

## **Personal Preparedness from UNJSPF Perspective – Q&A**

### **Participation in UNJSPF and Eligibility**

***Do all staff members join the fund by default? Or should new staff members follow some specific procedure to be enrolled?***

In order to join the Fund, you need to fulfill the requirements of Article 21 of the UNJSPF Regulations. You need to have a contract of 6 months or more or cumulative contracts without a break of more than 30 days that reach 6 months. The contracts should not exclude participation in the Fund.

***Do all members (24 of them) pay into the fund under the same ratio/percentage 1/3+2/3?***

The percentage deducted from each participant is similar (7.9%). The employing organization pays double this amount. Accordingly, the answer is yes. This is determined in Article 25 of the UNJSPF Regulations.

***Do you have to be vested in UNJSPF in order to be able to transfer your pension rights to another Organization/new place of employment?***

No. You will need to fulfill the requirements of the specific transfer agreement. Those agreements are published on the UNJSPF website at: [https://www.unjspf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Agreement\\_signed\\_betweenUNJSPFandAFDB.pdf](https://www.unjspf.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Agreement_signed_betweenUNJSPFandAFDB.pdf)

***Does the UN report pension payments to staff members/beneficiaries to tax authorities of any Member State?***

No. The UNJSPF cannot disclose information about benefits to third parties. The only exception is when the UNJSPF is requested to provide information by a court order or a judicial or civil authority in the context of divorce or family maintenance obligations.

***If one joined in the 2000s with NRA at 62 and stays on until 62 but decides to leave soon after, could they receive a withdrawal settlement?***

No. You cannot opt for a withdrawal settlement once you are eligible to a full retirement benefit. However, you can opt to commute up to 1/3 of your benefit into a lump sum.

***If one retires at NRA, the lump sum is a total of your own contribution (1/3) while the reduced pension is a total of the organization's contribution (2/3)?***

The amount of lump sum is not higher than your own contributions. The monthly benefit is paid for life and therefore not limited only to what was paid by your employing organization. The UNJSPF is a defined benefit plan.

***Does any UN package for leave affect your benefits for early retirement or pension? Does this have something to do with Withdrawal Settlement conditions? Can they go together?***

The eligibility for UNJSPF benefits is determined by the UNJSPF Regulations. To be eligible for a certain UNJSPF benefit, you need to meet the requirements for that benefit under the UNJSPF Regulations.

***What are the pension benefits in case of agreed settlement and not death?***

To be eligible to a benefit from the Fund, you need to fulfill the requirements under the UNJSPF Regulations and Rules for the specific benefit. You will need to check whether the agreed settlement affects any of those factors that determine your eligibility to a specific benefit. If you wish to discuss it with a representative of the Fund, please contact the Fund via the UNJSPF Contact Us form on the UNJSPF website at <https://www.unjspf.org/contact-us/>

### **Pension Estimates**

***Is it possible to offer an example of calculation for a staff member who worked less than 5 years and is exiting? Do I take the amount (including the level) and add 7,9 % to it?***

Please check the tutorial on the UNJSPF website: <https://www.unjspf.org/help-tutorials/withdrawal-settlement/>.

If more information is required, please write to the Fund via the Contact Us form. You can also run your own estimates via the UNJSPF Member Self Service.

***How is compound interest calculated in cases of paying back the Organization/UNJSPF for the purposes of restoration?***

***Is the annual 2% increase calculated in monthly installments or only after a full completed year, on the date of entry into service?***

***Does that last Withdrawal Settlement include the 100% comp after 15 years of CS or more?***

If your contributory service was for less than 5 years, the interest earned on the withdrawal settlement will be at the rate of 3.25%. If your contributory service was for 5 or more years, the payment would consist of the reimbursement of your own contributions plus the interest earned, increased by 10 per cent for each year in excess of five up to a maximum of 100 per cent over your own contributions amount. The estimate will show you the final amount.

**Dependents and Beneficiaries*****If a retiree has a dependent spouse and children who are no longer of minor age, I understand that the dependent spouse receives payments while still alive. Will the children get a benefit as well?***

The widow will receive a benefit for life. Children over the age of 21 are not eligible for children benefits, unless they are disabled.

***If a retiree dies, with a surviving spouse, and if the retiree's "revocable trust" mentions that any entitlement from the UNJSPF is to be released to the retiree's surviving children (above 21 yrs. of age), will one form overrule the other?***

The Fund will follow its Regulations and Rules. If the surviving spouse fulfills the requirements of Article 34 of the UNJSPF Regulations, they will be eligible to benefit. The Fund will not follow provisions in other documents.

