



Pension Points

Member Newsletter - December 2010

Top 5 Reasons to use On-Line Services

1. Join Our Email List
2. Update your personal information, including your address
3. Estimate your pension – even while meeting with your financial advisor in their office
4. Access your statement of plan benefits
5. Apply for benefits



ATRF is 20% Greener

Over the summer 2,300 additional plan members joined the green movement by registering for On-Line Services. This brings the total number of plan members registered to almost 16,000. Twenty-five lucky plan members who registered or used On-Line Services between the end of June and September 17 won a \$100 Chapters gift card! Here is what one of them had to say:

“I received my gift card and look forward to shopping for quality kids’ books for my Grade 2 classroom. Thanks a bunch” -Judy

If you haven’t yet registered, go to our website www.atrf.com and click on the On-Line Services button on the sidebar.

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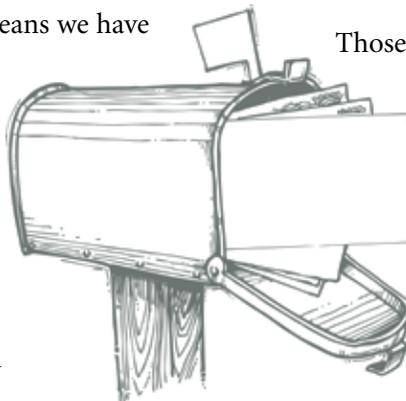
High Ratings from New Pensioners

We'll Be There

Annual Plan Member Statements are in the Mail

A big thank you to the employers who have done a great job of reporting your information for the 2009/10 school year. This means we have been able to start mailing your annual statements even earlier than last year. If you have not yet received your statement for the year ended August 31, 2010, you can check to see if it has been mailed. Go to the Teachers section of our website www.atrf.com and click on Plan

Member Statements on the sidebar. Mailing dates are shown beside each employer.



Those who register to *Join Our Email List* don’t have to wait for the mail – they receive an email containing a link to their annual statement several days before the paper copies go in the mail. You can *Join Our Email List* from the Member Menu in On-Line Services.

Pension Estimates are a Useful Tool

If you are registered for On-Line Services, you can do your own pension estimates at your convenience. Our Counsellors prepare pension estimates before they meet with you for a personal interview, or they can mail you pension estimates. There are a number of reasons you might want to contact ATRF for a pension estimate.

If You are Considering a Retirement Transition Option Plan

Some employers offer teachers a Retirement Transition Option Plan (RTOP), where you can resign from your continuous contract in the middle of the school year, apply for your pension, and then return for the remainder of the school year under a temporary contract.

A pension estimate can help you decide whether you would prefer to receive a slightly smaller pension starting at an earlier date, or a somewhat larger pension starting at a later date. If you decide to start your pension sooner, the RTOP may give you the option of a December 31 resignation or a January 31 resignation. Once you start receiving your pension, your monthly pension will be reduced by the amount of salary you earn each month if you work more than 0.6 of a year within any school year (contractual or substitute). Therefore, if you resign effective December 31, your pension may be reduced if the number of instructional days between January 1 and June 30 is greater than 0.6 of a school year.

You should also be aware that in accordance with the *Income Tax Act*, you can only earn one year of Pensionable Service in a calendar year. If you resign on December 31, you may get paid as much as 0.42 of a year for the September to December portion of the school year. If you worked full-time in that school year, you would have been paid for 0.6667 of a year from January to August, for a total of 1.0867 for the calendar year. Under these circumstances, the extra 0.0867 of Pensionable Service can't be used in your pension calculation. However, if you terminate on January 31 of the following year (that is your pension start date will be February 1), the 0.0867 of Pensionable Service can be used in addition to the service earned in January.

Returning from an Extended Disability

If you become disabled and are in receipt of extended disability benefits, you may continue to accrue Pensionable Service without having to make

any contributions. If you are over age 55 when you recover from your disability and your extended disability benefits are ending, a pension estimate may be useful to help you make the decision to return to your previous position or to resign and apply for your pension.

Saving for Retirement

The ads on TV and in magazines tell you to save for retirement, but how much should you save? Since your pension will likely be the cornerstone of your retirement income, knowing the amount of your pension can help you decide how much additional savings you will need. Request a pension estimate from ATRF and then speak to your advisor to set up a financial plan that will help you meet your long-term goals.

Are You a New Teacher?



