

Notes to the statement

We have provided these notes to explain your annual benefit statement (ABS) 2024. They cannot cover every circumstance and, if there is a dispute relating to this statement, the appropriate law will apply.

The notes do not give you any rights under contract or by law.

1. Partnership status

Your partnership status reflects our current records. Your partner's pension will be calculated based on your partnership status at the date of your death.

Please see Annex F for more information on surviving partner pensions.

2. Fire and Rescue Authority at 31 March

This is the fire and rescue authority who you were employed by at the date of this statement.

3. Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 start date

This is the date you joined the 2015 Scheme.

4. Annual pension at 31 March

This is the total current value of your pension benefits in this employment if you left the scheme at the date of this statement, and which would be paid at the deferred pension age that applies to the scheme you are a member of at the date of this statement, as shown in the table in Annex A.

This value may be adjusted for a number of reasons. Please see Annex E for more information.

5. Death in service lump sum

The current value of the death in service lump sum has been based on the scheme you are a member of at the date of this benefit statement, as shown in the table in Annex D.

6. Annual survivor's pension

This is the current value of survivor's benefits due if you die as an active member of the scheme at the date of this statement, based on your partnership status as set out in Annex D.

Death in service survivor's pensions are paid at 50% of the higher-tier ill-health pension that would have been due. Please see Annex D for more information on death benefits.

7. Recorded beneficiaries

These are the recorded beneficiaries as held on your record. (A recorded beneficiary is the person you have chosen to receive a survivor's pension if you die.)

Please see Annex D for more information on recording beneficiaries.

8. Pensionable pay for year ending 31 March

The pensionable pay should equal the amount of pay you have received and paid pension contributions on as a member of the 2015 scheme during the scheme year. Please contact your FRA if you have any questions about pay, including what is included in pensionable pay.

9. Additional pension bought

If you have chosen to buy added pension through additional contributions, this is the value of the additional pension benefits bought for the current scheme year.

10. Transfers in

This is the value of any benefits you opted to transfer into the 2015 scheme from another pension provider during the scheme year.

11. Scheme year CARE total

This is the total value of 2015 pension built up in the scheme year.

12. Increase for the cost of living

Your 2015 Scheme pension is increased by a [revaluation order](#) each year on 1 April. This statement reflects the adjustment applied as a result of this order to your pension as at 31 March (closing balance).

13. Normal Pension Age (NPA)

Your estimated pension is based on your NPA.

Please see Annex B for details on retiring from the scheme.

14. Total pension at NPA

This is the total value of your estimated benefits at your [normal pension age](#).

This value may be adjusted for the reasons listed in Annex E.

15. Estimated CARE pension

The estimated value of FPS 2015 CARE pension is calculated based on the pension built up to the date of your statement, plus your estimated service from that date to normal pension age (age 60), multiplied by $1/59.7^{\text{th}}$ of your pensionable pay for the scheme year as shown.

The value of this estimate does not include any adjustment for future revaluation under Treasury Revaluation Orders.

Please see Annex C for an example of how this is calculated.

16. Estimated survivor's yearly pension

A survivor's pension is normally paid if, when you die, you are married, have a civil partner or an eligible cohabiting partner (someone you live with who would be entitled to a survivor's pension).

See Annex D for more information.

17. Pension debits

At retirement your pension will be reduced by any pension debit in place. See Annex E for more details.

18. Annual allowance

This is the estimated annual amount of [pension growth](#) during the [Pension Input Period](#). For the purposes of this statement this has been calculated using your pensionable pay at 31 March.

Tax may be due if your pension growth is either more than the standard annual allowance limit of £60,000 for 2023/24 and 2024/2025 or more than your tapered annual allowance of between £10,000 and £60,000 for 2023/24 and 2024/25. Please see Annex F for more details.

19. Lifetime allowance

The lifetime allowance is the maximum amount of pension savings you can have before a tax charge is made.

From 6 April 2023 to 5 April 2024 the Lifetime Allowance threshold is reduced to NIL.

From 6 April 2024 the Lifetime Allowance is abolished.

See Annex F for more details.

20. Service history details

It may not be possible to supply a full-service history on this statement. If you have any questions about your service history, please contact your FRA.

Financial advice

Your fire authority and pension administrator cannot give you financial advice about the information contained in your annual benefit statement. If you need help to find an independent financial advisor, you can use the following link.

www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/choosing-a-financial-adviser

Note on the regulations

The benefits in this statement have been calculated under the Firefighters Pension Scheme Regulations as at 31 March 2024.

These notes are an informal interpretation of the Firefighters Pension Scheme Regulations, as only a court can provide a definitive interpretation of the law.

Explanation of terms

Career average pension (CARE)

Career average pension is the pension built up in the 2015 Scheme.

