you should review the information below so that you have a better understanding of each step involved:

Step 1 - Calculate your *gross pensionable remuneration*

Gross pensionable remuneration = Your basic pay plus any approved allowances deemed to be pensionable by the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform.

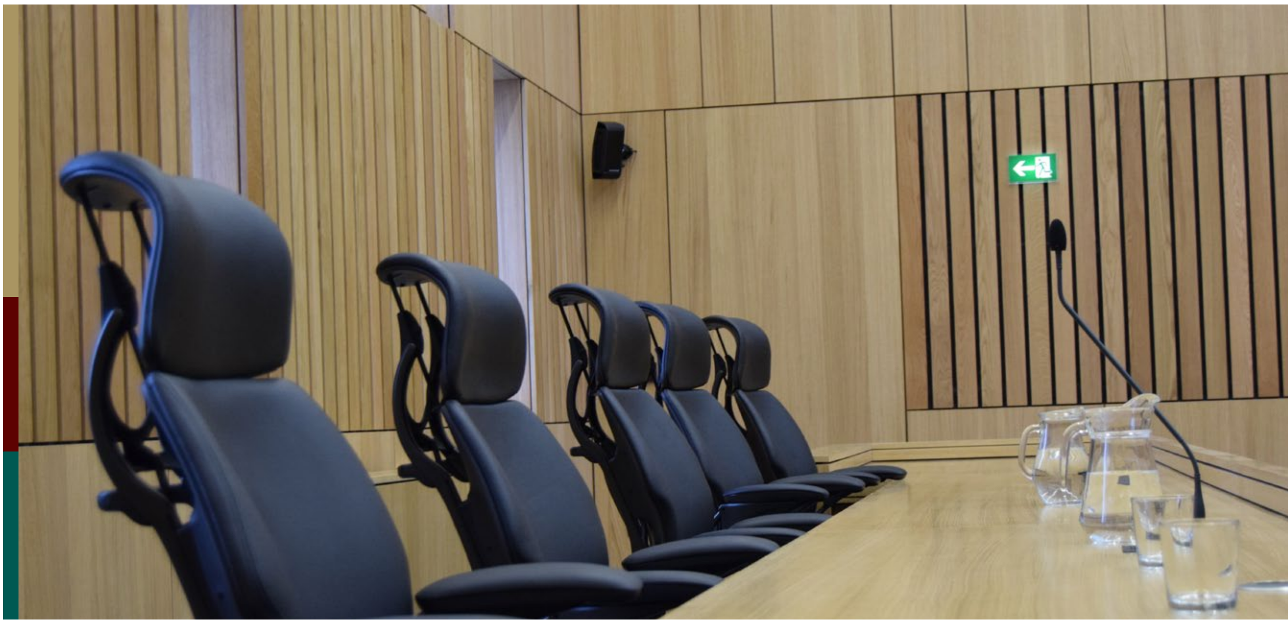
Work patterns do not affect the contribution calculations for members of the judiciary.

Step 2 - Apply your answer to contribution calculation formula:

13% of your full-time *gross pensionable remuneration.*

Please Note: The same contribution percentage is applied to all members of the Judiciary's gross pensionable remuneration irrespective of the Court they are appointed to.

Some worked examples follow based on the pay frequency .Remember, the same formulae and steps apply for each of these examples.



Example A – Contribution based on Monthly Pay Frequency

Judge AN Other has an annual *gross pensionable remuneration of €158,000.*

As noted at **Step 1** on page 14, the first part of the calculation is

Step 1 Determine what the full-time *gross pensionable remuneration* would be

The full-time gross pensionable remuneration is **€158,000 per annum**

1. Judge is paid monthly:
Step 1 The annual figure of €158,000 above is ÷ by 12 months: **€13,166.67 per month**
Step 2 Calculate Monthly Contributions:
Total contributions per month = 13% x €13,166.67 = **€1,711.67**

Do I get tax relief on my contributions?

Your contributions are automatically deducted from your monthly pensionable remuneration each time you get paid. Tax Relief on your contributions is given at source and applies to your Single Scheme contributions as well as the Additional Superannuation Contributions (ASC). This means that your gross pay is reduced by your contributions before PAYE (Pay-As-You-Earn) tax is applied. You do not need to make a separate claim to the Revenue for tax relief.

What happens to my pension contributions?

Single Scheme member contributions are remitted to a central government account and, consistent with most pre-existing public service pension schemes, will contribute to the payment of Single Scheme benefits as they arise.

Can I pay extra contributions?

The option for a member of the Single Scheme to:

- purchase additional retirement benefits within the Single Scheme; and/or
- transfer into the Single Scheme retirement benefits accrued in certain other Revenue-approved Schemes and PRSAs, other than from pre-existing public service pension schemes,

will generally be available, subject to certain terms and conditions. For most Single Scheme members, the details are set out in Circular 15/2019. Corresponding arrangements for Permanent Defence Force members are set out in Circular 06/2020.

Depending on your circumstances, you may also be able to make additional voluntary contributions to separate Revenue-approved pension arrangements (e.g. an AVC Personal Retirement Savings Account or an AVC Scheme that is affiliated to your trade union or representative association) if you wish to independently increase your retirement benefits outside of the Single Scheme. You should seek financial advice independently.

Your benefits from the Scheme

How do you build up benefits under the Scheme?

You are entitled to retirement benefits under the Scheme if you have completed the 24 month *vesting period*. Please see page 22 for more information about the *vesting period*.

You build up two types of referable amounts each time you get paid while you are a member of the Scheme. In each pay period, you build up referable amounts towards your retirement lump sum benefit and separately an amount towards your retirement pension benefit.

Your Retirement Lump Sum + **Your Retirement Pension** = **Your Single Scheme retirement benefits**

The benefits payable under the Single Pension Scheme are separate, and in addition, to any future entitlement that you may have to the Contributory State Pension payable by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (See page 27).

