

Joiners Fact Sheet

This Fact Sheet provides important information for you to read if you are a new joiner to the Isle of Man Government Unified Scheme (the Unified Scheme).

Welcome to the Isle of Man Government Unified Scheme 2011. As a new public servant of the Isle of Man Government, your employer would have confirmed to you in your offer and or appointment letter that you have automatically been placed into the **Standard Section*** of the Isle of Man Unified Government Scheme 2011 (the Unified Scheme) from your first date of paid employment.

* With the exception of Firefighters who will be entered into Section 7 and Tynwald Members who will be entered into Section 8.

This New Joiners Fact Sheet is designed to offer you an overview of the Scheme and to help answer some initial questions you may have.

If you are an existing member of the Unified Scheme and are simply changing jobs within the Isle of Man Government or re-joining after a break in service then please also read the Changing your Job Factsheet (GUS FS3) which can be found on the website www.pspa.im as it contains some important information on possible rights to remain in a protected section and linking past service and benefits from the Unified Scheme.

Who are the PSPA?

The Public Sector Pension Authority (PSPA) are the Managers and Administrators of the Unified Scheme and our contact details are at the end of this Fact Sheet.

What is the Unified Scheme?

The Unified Scheme is a defined benefits scheme and is an important and valuable staff benefit for people working in the Isle of Man public sector. Being a member of the Unified Scheme is one of the ways in which you can prepare financially for your retirement. Both you and the Isle of Man Government pay towards the cost of your pension.

The Unified Scheme contains 9 Sections: the Standard Section 1 and 8a and Protected Sections 2 to 8. Membership of the sections are restricted. All new entrants (with the exception of Firefighters and Tynwald Members) to the Unified Scheme are eligible to join the Standard Section only. Firefighters can join Section 7 and Tynwald Members join Section 8. Membership of Sections 2 to 6 is restricted and dependant of employment and membership status as at 31 March 2012.

The contribution you will pay towards your benefits will be deducted directly from your salary by your employing authority's payroll department. These deductions are subject to tax relief.

The Unified Scheme is contracted out of the State Second Pension Scheme (S2P)

What are the benefits of the Standard Section?

Details of the benefits of being a member and of what the scheme will provide for you at retirement and during your working life are covered in the Unified Scheme guide, but here are a few of the key features:

- An index linked retirement pension and an optional cash lump sum (currently tax-free) based on your service and earnings.
- Flexible retirement ages from age 55.
- A contribution rate of 7.5% in the Standard Section
- Protection for your family in the event of your death before and after retirement – including a Death in Service lump sum of 3 x pensionable pay, Survivors and Dependents pension.
- Early payment of a pension and lump sum if you become too ill to work.
- The ability to transfer in pension rights from other pension schemes into the Unified Scheme

What are the benefits of being in Section 7?

If you are a Firefighter then your entitlements vary to those above. Your contribution rate is set at a higher rate, as in the retirement pension and lump sum from Section 7 is higher than the Standard Section and if you have accrued 25 years service, you are able to retire from age 50.

The key features for Firefighters in Section 7 are:

- An indexed linked retirement pension and an optional cash lump sum (currently tax-free) based on your service and earnings.
- Flexible retirement ages from age 50.
- A current contribution rate of 13.50%
- Protection for your family in the event of your death before and after retirement – including a Death in Service lump sum of 3 x pensionable pay, Survivors and Dependents pension.
- Early payment of a pension and lump sum if you become too ill to work.
- The ability to transfer in pension rights from other schemes into the Unified Scheme

If you are a Practitioner or Tynwald Member your entitlements will vary to those above – please refer to the Scheme Guide for more information.

What happens when I join?

You become a member from the first day you start work and you will start contributing from this date.

If you are concurrently working in more than one post you will have separate memberships in the Unified Scheme for each post that you work.

Your employer will tell us, usually within 4 weeks of your commencing employment, that you have joined the scheme and then we will contact you directly at your home address to confirm your membership status in the Unified Scheme and send you more information that will allow you to action the following:

- Nominate a beneficiary for death benefits;
- Nominate your partner for survivor benefits; and
- Apply for a transfer of pension rights from other pension schemes into the Unified Scheme

In the meantime, you can read more about the provisions of the scheme on our website at www.pspa.im

I am a past member of the Unified Scheme can I only join the Standard Section?

Yes.

The exception being that you will only be admitted to your old membership status in a protected section if your break in service was 28 days or less.

I am receiving a pension from the Unified Scheme, so can I re-join the Scheme?

No.

There are exceptions if you are in receipt of a lower tier ill health retirement pension and you are under age 55 – refer to the Scheme Guide for more information.

What if I don't want to be in the Unified Scheme?

If, after reading the information about the Unified Scheme, you decide that you do not wish to be a member of the Unified Scheme, you and your employer's pay office should complete the GUS 1 – Opt Out Form.

However, before electing not to participate, it is very important that you know about what benefits are available to you and your dependants as a member and what you may be giving up if you do decide to Opt Out. Please make sure you read our Opting Out Fact Sheet (GUS FS1) before completing the GUS 1 Opt Out Form. Both the form and the fact sheet are available from our website or you can contact us using the details below to request the form and fact sheet.

Disclaimer

This fact sheet is a guide only and does not represent any entitlement to the provisions described. This fact sheet provides a simple over view of the provisions of the Unified Scheme and does not cover every aspect.

The full details are contained only in the Rules of the Isle of Man Government Scheme 2011, which are the legal basis of the scheme. Nothing in this fact sheet will override the Rules, and in the event of any unintentional difference, the rules will apply.

Where can I go for help?

Visit the PSPA website at www.pspa.im

Contact the Unified Scheme administrators at the PSPA:

Email: pensions@pspa.im

Write to:

PSPA

Prospect House

27-29 Prospect Hill

Douglas

ISLE OF MAN

IM1 1ET

You can telephone us on 01624 685598, however we always recommend putting your enquiry in writing if you can, so that there is a written record of your enquiry and our response.