



Local Government
Pension Scheme

Highland Pension Fund

Member Retirement Declaration Form

Please complete this form if you are retiring and wish to claim your Local Government pension benefits from Highland Pension Fund.

If you are unsure how to complete this form, please telephone us on **01463 702441** and our **Pensions Team** will be happy to talk you through the process.

The process:

Step 1 Talk to your employer and agree your retirement date – this should be at least 4 months in advance of your proposed date.

Step 2 Your employer will need to provide us with information about your pay and confirmation of your leaving date. We are unable to process your retirement benefits without this information. You may wish to contact them to find out what their process is and how long this usually takes.

If you have requested to receive an estimate before you retire, the pay information will usually be estimated by your employer – **it is important that you check the pay used in your estimate is correct and inform us as soon as possible if anything doesn't look right.**

When you actually come to retire, the pay used will be based on the actual pensionable pay you have earned in each scheme year, up to your date of retirement. If you have membership before 1 April 2015, they will also need to calculate your full-time equivalent pay earned during the 365 day period up to your date of leaving the scheme (more information about how your LGPS benefits are worked out can be found on page 5 of our retirement planning guide).

Step 3 You need to complete and return this form along with any documents that we have requested. We will require you to:

- confirm your date of birth and marital status
- provide information about your other pension rights
- make a decision about swapping part of your annual pension for lump sum

- If you have an in-house AVC fund, confirm how you would like this fund to be paid to you, and when you wish to stop making contributions.

Remember - once you have made a decision, these decisions are final and cannot be reversed later.

Step 4 If you have an in-house AVC fund, we will need to contact Prudential to request payment of your fund **before** we can calculate your retirement benefits. Your fund will usually be available for disinvestment 2-3 weeks after your final contribution date. Following disinvestment, it will take around 14 days for the payment to reach us.

Step 5 Your employer will provide us with your final pay information – we are unable to calculate your retirement benefits until we receive this information:

- If you receive the same pay every month, your employer may be able to provide this information before you retire.
- If you receive variable pay, your employer will only be able to provide this information once you have been paid your final wages.

We suggest that you plan for any delays that may be experienced by the fund in receiving your final pay information from your employer, as this will impact on when you receive your first pension payment from us.

Step 6 Once we have received your final pay information from your employer (and payment of your AVC fund if you have one), we will calculate your retirement benefits.

Step 7 Confirmation letter - after your retirement benefits have been calculated and checked, you will receive a formal notification of your entitlement – this letter will confirm the date you will receive your first pension payment and when your lump sum retirement grant will be paid to you.

Pension payments - Pensions are paid on the last banking day of each month. If your letter is dated on or after the 15th of the month, your first pension payment is likely to be made to your chosen bank account at the end of the following month.

Lump sum payment - you should receive payment of your lump sum within 10 working days from the date you receive your confirmation letter.

Any delay in returning this form and your supporting documents, will delay us being able to pay your pension benefits to you and may also result in tax charges.

Pension taxation

Trivial commutation

If you wish to investigate taking all your benefits as a lump sum on the grounds of triviality, you will need to contact us. The value of your pension pot must be below the limits set by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC). The total value of your pension pots under **all** registered pension schemes in the UK must amount to £30,000 or less. Further information about trivial commutation is available on the HMRC website www.gov.uk (enter the words **trivial commutation** into the search box).

Tick this box if you are interested in finding out if you can trivially commute your LGPS pension benefits. We will calculate if you meet the trivial commutation rules using the information provided by you in this form – if you meet the required criteria, we will contact you with the options available to you.

Annual Allowance

Annual Allowance is the maximum amount of pension savings you can make each tax year without incurring an excess tax charge. If you believe that you may have incurred an Annual Allowance tax charge in the current Pension Input Period (tax year), then any Scheme Pays election you may wish to make **must be received and paid before your pension can be put into payment**. Further information about Annual Allowance can be found in our factsheet which is available from the resources section of our website: www.highlandpensionfund.org/resources/annual-allowance-factsheet/.