Commutation factors

A commutation factor of 12:1 is applied to the part of the pension you may choose to give up, to calculate the amount of the lump sum payable.

Crystallised benefits

This is the value of pension benefits measured against the lifetime allowance. This is calculated by multiplying the annual pension by 20.

Deferred pension age

Deferred pension age in FPS 2015 is at statement pension age, with a minimum of 65.

Normal pension age

Normal pension age in FPS is age 65.

Pension input period

This is the period over which the pension growth is measured and is always 6 April to 5 April for all pension schemes. Pension input period is commonly abbreviated to PIP.

Pension growth

For defined benefit schemes, such as the Firefighters Pension Scheme, the pension growth is the measurement of the increase in pension during the PIP multiplied by a flat factor of 16.

Example

Annual pension at 6 April 2019 = £35,000

Annual pension at 5 April 2020 = £38,000

Pension growth = £38,000 - £35,000 = £3,000 x 16 = £48,000

Revaluation order

The revaluation order for the Firefighters Pension Scheme is based on average weekly earnings.

The revaluation order is applied to the closing balance of the career average pension on 1 April each year.

| Scheme year | Revaluation order |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 2015/2016 | 2% |
| 2016/2017 | 2.6% |
| 2017/2018 | 3% |
| 2018/2019 | 2.8% |
| 2019/2020 | 4% |
| 2020/2021 | 2.4% |
| 2021/2022 | 3.1% |
| 2022/2023 | 4.1% |
| 2023/2024 | 7.7% |

Scheme year

The scheme year runs from 1 April to 31 March. The current scheme year to which this statement refers is 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

State Pension age

You can calculate your State Pension age here: <https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age>

Annex A – Notes on the current value of benefits at the date of the statement

This is the total current value of your pension benefits in this employment if you left the scheme at the date of the statement, and which would be paid at the deferred pension age, which is linked to your state retirement age (with a minimum of age 60).

The example below shows how this is calculated.

Pensionable pay

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 - £40,000

1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 - £42,000

Current value of FPS 2015 benefits

| Scheme year | Opening balance | Revaluation | In-year build-up | Closing balance |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £1,278.06 (£40,000 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £670.02 |
| 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2024 | £670.02 | At 7.7% £51.59 | £703.52 (£42,000 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £1,425.13 |

Annex B – Notes on retiring from the scheme

Normal retirement

Entitlement to FPS 2015 benefits is from normal pension age (60).

Early retirement from FPS 2015

The minimum pension age for taking your FPS 2015 pension is age 55.

If you take your FPS 2015 pension earlier than the normal pension age of 60, an [early retirement factor](#) will apply – see the tables within Appendix A of the Government Actuary's Department (GAD) guidance.

Active factors

If you retire at age 55 or over, you can take your reduced benefits immediately. A reduction factor depending on your age will be applied to the value of your FPS 2015 pension at the date you want to retire.

Deferred factors

If you leave employment before age 55, you can apply to have your deferred benefits paid from age 55 at the earliest. A reduction factor depending on your age will be applied to the value of your FPS 2015 benefits at the date you want to retire. Otherwise, benefits will be paid in full at State Pension age.

Please see also the following resources:

- [Benefit flowchart for a member with FPS 2015 benefits only](#)
- [Retiring from FPS 2015 factsheet](#)

Annex C – Notes on calculating the estimated value of the FPS 2015 pension at retirement

FPS 2015 – estimated pension

The estimated value of your FPS 2015 benefits is calculated based on the 2015 pension built up to the date of your statement, plus your estimated service from that date to your normal pension age (age 60), multiplied by the 2015 scheme pay, multiplied by $1/59.7^{\text{th}}$ of your pensionable pay for the scheme year.

The value of this estimate does not include any adjustment for future revaluation under Treasury Revaluation Orders.

The example below illustrates estimated benefits payable under FPS 2015.

Sarah's date of birth is 25 May 1972. Sarah will reach normal pension age (age 60) on 25 May 2032.

Pensionable pay

| |
|---|
| 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 - £40,000 |
| 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 - £42,500 |
| 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 - £50,000 |
| 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 - £55,000 |
| 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 - £64,000 |
| 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 - £70,000 |
| 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 - £72,500 |
| 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 - £76,300 |
| 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 - £80,115 |