How are your benefits calculated?

Each time you are paid, two benefits (called *referable amounts*) are built up:

Your Lump Sum Benefits	Your Pension Benefits
7.5% **x** your *gross pensionable remuneration*	2.5% **x** your *gross pensionable remuneration*

You should review the information on the next page so that you have a better understanding of each step involved in the calculations.

Step 1 - Calculate your *gross pensionable remuneration*

Step 2 - Apply your answer to benefit calculation formulae:

Your Lump Sum Benefits

7.5% **x** your *gross pensionable remuneration*

Your Pension Benefits

2.5% **x** your *gross pensionable remuneration*

On the following pages, you will find some worked examples to help you better understand how your benefits are calculated.

Please Note: The same referable amount percentage is applied to all members of the Judiciary's gross pensionable remuneration irrespective of the Court they are appointed to.

Example A2

Judge AN Other has an annual *gross pensionable remuneration of €158,000* made up of pensionable pay *and any pensionable allowances they may be in receipt of.*

As noted at **Step 1**, the first part of the calculation is:

Determine what the *gross pensionable remuneration* would be

The *gross pensionable remuneration* is **€158,000 per annum**

Judge is paid monthly:

Step 1 The annual figure of €158,000 above is ÷ by 12 months: **€13,166.67 per month**

Step 2 Use monthly pensionable pay to calculate benefits accrued for this pay period:

Lump Sum Benefit built up each month

7.5% x €13,166.67 =	**€987.50**

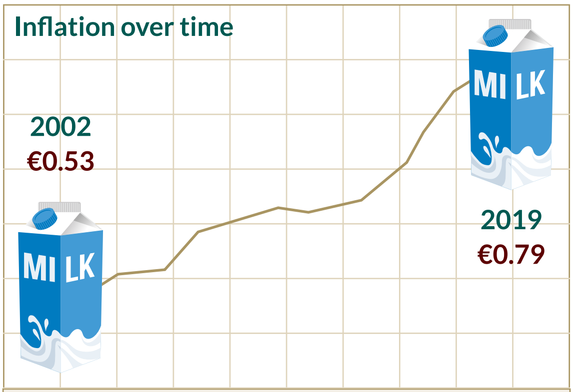
Pension Benefit built up each month

2.5% x €13,166.67 =	**€329.17**

How are your benefits revalued over time?

The Scheme takes into account that you build up benefits over the entire period of your membership of the Scheme. The Scheme structure allows for amounts built up in earlier years to be revalued or adjusted over time in line with *inflation* (as measured by increases in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) produced by the CSO).

Inflation can be simply explained as how the cost of goods or services (such as the cost of a carton of milk, the price of a haircut, etc.) changes from one year to the next. The Central Statistics Office officially measures the rate of annual inflation.

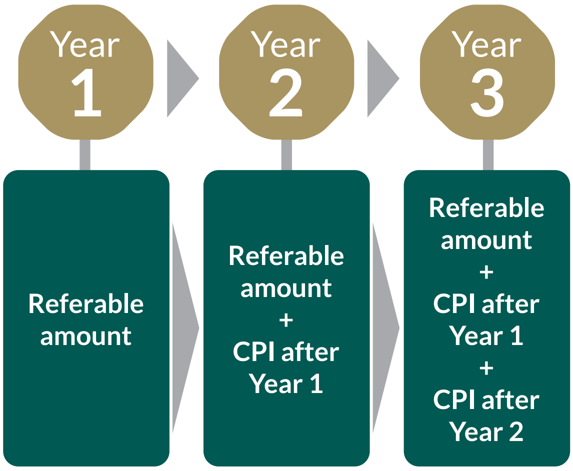


A litre of milk cost 53 cent in 2002 compared to a litre of milk which costs 79 cent in 2017.

Your benefits will be adjusted to take into account positive inflation but will *not* be adjusted downwards if there is a negative inflation (deflation).

Details of the relevant CPI rates to date affecting this Scheme can be found in the Circulars and Legislation on www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

The manner in which CPI is applied to benefits under the Scheme is illustrated below:



Example

In Example A2 on page 12 Judge AN Other earned a lump sum benefit or referable amount of €987.50 for each month that he got paid. If there were no changes to his earnings during the year, at the end of their first year in the Scheme

Lump Sum Benefits: €987.50 each month x 12 = **€11,850 at end of Year 1**

The table below shows some sample *CPI* figures over a 5 year period. It is important to note that these are illustrative only.

Year	CPI
1	1.00%
2	1.50%
3	-0.10%
4	1.00%
5	2.00%

For years when the annual CPI is negative, the CPI is taken to be zero i.e. there is no reduction to build up benefits

Using the *CPI* figures in the table above, and assuming that the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform each year sanctioned for CPI to be applied to benefit amounts already built up in earlier years, you can see how Judge AN Other's **Year 1 Lump Sum bene its** were adjusted in Years 2 to 5 to take into account changes in *CPI* over that time.