Lifetime Allowance

The Lifetime Allowance (LTA) was first introduced on 6 April 2006 and limited the amount of pension savings an individual could build up in their lifetime without incurring an excess tax charge. This overall Lifetime Allowance (LTA) limit was removed from 6 April 2023, and abolished from 6 April 2024, however, the lump sum rules remain, and two new lump sum allowances have been introduced:

- The Lump Sum Allowance (LSA)
- The Lump Sum and Death Benefit Allowance (LSDBA)

The Lump Sum Allowance (LSA) is the limit on the total amount of tax-free lump sums you will be able to take before tax is applied. This limit is currently set at £268,275.00 (unless you have a valid HMRC lifetime allowance protection certificate). Each time you take a tax-free lump from your pension benefits or savings, you'll use up some of your lump sum allowance.

Pension schemes must test your pension benefits against the Lump Sum Allowance (LSA) whenever you take money from your pension benefits. To do this, we will need to ask you about any tax-free cash you have already taken as well as any pension benefits which have not yet been paid to you. The information asked in **section 6** will enable us to test your benefits against the LSA rules, so it is important that you provide the information in full.

Please complete all sections of this form.

We can only pay your benefits after we receive your completed form and all relevant certificates.

Section 1 – Your details			
Full name		Title	
Address			
		Postcode	
National Insurance number			
Date of birth			
Personal email address			
Daytime Telephone Number		Mobile	
Date of retirement/leaving			

Section 2 – Next of kin details		
Full name		
Address (If different from your own)		
	Postcode	
Relationship		
Lump Sum Death Grant Nomination A lump sum death grant may be payable after you die, it will depend on when you left the LGPS, when you retired, and how many years pension you have received. You can view and update your beneficiary details by logging into your My Pension account – go to the 'Manage beneficiaries' section. You can log in or register at: https://highlandpensionfund.mypensiondetails.co.uk/login . If you require a paper form, please tick the box <input type="checkbox"/> and we will send a paper form to your home address.		

Section 3 – Proving your identity and partnership status

Tick the box below which describes your partnership status:

I am single and have never married or entered into a civil partnership.

I am legally separated.

I am married – please provide date of marriage:

I have a civil partner – please provide date of civil partnership:

I have a cohabiting partner – your cohabiting partner may qualify for a pension if you paid into the LGPS on or after 1 April 2009 and meet certain conditions set out in the regulations, find out more on our national website: <https://www.scotlgpsmember.org/>

I am a widow/widower – please provide date of death:

I am divorced – please provide date of divorce:

My civil partnership has been dissolved – please provide date of dissolution:

Please provide the following documents to confirm your identity:

Please do not send us your original certificates or documents by post:

You can send copies of your document(s) securely using your **My Pension account**:

- Log in or register at: <https://highlandpensionfund.mypensiondetails.co.uk/login>.
- Go to 'Documents and uploads' and select 'My uploads'. Follow the instructions on the screen, or see our handy guide: <https://www.highlandpensionfund.org/resources/my-pension-user-guide-my-uploads/>

Alternatively, photocopies, scanned copies, or photos of original documents should be provided in all cases, or you can bring your original documents into our office.

Please tick below to confirm which documents you have provided:

My birth certificate, passport, **or** driving license **(required in all cases)**

My marriage or civil partnership certificate

My decree absolute or civil partnership dissolution certificate

My judicial separation certificate

Death certificate in respect of my husband, wife or civil partner

Other documents (please specify):

Your documents must support any changes of name you have had. For example, if you no longer use the surname on your birth certificate, you will need to send another document too.

Section 4 – Converting pension for lump sum

You have the option to convert part of your annual pension to increase your tax-free lump sum. For every £1 of annual pension that you convert, you will receive £12 as a tax-free lump sum.

HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) limits the amount of tax-free lump sum you can take.

More information about lump sum limits can be found on our national website

www.scotlgpsmember.org/your-pension/planning/taking-a-lump-sum/

HMRC rules mean that you must make an election before we calculate your pension. **Once you have made your election, it is not possible to change your mind, so please make sure you are happy with your decision before making your election.**

Tick this box if you would like to receive a formal estimate before making your decision. We will calculate and send your estimate as soon as we can. There may be delay while we wait for information from your employer. All our estimate requests are prioritised by date of leaving.