***If you are divorced, is your ex-spouse considered a prospective survivor and therefore entitled to 1/2 your pension?***

To be eligible to a divorced surviving benefit, the spouse will need to fulfill the requirements of Article 35 bis of the UNJSPF Regulations, which are the following: (i) The participant had been married to the former spouse for a continuous period of at least ten years, during which contributions were paid to the Fund on account of the participant or the participant was awarded a disability benefit under article 33 of the Regulations; (ii) The participant's death occurred within 15 years of the date when the divorce became final, unless the former spouse proves that at the time of death the participant was under a legal obligation to pay maintenance to the former spouse; (iii) The former spouse has reached the age of 40. Otherwise the benefit entitlement shall commence on the day immediately following the day that age is reached; and (iv) Evidence is provided that a divorce settlement does not have an express renouncement of UNJSPF pension benefit entitlements.

***How can one verify that "Evidence is provided that a divorce settlement does not have an express renouncement of UNJSPF pension benefit entitlements" has been appropriately recorded with UNJSPF?***

This is usually determined in the divorce settlement. To ensure that it meets the requirements of Article 35 bis, you can show the draft of the divorce settlement to the UNJSPF legal office prior to finalizing the divorce settlement.

***If a surviving spouse is also a staff member, does this affect the benefit?***

No

***If an ex-wife is or was getting child support, does that affect death benefits? Or does only the spousal support count after 15 years?***

The question whether the spouse is in receipt of spousal maintenance is relevant only if the participant's death occurred more than 15 years after the divorce.

***What happens if the person in the A2 form is a minor?***

If the child can open a bank account, the amount can be paid to their bank account. If not, then it can be paid to a bank account in the name of the child.

***Can I put my disabled daughter (she is now 14 years old) on A2 form?***

You can. However, if the participant dies service or upon separation elects an early or full retirement benefit, the disabled child will be eligible to benefit for life (if he/she fulfills the requirements of Article 36 of the UNJSPF Regulations) and the A2 form will not be relevant. The A2 form will only be relevant if no survivors' benefits are payable.

***If a retiree took the maximum lump-sum, there won't be any benefits for those named on the "residual settlement"?***

Exactly.

***If a retiree becomes a father, can he report that child to UNJSPF and be entitled to child allowance?***

The eligibility for a child benefit is only given if the child was born or conceived prior to separation.

***For Pension benefits payment, can I have a primary and secondary beneficiary?***

Under certain circumstances, secondary dependents can receive survivors' benefits under Article 37 of the UNJSPF Regulations. For more information please read page 9 of the UNJSPF booklet on survivors' benefits at <https://www.unjspf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Survivors-Benefits-1.pdf> If there is no survivor's benefit payable to the participant/retiree's widow(er), divorced surviving spouse, children or secondary dependents, and, in the case of a retiree, he/she has not elected to be paid, upon separation from service, the maximum lump-sum commutation of the benefit allowed, the Fund will examine whether there is entitlement to payment of a residual settlement to the beneficiary designated in the A2 form on designation of beneficiaries for residual settlement.

***Do you recognize prenuptial agreements before marriage to ensure your new spouse is not included in the pension?*****Separation*****If one leaves, for example after 3 years of paying into the pension fund, is the payout the net of paid contributions or any additional percentage?***

They will be eligible to a withdrawal settlement consisting of payment of their own contributions to the Fund plus the interest earned at the rate of 3.25%.

***Is income at time of separation calculated to include post adjustment i.e. does it matter where you retire "from"?***

It does not include post adjustment. However, for GS and national officers the exchange rate for local currency will be relevant for the calculation of their benefits.

***If I separate from the organization before retirement and die before I hit early retirement age, what happens to my +20 years of pension contribution? Do they go to my husband?******Could you please clarify the instructions regarding separation documents?***

The mandatory separation documentation is: Separation Notification issued by the payroll office of the employing organization and the payment instructions. Those who elect a monthly benefit are also asked to provide additional documents. Please click on this link to see the full list: <https://www.unjspf.org/questions/what-documentation-must-be-submitted-to-the-fund-and-in-which-format-to-allow-for-the-review-and-processing-of-my-benefit/>

### **Important Forms and Contact Focal Points**

***How can one verify current beneficiaries to my pension? I tried to update my beneficiaries and discovered that new forms had to be sent by post but due to COVID-19, there were some relaxation to the rules. How do I send the updated beneficiary forms?***

Due to COVID-19, you can send a copy of the relevant form (A2 form). However, you will need to send the original document once it is possible. I suggest registering to Member Self Service and download the A2 form from there and send it via your work email address or the email address that you used in order to register to Member Self Service.