At the end of Year 1	Judge AN Other built up a lump sum of €11,850. No adjustment is made for the year that benefits are actually built up.
At the end of Year 2	CPI is 1.50% for Year 2. At the end of Year 2, Year 1 Lump Sum is increased by 1.50% i.e. €11,850 + 1.50% = €12,027.75
At the end of Year 3	CPI is -0.10% for Year 3. CPI is taken to be 0%. Therefore, at the end of Year 3, there is no adjustment to the Year 1 Lump Sum and it remains at €12,027.75.
At the end of Year 4	CPI is 1.00% for Year 4. At the end of Year 4, the Year 1 Lump Sum is further increased by 1.00% i.e. €12,027.75 + 1.00% = €12,148.03
At the end of Year 5	CPI is 2.00% for Year 5. At the end of Year 5, the Year 1 Lump Sum is further increased by 2.00% i.e. €12,148.03 + 2.00% = €12,390.99

We can summarise how the value of Judge AN Other's **Year 1 Lump Sum bene its** looks at the end of Year 5 in the table below:

Approved CPI adjustments		n/a	1.50%	0.00%	1.00%	2.00%
Year	**Earning €**	**End of Year 1**	**End of Year 2**	**End of Year 3**	**End of Year 4**	**End of Year 5**
1	158,000	**11,850**	12,027.75	12,027.75	12,148.03	**12,390.99**

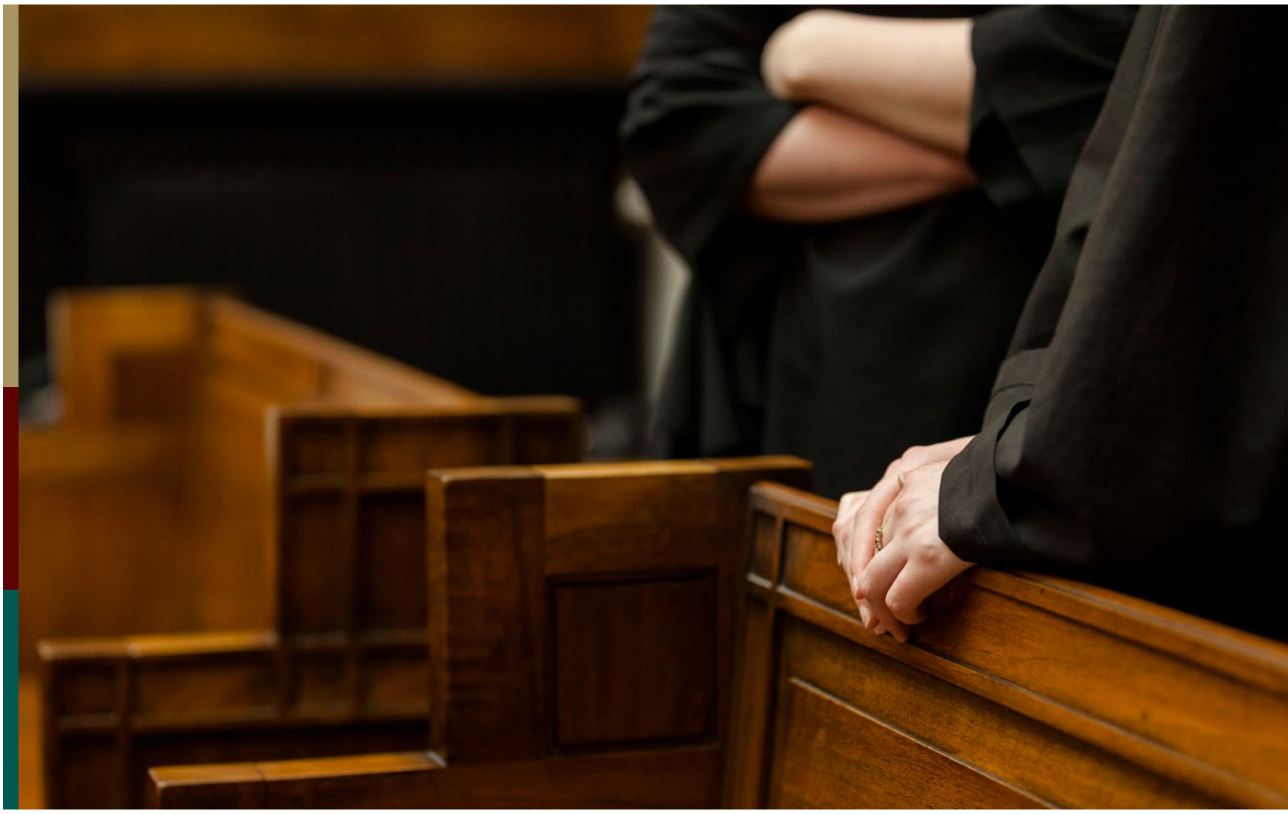
This the initial Year 1 Lump Sum bene it that Judge AN Other built up

At the end of Year 5, the value of Judge AN Other's Year 1 Lump Sum has increased from €11,850 to €12,390.99 as it has been adjusted to keep pace with inflation

In addition to the Year 1 Lump Sum benefit that Judge AN Other built up in Year 1, if he continued as an active member of the Scheme for Year 2, Year 3, Year 4 and Year 5, he would continue to build up benefits for those years that would also benefit from CPI adjustments in the years after they were built up.

The Table below shows:

- How Judge AN Other's Lump Sum benefit amounts continue to build up each year.
- How Judge AN Other's Lump Sum benefit amounts are revalued, in line with changes in CPI, to take into account inflation.



For this example, Judge AN Other worked full time in all years and you will see that they also received an increase in their annual salary over this 5 year period.

Approved CPI adjustments			n/a	1.50%	0.00%	1.00%	2.00%
Year	Annual Salary	Lump-Sum Accrual Rate	End of Year 1	End of Year 2	End of Year 3	End of Year 4	End of Year 5
1	158,000	@ 7.5%	**11,850**	12,027.75	12,027.75	12,148.03	12,390.99
2	160,000	@ 7.5%		**12,000.00**	12,000.00	12,120.00	12,362.40
3	161,500	@ 7.5%			**12,112.50**	12,233.62	12,478.29
4	163,000	@ 7.5%				**12,225.00**	12,469.50
5	167,000	@ 7.5%					**12,525.00**
Lump Sum Benefit Value at end of each year			€11,850	€24,027.75	€36,140.25	€48,726.65	€62,226.18

The above illustrates how Judge AN Other's built up lump sum amounts are revalued over time. **The same approach applies to the manner in which Judge AN Other's built up pension amounts are revalued over time.**

If Judge AN Other retired at the end of Year 5 at their Normal Retirement Age, this would be the value of their once-off lump sum

Remember, your retirement benefits are payable to you only if you have completed the *vesting period* of 24 months and if you satisfy the other qualifying conditions e.g. having served to normal retirement age. See page 22 and 24 for further information on the Scheme *vesting period* and *normal retirement age.*

What happens if you change your working hours?