If you have already received an estimate, you can make your election now

Please tick one of the options below:

Option 1

I do not want to increase my tax-free lump sum.

Option 2

I would like to receive the maximum tax-free lump sum permitted under HMRC rules.

Option 3

I would like to receive another amount:

Please enter below how much pension or lump sum you would like to receive:

- Please pay me a tax-free lump sum of £
- OR**
- Please pay me an annual pension of £

Important - if you are taking a tax-free lump sum with the intention of significantly increasing contributions to another pension scheme, you must inform us as tax charges may apply. This is called pension recycling and you can find out more on HMRCs tax manual: <https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/pensions-tax-manual/ptm133810>

Section 5 – Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)

Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs) is an arrangement whereby additional contributions are deducted from your salary and paid by your employer to Prudential, our in-house AVC provider.

If you do not have an AVC fund, please proceed to section 6. If you are paying additional voluntary contributions, you will now need to decide how you would like to use your accumulated AVC fund:

Option 1 - Buy an LGPS top-up pension

If you paid into the LGPS on or after 1 April 2015, you may use your AVC fund to buy an LGPS top-up pension. You can choose to 'top-up' your own benefits as well as your dependents. (This option is only available to active scheme members who cease contributions before retirement).

I am interested in using my AVC fund buy an LGPS top-up pension.

If you tick this option, we will provide a quotation showing the value of top-up pension your AVC fund will provide.

Option 2 - Buy extra membership

If you started paying AVCs before 30 June 2005, you may be able use your AVC fund to buy extra membership. (This option is only available to active scheme members who cease contributions before retirement).

I am interested in using my AVC fund buy extra LGPS membership.

If you tick this option, we will provide a quotation showing the extra membership and the value of pension this will provide.

Option 3 - Buy an annuity with Prudential

An annuity converts your AVC fund into an annual pension, providing a guaranteed income for life, or for a specified period. The amount of pension you are paid depends on your age, interest rates and whether you choose an annuity that includes dependents benefits. You can usually choose to take up to 25% as a tax-free lump at the same time as your annuity.

I am interested in using my AVC fund to buy an annuity with Prudential.

If you tick this option, we will issue an annuity request form to you to complete. We will forward this form to Prudential to enable them to prepare quotations on your behalf.

Option 4 - Buy an annuity open market option

You can search for an open market option annuity with an insurance company, bank or building society of your choice. The amount of pension you are paid depends on your age, interest rates and whether you choose an annuity that includes dependents benefits. You can usually take up to 25% as a tax-free lump at the same time as your annuity – you will need to check with your chosen provider what they offer.

I am interested in using my AVC fund to search for an open market option.

If you tick this option, you will need to ask your chosen provider to provide you with the options available to you - we recommend that you take independent financial advice before making any decisions.

Option 5 – Withdraw your AVC fund as a cash lump sum

You can withdraw up to 100% of your AVC fund as a tax-free cash lump sum so long as you take your AVC fund at the same time as your main LGPS benefits. HMRC limits the amount of tax free cash you can take – your total lump sums from the LGPS must not exceed:

- 25% of the total value of your LGPS benefits, including the AVC plan
- £268,275
- £268,275 less any tax-free lump sums you have already taken from your other pensions.

If you exceed the tax free limit, the remainder of your AVC fund can still be paid to you as cash, but it will be taxed through PAYE. Alternatively, you can use the remainder towards one the other options outlined above.

I am interested in using my AVC fund to increase my tax-free lump sum:

If you tick this option, we will provide an estimate showing how much tax-free cash you can withdraw from your AVC and let you know if you are within HMRC limits, or not.