***Could you please indicate the email address to which I can send the form A2 to?***

Please send the A2 form via the UNJSPF Contact Us form on the UNJSPF website at <https://www.unjspf.org/contact-us/>

***How do you check if your prior period validation was actually validated if you paid into it? For example, I was offered this validation within my 1-year period and remember paying approx. \$1,500. How am I able to check on this?***

You should be able to see it in your Pension Annual Statement that was issued on the following year. Furthermore, this will be added to the length of your contributory service. If you cannot find the information, please contact the Fund via the Contact Us form on the UNJSPF website.

***Could you elaborate on the two-track pension?***

You can find information about the two track system on the Fund's website at <https://www.unjspf.org/documents/the-two-track/> If you have additional questions kindly contact the Fund via the Contact Us form. Thank you.

***I filled out the A2 form in 2001. Should I update the information again even if there is no change in beneficiaries?***

No need to provide a new A2 if there is no change in beneficiaries.

***Is there currently any exemption during the Covid-19 pandemic for the update of beneficiaries to the pension fund? In the past updates were only accepted by post.***

Yes, please see the UNJSPF website, FAQs re COVID, for the UNJSPF procedures during COVID: [https://www.unjspf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-FAQ\\_COMPLETE\\_Participants-and-Beneficiaries\\_May-2020.pdf](https://www.unjspf.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-FAQ_COMPLETE_Participants-and-Beneficiaries_May-2020.pdf)

***My divorce settlement documents renouncing pension benefit entitlements were submitted to my EO in 2008. Does the EO share this document with UNJSPF? If not, how can I share this with UNJSPF to ensure that my benefits are not shared with my ex? Also, if there is no survivor benefits due, do my pension benefits increase?***

You can send the documents to the Fund via the UNJSPF Contact Us form on the UNJSPF website at <https://www.unjspf.org/contact-us/>  
It will not change the amount of your pension benefit since divorced surviving spouse's benefit is paid only upon the death of the retiree.

### **Retirement Age and Early Retirement**

***What are the implications for one's pension settlement if early retirement is taken before NRA?***

When you take an early retirement benefit, certain reduction factors apply to your benefit.

***If one opts for early retirement and they choose the Withdrawal Settlement, can they still remain covered for medical insurance? If not, can they keep their insurance by paying directly to the insurance provider/carrier?***

We cannot address questions related to ASHI. Please send the question to the insurance section. Thank you.

***If one opts for early retirement (at 55) but with deferral payments (from 62), can they still be covered by ASHI from the moment they take early retirement (from 55 onwards)? Thank you.***

This question should be directed to ASHI.

***If you work for 6 years 11 month and 25 days, but still have 2 years to go for your early retirement, what are the options if you decide to separate?***

You can opt for a deferred retirement benefit or a withdrawal settlement. Please look at the charts under <https://www.unjspf.org/benefit-options/> which compare benefits.

***What is the difference between "early retirement", "separation" and "agreed termination"?***

From the UNJSPF perspective, separation is when you no longer contribute to the Fund. Early retirement is when you contributed for 5 or more years to the UNJSPF and separate from the UNJSPF upon reaching early retirement age (55 or 58 depends on when you entered the Fund). Agreed termination is discussed between the employing org. and the staff member. It is not a term used by the Fund. However, if there is an agreed termination, then you will separate from the Fund.

***How long, on average, would it take to pay a withdrawal settlement if one went on early retirement?***

The Fund pays withdrawal settlements within 15 working days from the date of receipt of the mandatory separation documents (the Separation Notification form the payroll office of the employing org and the Payment Instructions).

***Can one opt for early retirement for no particular reason or are there specific reasons that are acceptable?***

No particular reason is required. Participants opt for an early retirement benefit if they have 5 or more years of contributory service and they separate at early retirement age (55 or 58 depends on when their participation started), prior to reaching normal retirement age.

***Who can retire at 60?***

If you have 5 years or more of contributory service and your normal retirement age is 60 (namely, you entered the Fund before 01 January 1990) you are eligible to a full retirement benefit. However, if you separate from the Fund at the age of 60 and entered the Fund on or after 01 January 1990, you can elect either early or deferred retirement benefits.