As your pension contributions and retirement benefits are calculated based on your pensionable remuneration in each pay period, any change in your working hours will affect your pensionable remuneration and consequently how much contributions you pay and what retirement benefits you receive.

What happens if you have two or more pensionable public service employments?

The Scheme rules state that if you are working in two or more pensionable public service posts at the same time, the combined value of the benefits cannot exceed the equivalent of one full-time employment.

Transferring benefits from other employments

Can I transfer benefits from prior private sector employments?

The option for a member of the Single Scheme to transfer in benefits from private sector pension schemes or affiliated arrangements will generally be available, subject to certain terms and conditions. For most Single Scheme members, the details are set out in Circular 15/2019.

What happens if I have benefits from prior public service roles?

If you hold benefits from earlier roles or employments under an earlier Pre-2013 public service pension scheme, you cannot transfer these benefits to the Single Scheme. Such benefits remain to be administered separately.

If you hold deferred benefits under the Single Scheme from an earlier Single Scheme role/employment, you do not need to arrange for a "transfer" of these Single Scheme benefits. This is because the Single Scheme applies across the public service. At present, Single Scheme benefits are only consolidated with your latest Single Scheme Relevant Authority on your death or retirement. Otherwise, at this time, the administration of your Single Scheme benefits built up in your earlier roles/employment(s) is the responsibility of your former employer(s).

What happens if I am absent from work?

Depending on the type of your absence from work, it could have an effect on your contributions and/or your benefits.

Paid Approved Absence

If, during an approved absence from work, you receive pensionable remuneration (such as maternity benefit/paternity benefit) **and** are paying scheme contributions, you will continue to build up retirement benefits under the Scheme.

Unpaid Absence

During an approved unpaid absence (such as a Career Break or period of unpaid special leave), you do not pay any contributions or build up any benefits in respect of that period. You will however continue to achieve time towards the Scheme vesting period of 24-months if you have not already vested in the scheme at the time of taking an unpaid absence.

Sick Leave

Sick pay arrangements may vary depending on who your public service employer is. For information, you should consult the appropriate HR point of contact.

Sick Pay at the Full Rate of Pay

Generally, if you are absent from work on full sick pay, your contributions and retirement benefits will be calculated as normal as if you were not on sick leave.

Sick Pay at the Half Rate of Pay

Generally, if you are on half pay sick leave, it is important to note that your contributions and retirement benefits are calculated as normal, i.e. based on your fulltime remuneration as if you were not on half pay sick leave.

More information on how sick leave is treated/administered under the Single Scheme can be found in Circular 3 of 2017 at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie or by consulting with the appropriate HR contact.

Sick Leave and receiving Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR)

Generally, if you have used up all of your full sick pay entitlements (e.g. 3 months full pay and 3 months half pay in a rolling period of 4 years), your may be granted Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration benefit.

You do not accrue retirement benefits under the Single Scheme, and similarly do not pay contributions, for any period where you are receiving Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration.

Further information on Temporary Rehabilitation Remuneration (TRR) is available in Circular 6 of 2014 at www.circulars.gov.ie or by consulting with the appropriate HR contact.

Your benefits on leaving employment

What happens if I leave my employment?

If you leave employment, other than by retirement or death, your benefits will depend on whether or not you have completed the Scheme Vesting Period.

What is the Scheme Vesting Period?

This is the minimum length of time that you must have served in pensionable employment as a Scheme member before you are eligible for Single Scheme retirement benefits. The Single Scheme *vesting period* is 24 months in total.

Your work pattern (i.e. full-time or part-time) is not taken into account when deciding if you have completed the vesting period or not. This means that regardless of the number of hours you work on a particular day, it fully counts for vesting purposes.

When considering if you have completed the Single Scheme vesting period, any earlier periods of Single Scheme membership must be taken into account.

Single Scheme employment for less than 24 months	Single Scheme employment for 24 months or more
✗ Not Vested	✓ Vested

If you have previously received a refund of contributions from the Scheme, please note that the period of time you were a member of the scheme which relates to the refund that was paid to you does not count towards the vesting period. In certain circumstances you can repay a refund, and restore your previous benefits and time towards your vesting period.

What happens if I have been a member of the Scheme for 24 months or more?

If, on leaving your employment, you have paid contributions for 24 months or more as a member of the Scheme you are not allowed to claim a refund of your contributions as you are now a vested member of the scheme. However, a lump sum and a pension payment will be payable when you reach your normal retirement age. See page 10 for more information on your *normal retirement age*.

If you have paid contributions for more than 24 months as a Scheme member and you are leaving one public service role to take up another pensionable Single Scheme role, your membership of the Scheme will continue. You will not need to start the Vesting Period again.

What happens if I move from one public service job to another?

If you have paid contributions for more than 24 months as a Scheme member and you are leaving one public service role to take up another pensionable role Single Scheme role, your membership of the Scheme will continue. You will not need to start the Vesting Period again.

What happens if I have paid into the Scheme for less than 24 months?

If you have paid member contributions for less than 24 months and you are not starting in another public service position to which the Single Scheme applies, you may be eligible to apply for a refund of your contributions. In accordance with current Revenue rules the standard rate of tax (currently 20%) will be deducted from any refund irrespective of what your actual rate of tax is.