Option 6 – Defer making a decision

If you left the LGPS before 1 April 2015, you do not need to take your AVC when you take your main LGPS benefits. You can choose to defer taking your AVCs and use them at a later date, but you must take them before age 75. If you do not take your AVC fund at the same time as your LGPS benefits, your options will be different when you come to take them – you will lose your right to:

- take a 100% tax free lump sum (you'll only be able to take up to 25% of the plan as a tax-free lump sum)
- buy an LGPS annuity
- buy extra membership in the LGPS

I wish to defer taking my AVC fund at this time.

If you tick this option, we will take no further action

Section 6 – Previous pension benefits declaration

The Government limits the amount of tax-free cash you can take from registered pension schemes. If you take a lump sum when you take your retirement benefits from us, we need to know about any other pension benefits you have taken previously, so we can check that you don't exceed the lump sum limits.

Although most members will not be affected by the limits, we must carry out the checks for everyone.

We do not need to know about your State Pension or any dependents pensions you are receiving.

If you are not taking a lump sum from us, proceed to section 7.

Do you hold a transitional tax-free amount certificate (TTFAC)?

No Yes – please provide a copy of your certificate(s).

If you took payment of a pension or lump sum before 6 April 2024, these payments will have used up part of your lump sum allowances. Under HMRC rules, we must assume that you took the maximum lump sum allowed.

If you took less than the maximum lump sum allowed, you can get a transitional tax-free amount certificate. The certificate sets out the total lump sums you have received. We will then use these amounts to calculate how much of the lump sum allowances you have used, rather than assuming you have taken the maximum amount. For most members, a TTFAC will have no effect on the lump sum they can take from the LGPS. The allowances will generally only affect members who have built up very large pensions.

If you hold a TTFAC, you do not need to tell us about pensions or lump sums taken before 6 April 2024.

If you are thinking about applying for a transitional tax-free amount certificate, you may wish to seek specialist independent financial advice. Some members could be worse off if they apply than they would be without a certificate.

You must apply for a certificate before you take a pension lump sum after 6 April 2024.

Tell us about any lump sums paid from 6 April 2024 onwards:

Please tell us about any tax-free lump sums you have received from 6 April 2024 onwards. You will need to tell us about:

- pension commencement lump sums (PCLS) – these are tax-free lump sums you take when you start taking a pension.

- uncrystallised funds pension lump sums (UFPLS) – this is a type of lump sum paid from a defined contribution scheme. You only need to tell us about the tax-free part of the lump sum.

Pension provider	Date paid	Amount of tax-free lump sum paid

Tell us about any pensions and lump sums paid between 6 April 2006 and 5 April 2024

You do not need to complete this section if you hold a TTFAC.

We need to know the percentage of lifetime allowance (LTA) used when you took these benefits. Your pension provider will have notified you of this when you took your benefits. If you do not have this information, you can provide the amount of annual pension at the date it was first paid to you, and any tax-free lump sum you received.

If you took an UFPLS, please tell us about this in the last column - include the whole UFPLS amount i.e. the taxable and tax-free amounts.

Pension provider	Date first paid	LTA%	Annual pension	Tax-free lump sum	Total UFPS

Tell us about any pensions paid before 6 April 2006

You do not need to complete this section if you hold a TTFAC.

If you took payment of pension benefits before 6 April 2006, we need to know the amount of annual pension you are currently being paid.

Pension provider	Date first paid	Current amount of yearly pension

Tell us about any tax free lump sum being paid on the same day

Are you taking another tax-free lump sum on the same day as your LGPS tax-free lump sum is payable?

No Yes – if yes, you will need to decide the order in which to take your benefits, and we will contact you to ask for more information.

Tell us about other lump sums and transfers

NOTE: You do not need to complete this section if you hold a TTFAC

Have you ever been paid a serious ill health lump sum?

This is a lump sum paid where your life expectancy is expected to be less than one year.

No Yes – if yes, please provide the amount and date paid below:

Amount £

Date paid:

Have you ever been paid a standalone lump sum?

This is a special type of lump sum paid to individuals who, on 5 April 2006, had the right to have all their pension scheme benefits paid as a tax-free lump sum. These are not common and are not payable from the LGPS.

