



It is the time of year when people are generally happier. The air is different, people are different. It is simply the most wonderful time of the year. As 2019 draws to a close, we enter not only into a new year but a new decade. While this may be overwhelming, it is the time when we generally find a renewed sense of optimism and with new goals being set for the new year, we thought it fitting to use this issue of the PensionsJournal to leave you with a few timely reminders to take with you into the new year.

Increase your voluntary contributions

One thing that happens during this period is that persons are sometimes blessed with Christmas bonuses from their employers. While this will provide necessary income to meet any short-term needs, or simply for the discretionary spending that comes with the season, we are reminded that it's not the amount of money that one earns which determines his wealth, but the amount that he saves.

Additionally, during this period, persons may be granted salary increases. We are an advocate for persons using the opportunity to increase voluntary contributions based on this annual increase in salary as this will have no impact on your day to day spending. Strategically increasing voluntary contributions at this point will allow members to maintain their current spending thereby leading to a higher pension at retirement. Remember, the maximum amount that you can contribute towards retirement via an approved pension arrangement by law is 20% of your gross salary.

So, for example, if you are currently contributing 5% of your gross salary towards retirement, and you are granted a salary increase of 2.5%, you could increase your voluntary contributions by this amount as it would be a step in the right direction and shouldn't impact discretionary spending. Over time, you will reach the maximum level and thereafter begin to enjoy the maximum tax savings possible. The earlier you start, the easier it will be in time!

Update your beneficiary information

This is a good time for you to review your beneficiary information. Beneficiaries are the persons who you have named to be entitled to the value of your member's account in the event of your passing. It is important that the persons who are on file as your beneficiaries, are the persons who you intend to be on file. In the event that the beneficiary is a minor,

it is equally critical to ensure that a trustworthy individual is appointed as a trustee and this information is updated on your account. If no trustee is appointed, in the event of your passing, the benefit will not be paid to the minor until he or she reaches age 18.

Living a balanced life

While saving for retirement is very important, what is more important is that you try to live the most balanced life possible along the journey to retirement. Finding balance amongst competing demands is never easy, but it is imperative that you find the time to focus on the things that you value the most. Being happy gives you a better outlook on life, so you're more prepared to handle whatever life throws your way. On the other hand, stress can keep you from enjoying life and can have a negative impact on your health, even prior to retirement.

Here are a few things that we suggest will help you to live a more balanced life:

- Schedule time each week to allow yourself to de-stress and spend a few minutes on relaxation each day;
- Make exercise a mandatory activity;
- Devote time each week to a hobby you love or to learning a new one you've always wanted to try;
- Travel, if possible, to see new places to gain new experiences;
- Don't sweat the small stuff;
- Don't forget to laugh. It's actually great for your health.

From your PROVEN Team, we wish for you a prosperous 2020!

You are encouraged to contact any member of the Pensions Administration Team if you have suggestions or questions at PWLpensionadmin@provenwealth.com or via telephone at **876-908-3800**.

The New Year is like a blank book, the pen is in your hand, it is your chance to write a beautiful story for yourself.

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