

PENSIONPoints

Member Newsletter | May 2016

click to WIN! And Go Green...



Over 20,000 Plan Members are using MyPension to access their pension information in a secure online environment. Are you one of them?

If you **Register** or **Sign In** between now and July 15, 2016, you will automatically be entered into a draw to win 1 of 25 \$100 Gift Cards from Chapters!

Winners will be selected after July 15, and you will be notified by email if your name is drawn!

Go to the Teacher section at www.atrf.com for contest details.

Contribution Rates Going Down

Over the past several years investment returns have been solid. Over the four years ending August 31, 2015, the Fund has earned an annualized average return of 12%. These strong returns have resulted in a significant decrease in the unfunded liability of the Plan and a material improvement in the overall funded position. As a result, contribution rates for the Plan will be reduced effective September 1, 2016.

Teachers' Pension Plan Contribution Rates		
(% of Salary)	Sept 2015	Sept 2016
Teachers		
Total Teacher Contribution	13.46	12.68
Salary up to YMPE*	11.44	10.74
Salary above YMPE	16.34	15.34
Government	12.65	11.95

*YMPE is the Year's Maximum Pensionable Earnings used by the Canada Pension Plan (\$54,900 in 2016)

In This Issue

- How May We Serve You?
- Meet With Us
- Steps to Retirement
- You Asked Us
- We'll Be There...
- The ATRF Office
- Web Registration is Easy and Convenient
- Your Pension Matters Seminar

How May We Serve You?

ATRF offers many services to plan members. In this second installment, we are providing information about Personal Interviews and Seminars. Both can be accessed through Meet With Us on our website.



Meet With Us

Personal Interviews

Teachers often ask “When should I see a Pension Counsellor?” or “How often do I need to meet with a Pension Counsellor?”

If you are planning to retire in the next 3 to 5 years, it would be a beneficial for you to book an interview to make that first contact. At your personal 30-minute interview, you will have the opportunity to review your pension estimates and options and ask questions about your ATRF pension. Then, in the year you plan to retire, you could book another appointment to learn about the application process and review the application forms and pension options.

Seminars

ATRF pension seminars provide a general overview of the Teachers' Pension Plan and include information about our website, *MyPension*, pensionable service and salary, increasing your service, calculating your pension, the application process, and the pension options.

We offer two different seminars - Your Pension Matters and Steps to Retirement.

Your Pension Matters is of interest to teachers at any stage of their career. The topics follow the format of your Annual Plan Member Statement, giving you a better understanding of the information you received. You are encouraged to bring your most recent Annual Plan Member Statement with you to this seminar. You'll also receive the 'Your Pension Matters' information kit, which includes information on the Plan.



Steps to Retirement is primarily for teachers who are planning to retire during the current year or within the next couple of years. We review the 'Steps to Retirement' publication to give you a better understanding of the application process, application forms, and pension options.

ATRF staff is available, upon request, to hold a seminar at any Alberta location where there will be at least 25 members in the audience - including PD days, staff meetings, or ATA Local meetings.

Please contact us at seminars@atrf.com with the requested date, time, location and seminar type along with the number of participants expected.

Steps to Retirement

When you are ready to retire...



In our 'Steps to Retirement' booklet you will find a lot of helpful information to assist you with the retirement process.

This publication covers the following:

- Step 1** – Submit Your Resignation
- Step 2** – Apply for Your Pension
- Step 3** – Wait for Your Pension Options Package
- Step 4** – Complete Forms in Your Pension Options Package
- Step 5** – Receive Your Pension Payment

The booklet is on our website in Publications and Forms – Preparing for Retirement. In the Teachers' Lounge section of the website you will find the 'Steps to Retirement' video which works as a companion to the booklet.

You Asked Us...

Q: *Is it important to have an even number of years of pensionable service? I have 29.9950, should I try to reach 30.0000?*

A: No, it is not necessary to have full years because ATRF is counting every day of your pensionable service to the 4th decimal place. There is nothing magic about having an even 30.0000 years. As in this example, it just means you would be adding only 1 more day of service to your pension.

Q: *Can I make my resignation date the middle of the month?*

A: Your ATRF pension can only take effect on the 1st of a month and is paid at the end of the month. If you resign mid-month, you will not receive salary or pension for the remainder of that month. We recommend that you resign at the end of the month.

Q: *When I retire, should I resign June 30 or August 31?*

A: If you are a 10-month employee, the effective date of your resignation would usually be June 30 rather than August 31. When you do this, ATRF can pay your pension in July and August, and your employer will also pay your salary for July and August. The service and salary for this period is included in your pension calculation as of the end of June.

If you are a 12-month employee, the effective date of your resignation would usually be August 31 rather than June 30. If you resign before August 31, you will not be credited with a full year of service.



"We'll Be There..."

Personal Interviews

We understand your need to see us in locations other than Edmonton, and we make efforts to provide our services throughout Alberta at various times during the year. In the fall of 2016, we plan to hold personal interviews in the following locations:

Calgary • Medicine Hat • Lethbridge • Red Deer

These interviews are for plan members who want information about pension benefits, increasing your pension, or preparing for retirement.

The ATRF Office

is on the 6th floor of Barnett House and is open from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday all year round. Call to arrange an appointment to meet with one of our Pension Counsellors.



Web Registration is Easy and Convenient

The interview schedule for fall 2016 is posted on our website by the end of June. To register for an interview outside the ATRF office, click on **Meet With Us**.

Your Pension Matters Seminar

ATRF Pension Counsellors are also available to conduct seminars throughout Alberta. They can be held in conjunction with PD Days, staff meetings, or ATA Local meetings.

ATA Retirement Consultants also organize full day Pre-Retirement Workshops. They invite an ATRF Pension Counsellor to present "Your Pension Matters". These sessions have been very successful and we look forward to attending more sessions in 2016-17.