If you have paid contributions for less than 24 months as a Scheme member, and you are leaving one public service role to take up another pensionable Single Scheme role, your membership of the Scheme will continue. You will not be entitled to any refund of contributions.

How can I get a refund of the contributions that I paid?

If under your most recent employment you are eligible for a refund, please consult with the appropriate HR contact and they will send you details on how to apply for a refund of the contributions that you have paid. You should ensure you provide the appropriate HR contact with an up-to-date correspondence address for you and advise them if you are taking up a pensionable role elsewhere in the public service. You will not automatically receive a refund of contributions paid where you have not vested in the Scheme. The onus is on you to apply for a refund where eligible to do so.

What happens if I die after leaving my employment?

Less than 24 months as a member of the Scheme

If you have ceased employment and you have not completed the 24 months *Scheme Vesting Period*, there is no death benefit payable under the Scheme. If you have not already been refunded the contributions you had paid these would be refundable.

24 months or more as a member of the Scheme

If you cease employment and you have completed the 24 months *Scheme Vesting Period*, and if you subsequently die prior to qualifying for your retirement benefits under the Scheme, a once-off Death Gratuity benefit is usually payable to your legal personal representative who administers your affairs on your death. Separately, a surviving Spouse/Civil Partner Pension and/or a Child Pension(s) may also be payable to eligible beneficiaries. Spouse/Civil Partner pensions are also referred to as "Survivor's" pensions.

The death gratuity payable is the lump sum referable amount that you have built up as a member of the Single Pension Scheme, minus any other lump sum that might have been paid to you from the Single Scheme or a pre-existing Public Service Pension Scheme.

Your spouse / civil partner may also be granted a survivor's pension. The amount payable is equal to half of the pension referable amount that you have built up as a member of the Scheme.

An eligible child may also be eligible to receive a child's pension in the event of your death for so long as they meet the definition of an eligible child, this generally being under the age of 16, or if in full-time education and under the age of 22, or permanently incapacitated.

Further information on Death Benefits may be accessed in the relevant Circular or Guidelines available on the Single Scheme website at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie or by consulting with the appropriate HR contact.

Can I transfer my benefits to another pension arrangement?

No. The Scheme does not currently allow transfers out to other pension arrangements.

What happens if I re-join the Single Scheme at a future date?

If you re-join the Single Scheme within 24 months of leaving your last Single Scheme role, and if you received a refund of Single Scheme contributions that you previously paid, you can apply to your current Single Scheme Relevant Authority to restore your benefits by repaying, with compound interest, the refunded amount.

By repaying earlier Single Scheme refunds contributions with compound interest, the corresponding Single Scheme service will count towards the Single Scheme vesting period.

On re-joining the Scheme, if you are eligible to repay a prior Single Scheme refund and opt not to do so or are ineligible to do so, your service completed towards the Single Scheme vesting period will only count from the start of your most recent Single Scheme employment.

Further information on eligibility to repay a prior Single Scheme refund, and the cost to do so, can be obtained from the appropriate HR contact.

Your benefits on retirement

What is my normal retirement age?

Your normal retirement age under the Scheme is the same as the age as that at which you may become eligible to claim the Contributory State Pension from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. This is currently 66 years of age.

Can I remain a Scheme member beyond my normal retirement age?

Provided the terms and conditions of your employment allow, you can decide not to retire and access your benefits at your normal retirement age and instead keep working up until your 70th birthday. If you do so, you will contribute to build up retirement benefits but cannot access Single Scheme retirement benefits until you have formally retired. Age 70 is the *upper retirement age under the Scheme.*

How are my final retirement benefits calculated?

Your retirement benefits are calculated based on your *pensionable remuneration* in each pay period over your entire pensionable public service career. (for examples please refer to page 12).

This is normally done by adding the total lump sum and pension amounts that you have built up over your membership in the Single Scheme. The benefits payable would include any CPI increases applied in previous years. See page 12 for examples.

Section 22(2) of the *Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012* provides that retirement benefits payable to eligible members of the judiciary under the terms of the Single Scheme are capped. A member of the judiciary is eligible to receive a maximum retirement pension of one-half of annual pensionable remuneration at the date of retirement and a retirement lump-sum of no more than one and a half times annual pensionable remuneration at the date of retirement.

Is there a maximum limit on my retirement benefits?

Under current Revenue rules, there is a personal limit of €200,000 on **all** tax free lump sums taken from **all** pension arrangements since 7 December 2005. The next €300,000 of pension lump sum taken from all pension arrangements since 7 December 2005 is taxable at the standard rate of income tax (currently 20%). Any lump sum over the €500,000 limit will have USC deducted and will be taxed at the higher rate (currently 40%).

There is also a cap on the maximum value of retirement benefits that any individual can build up from 7 December 2005 onwards. This is called the Standard Fund Threshold (SFT) and is €2 million at the date of publication.

Before you can receive your benefits when you retire, you will need to provide your Single Scheme pension administrator with details of any other retirement benefits, regardless of whether they are public service pension benefits or non-public service pension benefits. This is so your pension's administrator can assess whether your benefit exceeds the Standard Fund Threshold (SFT). If the value of your total retirement benefits exceeds the SFT, and you have not been granted a Personal Fund Threshold by Revenue, there will be a tax liability on the amount in excess of the SFT at the point of retirement. Your pension administrator may be required to deduct any tax due on the value of your benefits above the SFT before providing you with your Scheme benefits. Your pension will then be taxed as earned income under the PAYE system and any cash lump sum will be taxed as described above. This can effectively result in

double taxation of pension benefits in excess of the Standard Fund Threshold.

You should note that if you do not provide satisfactory evidence of your other retirement benefits, your pensions administrator may be unable to put your benefits into payment, or may assume that the whole value of your benefits exceeds the SFT and are subject to tax (and, in such an event, it will be your responsibility to reclaim it back from Revenue in the event an overpayment of tax is subsequently identified).

