



## Realignment of the Pension & Benefits Office

The Pension & Benefits office is excited about changes we are making in our service which we provide to the community.

We have been implementing a central repository for all enquiries. Instead of having a Pension & Benefits Counsellor assigned to specific letters of the alphabet the Counsellors will work on a rotation basis handling all functions of the Pension & Benefits office.

You have begun to see e-mails from us as a response to some phone calls or e-mail transactions. The subject line will indicate "Incident INCXXXXXXXXXX". Please make sure this incident number appears in all subsequent correspondence to our office. That way any additional information or questions can be linked back to the original request.

**Effective November 21, 2011** please email [askpb@yorku.ca](mailto:askpb@yorku.ca) your questions. At a later date we will be implementing a new extension number for all calls. In the interim please call extension 20617, 20377 or 33912 as calls are forwarded to a different extension each day.

Moving to a central repository will be more efficient in the long term. In the short term there may be some delays in our responses and we appreciate your patience as we work through the changes. **For more efficient service please have your nine digit employee number available when you contact us.**

As a reminder you can obtain answers to any extended health (including vision) or dental questions by accessing the Sun Life member website at <https://www.sunnet.sunlife.com/signin/mysunlife/home.wca?>

You can also contact Sun Life at 1-800-361-6212 Monday to Friday 8:00 am to 8:00 pm or access your benefits booklet at <http://www.yorku.ca/hr/services/employees/benefits.html>



If you are looking for pension estimates please access the York University Retirement Planner at <http://www.yorku.ca/hr/services/employees/yurp.html>

The Pension & Benefits office will be pleased to provide service for items such as:

- › A benefit claim that has been declined which you believe should be covered and Sun Life has provided you an unsatisfactory response when you questioned them.
- › Any form of leave of absence and how it may or may not affect your pension or benefits.
- › Assistance in completing pension or benefit forms that require completion.
- › Questions regarding a change in status, for example, reducing your hours, getting married, having a baby, etc.

## Marriage Breakdown changes Effective January 1, 2012

In the July 2011 P&B Times, we notified the community of the upcoming changes to Ontario's *Family Law Act* and the *Pension Benefits Act*.

The *Family Law Statute Amendment Act* is designed to streamline the pension division process and help ease the financial burden for couples facing the end of their relationship. The new Act includes numerous amendments to the *Pension Benefits Act* and the *Family Law Act* and becomes effective January 1, 2012.

### Does the *Family Law Statute Amendment Act* apply to you?

If you're signing your separation agreement on or after January 1, 2012, you and your spouse will fall under the new rules.

If you're unsure of whether you should complete your separation agreement before or after January 1, 2012, consult your family lawyer. Each person's situation is different and unique, and your family lawyer can provide customized legal advice as it relates to your separation and the impact it might have on your pension.

If you signed your separation agreement before January 1, 2012, there is no change to your situation. The terms of your separation agreement are still valid. If you haven't done so already, please submit a copy of your separation agreement to us.

### Signing your separation agreement after Jan. 1, 2012

When a marriage breakdown occurs, the division of your pension is neither mandatory nor automatic. If you choose to divide your pension to settle an equalization payment, here's how the new rules may apply to you.

- 1. York to provide pension valuation**—you no longer have to have your lawyer assess the value or hire an external actuary to do this. York will prepare a statement of Family Law value for you.
- 2. Lump-sum payout for ex-spouse**—if you're separating before receiving your first pension payment, you will now have the option to assign a lump sum payout to your ex-spouse instead of having to wait for your first pension payment.

Starting January 1, 2012, if you are requesting a valuation of your pension you will need to follow several steps:

**Step 1 -** The pension plan member, spouse or former spouse applies for the Family Law Value by filing an application with the York University Pension and Benefits office using prescribed forms. There is a fee for the first valuation of \$400 and \$800 for any subsequent application. If a marriage breakdown calculation has been completed prior to January 1, 2012 and application is submitted for the same marital period, the fee will be \$800.

**Step 2 -** If the application is complete and payment has been received, the Pension and Benefit Office or its authorized agent or representative provides the statement of the Family Law Value using the prescribed form.

**Step 3 -** The pension plan member and his or her spouse/former spouse determine how the Family Law Value is to be treated and get a court order, enter into a domestic contract or seek a family arbitration award.

**Step 4 -** The spouse/former spouse of the pension plan member advises the Pension and Benefit Office of his/her decision to divide or not to divide the Family Law Value.

For more information about these changes, including links to the prescribed forms, please see the FAQ specific to this topic on the Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) website.

<http://www.fSCO.gov.on.ca/en/pensions/Family-Law/Pages/familylawforms.aspx>



## **P & B Times**

York University  
Pension & Benefits Office  
Human Resources  
Suite A, East Office Building  
4700 Keele Street  
Toronto, ON M3J 1P3

**Want the P&B Times faster and reduce paper? Contact us with a valid email.**

### **Need More Information?**

Information provided in this newsletter is of a general nature, should you require further information that specifically pertains to you please contact your Pension & Benefits Counsellor as listed in the chart below.

In the event the information contained herein conflicts with the applicable contract, policy or guideline, the terms of the contract, policy or guideline will prevail.

Here are just a few websites you can access to gain more information:

York's Pension & Benefits Office : [www.yorku.ca/hr/units/cpb/pensionbenefits.html](http://www.yorku.ca/hr/units/cpb/pensionbenefits.html)

York's Employee Self Service: [www.yorku.ca/hr/services/employees/yesss/index.html](http://www.yorku.ca/hr/services/employees/yesss/index.html)

York's Retirement Planning Centre: [www.yorku.ca/retire](http://www.yorku.ca/retire)

Sun Life's Plan Member services: [www.sunlife.ca/member](http://www.sunlife.ca/member)

York University Retirement Planner: [www.yorku-ret.ca](http://www.yorku-ret.ca)