Welcome to the Teachers' Pension Plan. There are three things you need to do:

1. Fill out two forms. If your employer has not provided you with two ATRF forms - Information Update and Beneficiary Designation - download them from the Publications and Forms section of our website, complete and mail them to ATRF.
2. Register for On-Line Services, and
3. Join Our Email List - if you would like to go paperless.

Increasing Your Pensionable Service

Plan members often ask if they can make additional contributions to the pension plan to increase their pension. Although that is not an option, if you have ever taken an employer approved leave, or if you have contributed to another pension plan, you may be able to increase your pension by increasing your pensionable service. This can be done two ways – *purchasing service* or *transferring service* from another pension plan with whom ATRF has a reciprocal agreement.

What Service can be Purchased?

There are several types of service you can purchase to increase your pensionable service. If you are an active member or accruing pensionable service you can apply to purchase the following types of service that has taken place with an ATRF employer:

- Substitute Teaching Service
- Employer-Approved Leaves

- Previously Refunded Service
- Reciprocal Transfer Shortfalls

If you are not an active member you can only purchase Substitute Service in 186-day blocks, or any number of days if applying to start your pension at the same time.

Increasing your service helps to increase the pension you will receive when you retire. It is important to compare the cost of purchasing service against the increase to your pension. We encourage you to use the Pension and Purchase Calculators in On-Line Services to make this comparison. You can call ATRF for estimates.

Buying Service

If you decide to purchase service you can pay for it by cheque or by transferring funds from a Registered Retirement Savings Plan (RRSP).

There can be income tax implications when you purchase service. The tax implications are different when you purchase service that takes place after 1989 or before 1990. If you are purchasing service prior to 1990, call ATRF. For a period after 1989, ATRF will issue a past service pension adjustment (PSPA) which is the sum of all the pension adjustments (PA's) for the years being purchased. The PA is the value of the pension benefit earned in a year and it reduces your available RRSP room. The Canada Revenue Agency must approve the PSPA before the purchase can be finalized and you can use the payment as a tax deduction.

Reciprocal Transfers

You may also increase your pensionable service by transferring service from another pension plan, if there is a reciprocal transfer agreement between that plan and ATRF and you meet the eligibility requirements.

ATRF has established Reciprocal Agreements with all the provincial teacher pension plans and with three Alberta Public Sector pension plans – Management Employees Pension Plan, Public Service Pension Plan, and the Local Authorities Pension Plan.

Please see the Information Sheets on our website for more information, including eligibility requirements. Before you make a final decision on a reciprocal transfer, you will be given the information you need from both pension plans to make that choice.

High Ratings from New Pensioners

Each of the 1,056 plan members who applied for their pension during the past year received a New Pensioner Questionnaire.

We asked them about the quality of service they received from

ATRF, the communication material they read during the pension application process and, their assessment of our website and On-Line Services.



- ✓ 98.7% rated service and communication as “good” or “excellent”
- ✓ 49% said they had used On-Line Services during the application process
- ✓ 80% indicated they attended a personal interview with a Pension Counsellor
- ✓ 57% had attended a pension seminar

“We’ll Be There...”

ATRF Pension Counsellors will be conducting personal interviews in 2011 in the cities listed below. These interviews are primarily for plan members who are considering retiring in 2011 to 2013.

Calgary (North) January 17 to 20	Calgary (South) May 9 to 12
Calgary (South) March 14 to 17	Red Deer April 26 to 28
Calgary (North) March 21 to 24	Lethbridge May 2 & 3
Calgary (North) April 11 to 14	Medicine Hat May 4 & 5

Web registration is easy and convenient

To register for an interview at www.atrf.com, click on Meet With Us in the Teachers section.

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*Working in partnership to
secure your pension income*

Teachers' Conventions 2011

To register for a personal interview at your 2011 Teachers' Convention, use the link from your convention website or go to the Teacher Section at www.atrf.com and click on Meet With Us, then Teachers' Conventions.

North Central
Edmonton – February 10 & 11

Central Alberta
Red Deer - February 10 & 11

Calgary City
Calgary - February 17 & 18

Northeast
Edmonton - February 17 & 18

Palliser
Calgary - February 24 & 25

South Western Alberta
Lethbridge - February 24 & 25

Southeastern Alberta
Medicine Hat - February 24 & 25

Greater Edmonton
Edmonton - March 3 & 4

Central East Alberta
Edmonton - March 10 & 11

Mighty Peace
Grande Prairie - March 10 & 11