Does my pension increase after I retire?

Subject to the approval of the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform, your pension may increase in line with any increases to *CPI*.

Example

Judge Berry retired on 31 April 2018 and their rate of annual pension at 31 December 2018 was €40,000. In January 2019, in line with the CPI change, the Minister approved an increase of 0.70% from 01 January 2019 to all pensions in payment on that date. From 1 January 2019, Judge Berry's annual pension would have increased from €40,000 to €40,280.

Can I retire early?

From age 55, once you have completed the Single Scheme *vesting period* of 24 months, you can apply to your HR point of contact for *cost-neutral early retirement*.

The early retirement benefits payable to you up to the date of your retirement will be based on the lump sum and pension amounts that have built up to the date of your retirement. However, your lump sum and pension will be **permanently** reduced to reflect the early access to your benefits.

The rate of the reduction will be in line with actuarial rates approved by the Minister for Public Expenditure & Reform. Your age at retirement and the time remaining until your normal retirement age are the main factors in determining the reduction to be permanently applied.

For further information on cost-neutral early retirement you should consult the relevant Circular available on the Single Scheme website at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie or consult with the appropriate HR contact.

When can I qualify for payment of deferred benefits?

Judicial members who leave Single Scheme employment before the normal retirement age, are eligible for payment of deferred benefits at the same time as the eligibility age for the Contributory State Pension. This is currently 66 years of age.

What happens if I need to retire early because of ill health?

You can apply to retire early at any age on the grounds of ill-health. Applications to retire on grounds of ill-health involve a medical assessment as part of the application process.

For further information on ill health retirement and what this may mean, you should consult the relevant Circular available on the Single Scheme website at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie or by consulting with the appropriate HR contact.

What happens if I re-join the Public Service after retirement on pension?

If you are re-engaged in the Irish Public Service after your retirement and you are in receipt of a public service pension, depending on the level of pensionable pay you receive from your previous public service role after your retirement, your pension may be reduced or suspended altogether. This reduction or suspension is called "abatement." The rules provide that a public service pensioner's combined earnings from their current public service job plus their existing public service retirement pension, does not exceed the current equivalent of pensionable pay from their previous public service job. The actual impact on your pension (if any) will vary from person to person.

If you are re-employed in the public service in any paid capacity, you are legally obliged to notify your new employer that you had previous public service employment and that you are in receipt of a public service pension, on being re-hired as a public servant. You should also ask your new employer to provide the required salary etc. information to your former employer or pension provider without delay.

The Contributory State Pension and your Single Scheme benefits

The Scheme takes account of the Contributory State Pension as part of the employees' total pension package, this is referred to as an integrated scheme – see definitions at the start of this booklet. Pay-related social insurance (PRSI) contributions made may entitle Scheme members to social welfare benefits.

You may potentially be entitled to receive the Contributory State Pension determined by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection (DEASP). This would be payable separately to you and directly by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection. The maximum rate at 25 March 2019 for a single person without a dependant is €248.30 per week (€12,956.29 per annum).

The minimum age to qualify for the Contributory State Pension from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection is based on your date of birth:

Entitlement to the State Contributory Pension is based on eligibility criteria set by the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection.

Further information on Contributory State Pension entitlements, including details on the eligibility criteria, can be obtained from the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection by telephone at LoCall 1890 500 000 or via their website at www.welfare.ie

Supplementary Pension

The terms of the Single Scheme do **not** currently provide for the payment of a supplementary pension under any circumstances.

Death benefits

What happens if I die during employment as a member of the Scheme?

If you die in service, subject to certain conditions and eligibility, the following benefits may be payable:

Death Gratuity

The death gratuity is twice your pensionable remuneration in the 12 months before your death. If you have been a member of the Scheme for less than 12 months in total, your death gratuity will be twice your pensionable remuneration earned while you were a member of the Scheme.

The death gratuity would be reduced by any lump sum already paid or payable from this Scheme or from a pre-existing public service pension scheme (i.e. a public service pension scheme other than the Single Scheme), and by any other gratuity payable or already paid from a pre-existing public service pension scheme.

Your death gratuity is payable to your legal personal representative on your death. You cannot nominate someone else to receive a death gratuity.

Dependant benefits - Annual Pension payable to eligible Spouse or Child

Your surviving spouse / civil partner may also be granted a survivor's pension equal to half of the pension that would have been payable if you had been retired or discharged on medical grounds on the date of your death.

Subject to certain limits, an eligible child may also be eligible to receive a child's pension in the event of your death for so long as they meet the definition of an eligible child, this generally being under the age of 16 or, if in full-time education, under the age of 22, or if permanently incapacitated.

What happens to my pension payment when I die after retirement?

If you are single, your pension will automatically cease on your death with no further benefits payable to your Estate.

If you are married, your spouse / civil partner may be granted a survivor's pension equal to half of the rate of your pension at the date of your death.

Subject to certain limits, an eligible child may also be eligible to receive a child's pension in the event of your death for so long as they meet the definition of an eligible child, this generally being under the age of 16, or if in full-time education and under the age of 22, or permanently incapacitated.

Further information on Death Benefits may be accessed in the relevant Circular or Guidelines available on the Single Scheme website at www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie or by consulting with the appropriate HR contact.

Family Law and your benefits

What may happen to my benefits if I get separated or divorced?

Your retirement and death benefits under the Scheme could be affected in the event of your Divorce, Judicial Separation or dissolution of a Civil Partnership under the Family Law Acts.

