

EMPLOYERS' NEWSLETTER

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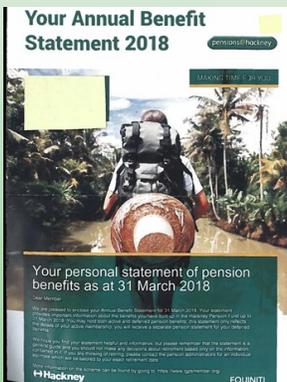
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Welcome to our quarterly newsletter, which provides you with an update on the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and other topical matters.

Annual Benefit Statements

Equiniti have recently been sending out ABSs to active members for the year-end March 18. We would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to all Employers for submitting the Year End Returns to Equiniti in a timely manner!

You may well be getting a few queries from members regarding their statements, that you may not be able to answer. In these circumstances, please refer them to Equiniti who will be happy to assist. Their contact details are: 01293 603 085



Employers' Forum

It is nearly that time of year for our Annual Employers' Forum, and we are currently making arrangements to hold this in late February or early March 2019.

As you are aware, 2019 is the Fund's valuation year, so this event will be incredibly important and your attendance is required. We will be sending out a **'SAVE THE DATE'** for your diaries in January, and full details of the venue, time and agenda will follow in due course –

Please look out for this and make sure you put the date in your diary!!

If your main pension contact won't be available on the day, please send someone else in their place: this event is to help you, help your members!



Checklist

- Be aware that members are receiving their benefit statements may raise pay queries with you
- Have you printed off the ScamSmart leaflet and left it in a prominent staff area?
- Contact us if you would like to host a member event on 020 8356 2521



Don't let your members be scammed out of their retirement!

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and The Pensions Regulator (tPR) have launched a new fraud alert campaign called **ScamSmart**.

We urge all our employers and members to be on their guard if you receive an unexpected **'too good to be true'** offer to transfer your pension to them or to release some money from it. Your money is then often invested in unusual and high risk investments, or it is simply stolen!

If you or any of your members are approached, please visit the **ScamSmart** website before going any further – **Don't become another victim!**

ScamSmart - www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart



If you or your members are approached, report it immediately to Action Fraud:



Pension Fun Fact

We have a total of 23,569 people who we look after, this includes actives, deferred, pensioners and leavers

Important News From Teachers Pension Scheme (TPS)

Increases to Employer Contribution Rates

Schools, colleges and universities have been warned to budget for an increase in the employer contributions they must pay into the Teachers' Pension Scheme (TPS) on behalf of their staff. The warning of a contribution rise follows the government's Actuary's Department completing its calculations to provide indicative results of the 2016 valuation of the Teachers' Pension Scheme

The key results are:

- Implementation of the change to the employer contribution rate will be **1 September 2019** (rather than 1 April 2019) due to the delay in this announcement
- The current employer contribution rate of 16.48% will be increasing to an **estimated employer contribution rate of 23.6%, for the period 1 September 2019 until 31 March 2023**
- The change to the SCAPE discount rate that is used to assess the current cost of future benefit payments, has necessitated for the increase in employer rates; the SCAPE rate will change from CPI + 2.8% to CPI + 2.4% from April 2019

- There will be funding from the DfE for the year 2019/20 to help meet the additional costs and a consultation process will take place to determine final funding arrangements. Funding for 2020/21 onwards will be discussed as part of the next Spending Review round.
- The indicative result also shows that the cost cap has been breached due to the value of member benefits having fallen, this is due to assumptions about earnings (pay increases lower than expected) and reduction in life expectancy. Discussion will take place with the TPS Scheme Advisory Board to recommend changes to the scheme design for career average section members of the TPS to align member

No doubt there will be more updates on this as we head towards September 2019 – we'll keep you posted!



Employers' Portal

We are currently developing, in conjunction with Equiniti, an employer portal – This new development will let you upload your contribution and member data directly to your members' records!!

The Portal is a secure upload method and you will see immediately if the upload has been successful, or if there are any errors that require your attention. The member information will be directly loaded to their pension record, and you will also be able to view some of the details on their records (you will only be able to see details for which you provide data for, the rest will be restricted)

By using the portal, it will streamline the data sharing process leading to more accurate records being held and a decrease in the number of queries that Equiniti will need to raise with Employers on an ongoing basis. It will also ease the Year End process and lessen the queries as these will be raised on a monthly basis when you submit your data to the portal.

We currently have a few very brave employers who are trailing the Portal and we wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to them for doing this. Their robust testing and feedback will enable us to do any 'tweaks' to the system before fully launching to all employers over the course of 2019.

We will update you further, once the trial period has been completed.



MEMBERS PAGE

PLEASE DISPLAY IN A PROMINENT PLACE FOR ALL YOUR MEMBERS TO SEE!

Have you got your LGPS annual benefit statement yet?

(GDPR), to all individuals who hold data for about how we use your information, who we share it with and why. The notice should be self-explanatory, but if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

Most of you should by now have received your 2017-18 annual benefit statement from Equiniti. If you've not received it yet, please don't panic!!



We are working hard with Equiniti to resolve some data problems and we hope to get some posted out before Christmas. If you don't receive one, please be patient, as the rest will follow in January 2019.

Included with this year's statements is a Privacy Notice which we are required to send under the new data protection regulations

Pension flexibility (Freedom & Choice)

Don't let a scammer enjoy your retirement – find out more by visiting www.fca.org.uk/scamsmart. If you are approached, report it immediately to Action Fraud:

The frequency of pension scams is on the increase, but there are a number of things you can do to protect yourself.

-  **Reject unexpected Offers** - an offer out of the blue is probably a scam. If it's too good to be true, it probably is!!
-  **Check who you're dealing with** - check with the Financial Services Register to make sure they are FCA authorised - www.register.fca.org.uk
-  **Don't be rushed or pressured into making a decision** - take your time and do all the necessary checks
-  **Get help & impartial information** - the Pension Advisory Service provides free independent and impartial information and guidance - www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk



Contact Details

The Hackney Pension Team

Julie Stacey (Head of Pensions Administration)

Karen Chenery (Liaison Officer Pension)

Lucy Patchell (Pension Officer)

Nicola Speer (Pension Officer)

Sharmin Haque (Pension Assistant)

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The Pension Administrators Equiniti

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Equiniti 01293 603 085

Hackney.pensions@equiniti.com

Useful websites

www.lgpsmember.org

www.lgpsregs.org

www.thepensionregulator.gov.uk/public-services-schemes.aspx

www.gov.uk/state-pension-age

Seasons Greetings and a Happy New Year From the Pensions Team.

Note: The offices will be closed for the Christmas period

From 22/12/2018 to 02/01/2019 inclusive

