

GOOD to KNOW

QUICK FACTS
ON GROW-IN
BENEFITS AND
YOUR PENSION

DECEMBER
2019



Grow-In Benefits and Your Pension

Understanding Grow-In Benefits

Under Ontario pension law, OPSEU Pension Plan members whose employment is involuntarily terminated may be eligible to “grow in” to an early unreduced pension at a future date.

This means if your employment is terminated involuntarily, you may still be eligible to qualify for an unreduced pension under the Plan’s Factor 90 or 60/20 early retirement options. If you qualify, your pension will be payable on the date you would have become eligible for an early unreduced pension, as if your employment and membership in the Plan had continued to that date.

Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for grow-in benefits, you must meet the following criteria:

- You are an active or divested member of the OPSEU Pension Plan and are under age 65.
- You have received a notice that your employment will be terminated involuntarily (e.g., because of a permanent layoff or termination that is not “for cause”).
- Your age plus years of pension service, plan membership or continuous employment must total at least 55 years on the date your employment ends.
- You would have qualified for an early unreduced pension before age 65 if your employment and plan membership had not ended.

Members who receive a notice of a temporary or seasonal layoff, or whose employment is terminated due to willful misconduct, disobedience or willful neglect of duty, are not eligible for grow-in benefits.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: To confirm your eligibility, your employer must complete and submit OPTrust’s Grow-In Benefits - Employer Certification (OPTrust 3013) form to OPTrust with a copy of your notice of termination.

How Grow-In Works

If your employment is terminated involuntarily and you qualify for grow-in benefits, you will have the option to defer your pension. You can then start collecting an early unreduced pension before age 65, on the date you would have qualified under the Plan’s Factor 90 or 60/20 provisions, had you continued working.

If you are under age 55 when your employment ends, you can also choose to transfer the commuted value (CV) of your pension to a Locked-In Retirement Account (LIRA) or another pension plan. If you qualify for grow-in benefits, your CV will include the additional value of your early unreduced pension entitlement.

IMPORTANT TO NOTE: There are other important factors – including whether you qualify for post-retirement insured benefits – that you should consider before deciding to transfer your funds out of the Plan.



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How your pension is calculated

If you qualify for grow-in, your early unreduced pension will be calculated based on the Plan's pension formula, using your average salary and years of pension service as of the date your employment ends. Your pension will include both your lifetime pension and the early retirement bridge benefit, which is an amount payable from your early retirement date until you reach age 65.

Annual inflation adjustments will be applied to your deferred pension every January and will continue after you start receiving your pension.



Questions and Answers

Does grow-in affect my eligibility for post-retirement insured benefits?

Grow-in benefits do not affect your eligibility for post-retirement insured benefits (PRBs) offered by the Government of Ontario. If you qualify for PRBs, the options available to you will be explained on the termination statement you receive from OPTrust.

Does grow-in affect survivor benefits?

Yes. Whether you die before or after you start to collect your pension, your eligibility for grow-in benefits will be taken into account when calculating the survivor benefits that are payable to your spouse, other beneficiaries or estate.

How do grow-in benefits work for divested members?

If you are a divested member of the Plan and your employment is involuntarily terminated by your successor employer, you may qualify for grow-in benefits with respect to your "special deferred" OPTrust pension. If you are a divested member and believe you may qualify for grow-in benefits, please contact us.



For more information please contact OPTrust

This information is a summary of certain benefits offered under the primary schedule of the OPSEU Pension Plan and is not applicable to OPTrust Select. All information is current as of the date of publication.

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