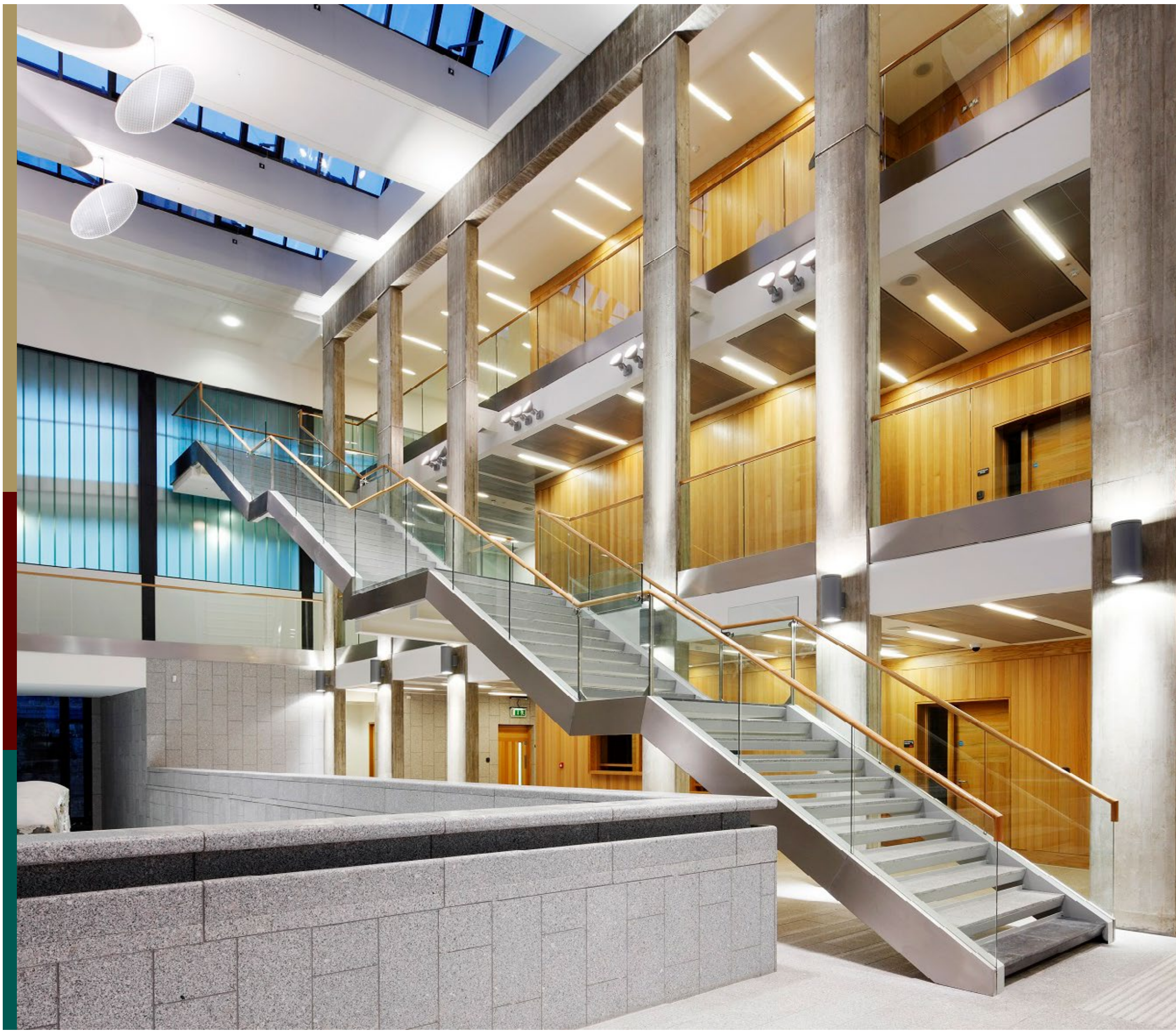
In some cases, a Pensions Adjustment Order may be issued by a Family Law Court directing the Trustees of the Scheme to split a member's benefits between the member and a former Spouse or Civil Partner and/or a child. Pension Adjustment Orders can apply to retirement benefits only, contingent (death) benefits only, or both.

The Trustees is the legal notice party for any Family Law proceedings under the Single Public Service Pension Scheme.

Where can I get more information on Family Law?

Further information about the operation and impact of Pension Adjustment Orders on pension schemes can be sourced from:

- The Pensions Authority published 'A brief guide to the pension provisions of the Family Law Acts' and a 'Pensions on separation and divorce checklist'. You can obtain a copy of these documents by accessing the Authority's website at www.pensionsauthority.ie or by writing to The Pensions Authority, Verschoyle House, 28-30 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2, D02 KX27
- Your solicitor.



Additional Scheme Information

What is the legal basis for this Scheme?

This is a statutory Public Service Defined Benefit Pension Scheme established on 1 January 2013 under the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.

Can the Scheme be amended?

Yes. The Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform has the power to introduce regulations in relation to certain benefits under the Scheme. More substantive changes to the Scheme may require legislative changes to the Public Service Pensions (Single Scheme and Other Provisions) Act 2012.

Is the Scheme registered with the Pension Authority?

Yes. The Pensions Authority registration number is PB275744.

Who administers the Scheme?

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in conjunction with the Civil Justice & Equality section of the Department of Justice, is responsible for the administration of pension contributions from your pay, for calculating the Scheme benefits that you build up over the course of your tenure, for issuing annual benefit statements to you each year and for paying your benefits under the Scheme. Any queries related to your pension benefits should be directed to the Civil Justice & Equality section in the Department of Justice.

Please be aware that each Relevant Authority is responsible for the administration of your pension contributions deducted, and for calculating the retirement benefits that you have built up during your employment with them. Therefore, if you have multiple pensionable public service during the year, you will receive multiple benefit statements after year-end from each of your Single Scheme Relevant Authorities.

Who pays my benefits?