***When do you get penalized by application of the reduction factor?***

If you elect deferred retirement, benefit reduction factors will apply to your benefit.



***What are the implications for one's pension settlement if early retirement is taken before NRA?***

If you separate from the Fund after reaching early retirement age but prior to reaching normal retirement age, you can elect an early retirement benefit. Because this benefit is payable earlier than your normal retirement age, a reduction factors will be applied to your entitlement, for life. The extent of the reduction depends on your age at the time of separation, i.e. the year(s) and month(s) that separate you from your normal retirement age, and the length of your contributory service. If you have 5 or more years of contributory service and you separate prior to reaching normal retirement age (and even early retirement age) you can elect a deferred retirement benefit. The benefit will become payable upon reaching normal retirement age or upon reaching early retirement age (but then reduction factors will apply). Please check the chart on UNJSPF website which compares UNJSPF benefits: [https://www.unjspf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/UNJSPF\\_BenefitComparison\\_v2.pdf](https://www.unjspf.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/UNJSPF_BenefitComparison_v2.pdf)

***Which year of becoming a participant of the Pension Fund could enable one to have early retirement at age of 55?***

If you joined the UNJSPF before 01 January 2014, your early retirement age is 55 years; If you joined the UNJSPF on or after 01 January 2014, your early retirement age is 58 years.

***For those whose mandatory retirement age is 65 years (joined after 2014), early retirement benefits as of 55, as of 58, what does it mean?***

If you joined the UNJSPF on or after 01 January 2014 your early retirement age is 58. This means that, if you separate at the age of 58, you are eligible to opt for an early retirement benefit from the Fund.

***Does the reduction factor also apply to withdrawal settlement?***

No, only to early retirement and deferred retirement benefits. For information on how the UNJSPF calculates benefits please see the chart on Benefit Comparison on the UNJSPF website at: [https://www.unjspf.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/06/UNJSPF\\_BenefitComparison\\_v2.pdf](https://www.unjspf.org/wpcontent/uploads/2017/06/UNJSPF_BenefitComparison_v2.pdf)

***I am confused by the explanation on early retirement benefits. The slides speak of 6%, 3%, etc., but the facilitator doubles those percentages (12%, 6%, etc.). Why?***

The early retirement benefit would be smaller than the full retirement benefit since it would commence sooner and would be paid over a longer period. The extent of the

reduction depends on the age when the periodic benefit begins and the length of contributory service. If your date of entry is before 01 January 2014: for contributory service (CS) of less than 25 years the reduction factor is 6% per year; for CS of 25 years or more, but less than 30, the reduction factor is 3% per year, and for CS of 30 years or longer the reduction factor is 1% per year. If your date of entry into participation in the Fund is on or after 01 January 2014, for CS of less than 25 years the reduction factor is 6% per year and for CS of 25 years or more the reduction factor is 4% per year. A 'reduced' reduction factor rate (of 4%, 3% or 1%), if applicable, shall not apply for more than max. 5 years; hence, if at the date of separation the participant was more than 5 years younger than their NRA, the reduced reduction factor would apply for max. 5 of the years that they are younger than their NRA and for every additional year (and month) the reduction factor would revert to 6%.

### **Death and Disability Benefits**

***If a staff member dies and their beneficiary is over 21 yrs. old, what happens? Will the beneficiary still get the pension if the staff member has no spouse and their beneficiary is over 21 yrs. old?***

If there is no eligibility for widow/er benefit, divorced surviving spouse benefit or child benefit (under the age of 21 or disabled,) then the Fund will need to check if there is eligibility for a residual settlement (to the beneficiary you designated on the UNJSPF form A2 - designation of beneficiaries for residual settlement). For more information click here: <https://www.unjspf.org/questions/5-how-do-i-designate-prospective-beneficiaries-of-a-residual-settlement-and-what-is-the-a2-form/> The Fund also has a booklet on survivor's benefit which is published on the UNJSPF website.

***Is the survivor's benefit paid only to a spouse or can it be paid to other beneficiaries recorded with UNJSPF?***

The death benefits are for widow/er, divorced surviving spouses and children (disabled or under the age of 21). Under certain conditions, death benefits can be paid to secondary dependents (Article 37 of the UNJSPF Regulations). For the UNJSPF booklet on survivors' benefits please click here: <https://www.unjspf.org/documents/survivors-benefits/>

***On day 6months +1 day, staff member dies in service, do you calculate their benefits based on the normal retirement age?***

It applies to all participants equally.