No Yes – if yes, please provide the amount and date paid below:

Amount £

Date paid:

Did you transfer any UK pension benefits to an overseas pension scheme before 6 April 2024?

No Yes – if yes, please provide the amount and date paid below:

Amount £

Date paid:

Lifetime allowance (LTA) protections and enhancements

If you have any LTA protections or enhancements, please tell us about them in the box below:

LTA protections: The Government reduced the lifetime allowance three times after it came into force in 2006. Each time it reduced, those people who had already built-up large pensions could apply for protection from the reduction.

It is no longer possible to apply for lifetime allowance protections unless you have benefits in a public service pension scheme that could be affected by the McCloud remedy. If this applies, you can still apply to HMRC for Fixed or Individual Protection 2016 until 5 April 2027. For more information, please visit:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pension-schemes-protect-your-lifetime-allowance> and
- <https://www.scotlgpsmember.org/mccloud-remedy/>

LTA enhancements: You may have applied for these if you transferred a pension to the UK from overseas, or you were awarded a pension credit, as part of a divorce/dissolution of a civil partnership.

Type of LTA protection/enhancement	HMRC reference number

Section 7 – Registration for online payslips and P60 certificates

My Pension is our online portal which provides access to a range of online services, including the ability to view and print your pension payslips and P60 certificates, update your home address, change your bank details and keeping you up to date with important pension matters.

If you have already registered for **My Pension** as an employee, access to your pensioner details will transfer over automatically.

However, if you registered for My Pension using a work email address, or you have not registered before, please provide your personal email address:

My Pension is our default method for accessing your pension payslips and P60 certificates.

Section 8 – Your bank details

Please pay my retirement benefits into the following account:

Name of Account Holder:	
Name and address of Bank/ Building Society:	
Sort code:	
Account Number:	
Roll number of account: (this is only required for Building society accounts)	

Section 9 – Member Declaration

I confirm the information I have provided in this form is, to the best of my knowledge, true and complete.

I am not taking a tax-free lump with the intention of significantly increasing pension contributions to another pension scheme.

I understand I will be wholly and personally liable for any tax charges and penalties imposed by HMRC if the information I have provided is found to be incorrect.

Name:

Date:

Handwritten signature: _____ **(required if returned by email or post)**

Ways to return this form:

You can send your form to us securely using your [My Pension account](#): go to 'Documents and uploads' and follow the on-screen instructions, or for help, see our [short guide for step-by-step instructions](#).

Post to: The Pension Fund Manager, Highland Pension Fund, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness, IV3 5NX.

Email to: mypension@highland.gov.uk

Public Service Pension Scheme Membership Form**Use this form to tell us about any previous Public Service Pension Scheme Membership**

Since 1st October 2023 LGPS rules changed to remove the discrimination found in the McCloud judgement. More information about the McCloud judgment can be found at:

<https://www.highlandpensionfund.org/resources/the-lgps-mccloud-remedy-fact-sheet/>

This form is to tell us about any previous Public Service Pension Scheme Membership you have built up before the 1 April 2012 and during the McCloud Remedy Period. This will allow us to decide whether you qualify for the underpin protection.

You must tell us about all periods of membership for the following Public Service Pension Schemes:

Civil Service Pension Scheme	NHS Pension Scheme
Judicial Pension Scheme	Firefighters' Pension Scheme
Local Government Pension Scheme	Police Pension Scheme
Teachers' Pension Scheme	Armed Forces Pension Scheme

Your details

Full Name			
Date of birth		National Insurance number	

Do you have any Public Service Pension Scheme Membership?

No - Please proceed to the member declaration section

Yes - Please complete the table below:

Scheme Name	Scheme Address	Member/scheme reference	Membership dates		Membership status (Active, Deferred, Refund or Pensioner)
			From	To	

Member Declaration

- I confirm that the information I have provided on this form is correct.
- I understand that this information will be used to determine whether the underpin protection would apply to my pension benefits.
- **I give my consent for the Highland Pension Fund to get information about previous pension scheme membership from the schemes named above.**

Name:

Date:

Handwritten signature: _____ **(required if returned by email or post)**