The Department of Public Expenditure and Reform is responsible for arranging for the payment of all benefits payable under the Scheme. The Single Scheme is a pay-as-you-go scheme. This means that all liabilities under the Scheme are met by the Exchequer.

Can I use my benefits as security for a loan or mortgage?

No. Your benefits under the Scheme cannot be used as a security for a loan or mortgage or be assigned to any other person or entity.

What do I do if I have a complaint?

If you have a particular concern regarding the administration of your benefits under the Scheme, you should first make contact with the Civil Justice & Equality section in the Department of Justice to raise your concerns.

If you still remain dissatisfied, you should formally write to Civil Justice & Equality section in the Department of Justice. They can inform you if there is a particular procedure that you should follow. In any correspondence, you should outline clearly the reasons for your concerns in sufficient detail to allow the matter to be appropriately referred and the matter investigated fully in a timely manner with a view to reaching an appropriate resolution.

Ultimately, you may have recourse to the Office of the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman in relation to your complaint if you remain dissatisfied. The contact details for the Office of the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman are:

Address

Office of the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman
4thFloor, Lincoln House
Lincoln Place
Dublin 2
D02 VH29

E-mail info@pensionsombudsman.ie

Phone +353 1 676 6002

Fax +353 1 661 8776

Who can I contact for more information?

You can access further information on the Single Scheme on the dedicated website www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie

If the content in this booklet or on the website does not address your particular query, please see contact details below and information on who to contact depending on the nature of your query:

Other sources of useful information

Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection
http://www.welfare.ie

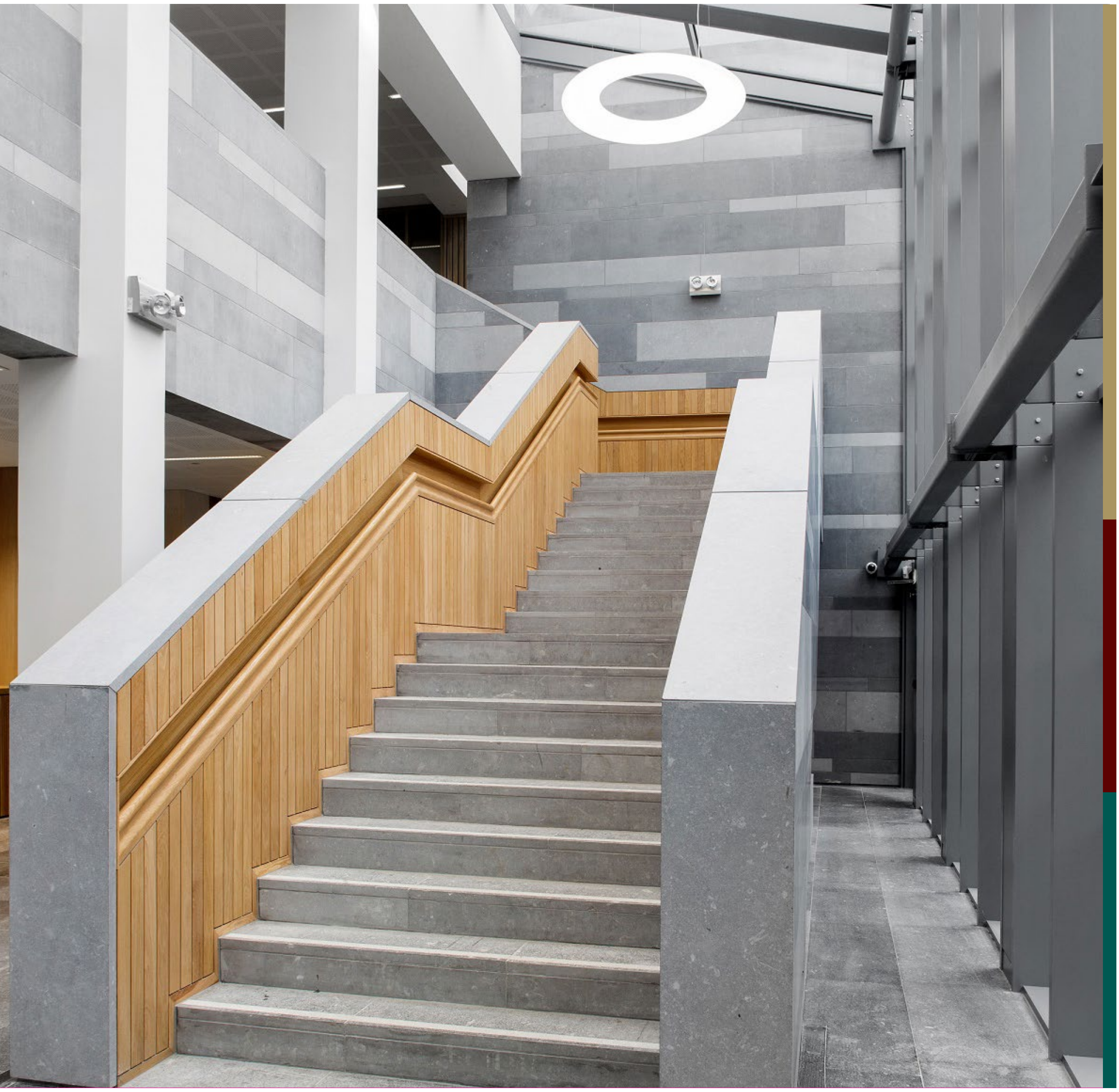
Citizens Information Board
http://www.citizensinformation.ie

Legal Aid Board
http://www.legalaidboard.ie

The Pensions Authority
http://www.pensionsauthority.ie

Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman
http://www.fspo.ie

Brokers Ireland
http://www.brokersireland.ie



Single Public Service Pension Scheme

www.singlepensionscheme.gov.ie