

YOUR GUIDE TO DESIGNATING A PENSION BENEFICIARY



Naming a beneficiary helps to ensure your benefits are paid as you wish when you die. It can also save your heirs time and money. Your beneficiary can be one or more people or an organization, such as a charity. You may change your beneficiary at any time—as long as he/she is not an irrevocable beneficiary—by completing a new beneficiary form.

When Your Pension Beneficiary Will Be Used

If you die before you retire, and you do not have a Spouse or Common-law Partner, or Dependent Children, your beneficiary would be entitled to receive the commuted value of your pension benefit for all credited service, plus any excess contributions plus interest.

If you die after you retire, and you do not have a spouse/partner or Dependent Children, a named beneficiary would receive your Pension Plan contributions plus interest, less any pension benefits paid to your date of death.

What if I do not designate a beneficiary?

Benefits will be payable to your estate and will be subject to the relevant taxes and fees associated with processing an estate.

Should I name my Spouse or Common-law Partner as a pension beneficiary?

It is not necessary to name your spouse/partner as a pension beneficiary. Under provincial law, a spouse/partner is automatically entitled to pre-retirement death benefits and a survivor pension after you retire. However, keep in mind that:

- Part of your benefit may be assigned to a former spouse/partner by a separation agreement or court order.
- Your spouse can waive his or her entitlement to the pre-retirement death benefit and/or survivor pension.
- A spouse/partner is not eligible for a pre-retirement death benefit, or a survivor pension, if he or she is living separate and apart from the member due to a breakdown in the relationship.

Spouse of a member means the person who is married to the member.

Partner refers to common-law partner. A common-law partner is a person who is in a registered common-law relationship with the member (per Vital Statistics Act); or who is living with the member in a conjugal relationship for at least three years if either of them is married, or for at least one year if neither of them is married.

Waiver of Survivor or Death Benefit

A surviving spouse/partner can waive his/her entitlement to a pre-retirement death benefit before or after the member's death. This waiver may be revoked with the agreement of the member and the spouse any time before the member's death. This allows pre-retirement death benefits to be assigned to a beneficiary other than a spouse/partner, for example to children from a prior relationship.

Should I name my children as beneficiaries?

If you do not have a spouse/partner when you die, your Dependent Children will automatically receive a preretirement death benefit or a survivor pension until they no longer qualify as dependent. When the last Dependent Child ceases to be dependent, the balance of the death benefit, if any, will be paid in equal amounts to the children who were Dependent Children at the date of death. Children who are not Dependent Children will not receive any benefits unless they are named as your designated beneficiary.

What if my beneficiary is under age 18?

If a Dependent Child is a minor, benefits will be paid to the Dependent Child's legal guardian. If you are appointing a minor who is not a Dependent Child as beneficiary, you should appoint a Trustee to receive and disburse any monies payable.

What is an irrevocable beneficiary?

An irrevocable beneficiary is one that is required according to provincial law or by virtue of a divorce or settlement. You cannot change an irrevocable beneficiary.

How to fill out the form

List each beneficiary on a separate line.

Sign in blue ink. If it is not signed, it is not legally valid.

Have a witness, other than the named beneficiary or trustee, sign the form. If the named beneficiary signs as the witness, it is not legally valid.

Date the form. If you change your beneficiary but do not date the form, we may not be able to determine which beneficiary is the current one.