***In the event of death before retirement, how much goes to the beneficiaries?  
Does it include a percentage of the organization's contribution?***

If your spouse fulfills the requirements under the UNJSPF Regulations, they will be eligible to receive a widow/er benefit immediately following your death. The amount of a widow/er benefit is approx. 50% of what the participant would have received, had they reached normal retirement age. Children under the age of 21 are eligible to receive child benefit. If there is no survivor's benefit payable to your widow(er), divorced surviving spouse, children or secondary dependents, the Fund will make a payment to the person(s) or institution(s) of your choice as indicated on the latest signed and dated original "Designation of Recipient of a Residual Settlement" form – UNJSPF PENS.A/2, which you submitted to the Fund. This payment, which will consist of all your contributions plus interest, is called a residual settlement, and is paid as a onetime lump sum payment. You can download the PENS.A/2 from the UNJSPF website or your Member Self Service account.

***Is the benefit payable to an ex-wife only if, at the time of death, she was getting spousal support, not if she was getting support until earlier than the death?  
Assuming that the death happened more than 15 years after divorce?***

If the participant's death occurred more than 15 years after the divorce, Article 35 bis requires that "at the time of death the participant was under a legal obligation to pay maintenance to the former spouse"

**BRS, Gaps in Non-Contributory Service and Validation**

***Can you (bridge) pay for break in service in order to have continuous pension contributions?***

You cannot pay contributions for a period of break in service. However, you can pay contributions for a period of SLWOP, but this needs to be arranged with your employing org. prior to the SLWOP. You will need to pay you share as well as the share of your employing org. Furthermore, if you fulfill certain conditions, you can also validate a period of service in which you did not contribute to the Fund.

***Without the validation, one will lose e.g. 6 months of contribution?***

During those six months, the staff member will not contribute to the Fund. The staff member will start contributing only upon becoming a participant in the Fund. Participants have the option to validate a period of noncontributory service if they fulfill the requirements of Article 23 of the UNJSPF Regulations. Kindly see the Fund booklet on validation at: <https://www.unjspf.org/documents/validation/>

***Is "validation" only available for staff members? In other words, if someone was a contractor for 10 years before joining the system as a staff member, can they apply for "validation" for the period as a contractor?***

Validation is not possible for those whose contract was excluded from participation in the Fund.

***For my first six months, I couldn't contribute pension fund. How and what is the procedure to contribute my 7.9% and maximize contribution?***

You will need to contact the Fund within 1 year of becoming a participant in the Fund and request to validate your prior non-contributory service. You will need to fill out and provide the Fund with form PENS.B/1. For the form please click here: <https://www.unjspf.org/documents/election-to-validate/>

***Does the validation or restoration payment have to be paid in a one-time lump-sum or can it be paid back over time in a payment plan?***

It can be paid as a one-time lump-sum or as deductions from your salary. You will be given the option in the letter that will be sent to you regarding restoration/validation, once you request to exercise this option.

***If you joined UNJSPF before January 2014 as locally recruited staff member and you earn Temporary appointments with an internationally recruited position, will your date of entry into the pension fund remain the same?***

The type of contract you have will not change your date of entry into UNJSPF participation. What is relevant for the fund is whether you had a break in service of more than 30 days between the contracts. If you had a break in service of more than 30 days but less than 36 months, you will need to re-qualify for UNJSPF participation. If you re-qualify, then contributions will continue to be paid to the same pension account and you will keep the same date of entry into UNJSPF participation.

## **Others**

***What is SLWOP?***

Special Leave without Pay

***If, for example, member states decide to dissolve the organization, will the Pension Fund still pay the pension to all staff that contributed to the fund?***

I do not think I am in a position to answer this question. For now, I did not hear of this being an issue.

***Are investors to the Fund chosen according to ethical criteria or does the list include actors that the organization fights against (polluting industry or other)? How can we get the details of the Fund's portfolio?***

I suggest directing this question to the investment section of the Fund (and the newly appointed representative for UNJSPF Asset Investments.)

***As part of preparation plan, are Staff Members allowed to plan early retirement in a different default country less affected by COVID-19? if so, when or who will cover this topic?***

This should be discussed with the employing organization.

***I have 22 years of contributory service. Can I still receive an education grant if I retire in 8 years?***

The question should be sent to the executive office of your employing organization. The fund does not handle education grants. Thank you.