Current value 2015 scheme Pension

| Scheme year | Opening balance | Revaluation | In-year build-up | Closing balance |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £670.02 (£40,000 x $1 \div 59.7$) | £670.02 |
| 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 | £670.02 | at 2% £13.40 | £711.89 (£42,500 x $1 \div 59.7$) | £1,395.31 |
| 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 | £1,395.31 | at 2.6% £36.26 | £837.52 (£50,000 x $1 \div 59.7$) | £2,269.11 |

| | | | | |
|--|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 | £2,269.11 | at 3% £68.07 | £921.27 (£55,000 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £3,258.46 |
| 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 | £3,258.46 | at 2.8% £91.24 | £1,072.03 (£64,000 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £4,421.72 |
| 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 | £4,421.72 | at 4% £176.87 | £1,172.53 (£70,000 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £5,771.12 |
| 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022 | £5771.12 | at 2.4% £138.51 | £1,214.40 (£72,500 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £7,124.03 |
| 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 | £7,124.03 | at 4.1% £292.09 | £1,278.06 (£76,300 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £8,694.18 |
| 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2024 | £8,694.18 | At 7.7% £669.45 | £1,341.96 (£80,115 x 1 ÷ 59.7) | £10,705.59 |

Estimated projection to normal retirement age (60)

Service from 1 April 2024 to 24 May 2032 (last day of service) of 8 years and 54 days multiplied by £80,115 x 1 ÷ 59.7, equals a total estimated pension of **£10,934.21**.

Total estimated FPS 2015 pension at normal retirement age

Current value (£10,705.59) plus estimated projection (£10,934.21) = **£21,639.80**

Annex D – Notes on the survivor’s pension

FPS 2015 provides for a survivor’s pension to be paid if, when you die, you are married or have a civil partner or eligible ‘cohabiting partner’ (someone you live with who would be entitled to a survivor’s pension).

Survivor’s pension if you die in service

Although the statement is based on your benefits at 31 March 2024, survivor’s benefits are based on future entitlement.

Death in service survivor’s pensions will be paid to eligible partners at 50% of the higher-tier ill-health pension that would have been payable.

Under FPS 2015, if your husband, wife or partner is more than 12 years younger than you there would be a reduction of 2.5% for every year or part of a year over the 12 years, to a maximum of 50%.

Survivor’s pension if you die after you retire

Survivor’s pensions will be paid to eligible partners at 50% of your pension (before any reduction for early payment, but after commutation of lump sum).

Under FPS 2015, if your husband, wife or partner is more than 12 years younger than you, there would be a reduction of 2.5% for every year or part of a year over the 12 years, to a maximum of 50%.

Nominating a beneficiary

Whilst there is no legislative requirement for you to complete a nomination for someone (a ‘qualifying partner’) who you want a survivor’s pension to be paid to we consider it best practice for members to record who they want a surviving partner’s pension to go to if they die. This will save a surviving partner from unnecessary administrative duties at what would be a sensitive time.

Please contact your FRA to find out how to access the form or make any amendments to your decision.

Death in service lump sum

If you die in service as a member of the FPS 2015, a death grant would be payable. This would normally be three times your final pay at the date of death. Final pay is normally the greater of the following –

- (a) the amount of your pensionable pay and assumed pensionable pay during your last 365 days of continuous pensionable service, or
- (b) the amount of your pensionable pay and assumed pensionable pay during your last 3 years of pensionable service, divided by three.

If you have continuous pensionable service of less than 365 days, the pay would be uplifted to reflect a full year.

If you have more than one active member's account, a lump sum death benefit is payable in respect of each of those accounts.

Death on pension lump sum

A death grant may also be payable to FPS 2015 members if you die after retirement, and you have been receiving pension payments for less than five years. In these circumstances, the death grant would be the difference between five times the annual amount of pension and the number of instalments of pension paid. It is in effect a five-year guarantee of pension.

Members of FPS 2015 can fill in an 'expression of wish' form for beneficiaries to receive the death in service lump sum, though the final decision rests with the Fire and Rescue Authority.

Please contact your FRA to find out how to access the form or make any amendments to your decision.

Annex E – Notes on adjustments to your pension

Your pension may be adjusted by any of the following:

a) **Actuarial reduction** – the figures quoted may be reduced if you take them before the date that they would normally be paid. See [Annex C](#).

b) **Scheme Pays** – if you have chosen to use Scheme Pays to pay an annual allowance charge from your pension scheme, this debit is usually included on your statement and the figures quoted would be reduced to meet the charge.

If you are affected by the annual allowance for 2023/24 tax year you will receive a pension saving statement by 6 October 2024.

This will be recalculated when you take your pension.

c) **Pension sharing order** – if a pension sharing order or earmarking order following a divorce or a dissolution of a civil partnership applies to your pension benefits, this debit is included on the statement and the figures quoted have been reduced to meet the charge.

The amount of the reduction will be recalculated when you take your benefits.

d) **Two pensions** – the figures on the statement do not take account of any adjustment that may be made when you retire to reflect a period at a higher pay.

If you are entitled to a two pension benefit, it will be calculated when you take your pension.

Annex F – Notes on pension growth

Annual allowance

This is the amount your pension can increase by during the tax year without giving rise to a tax charge (although you can carry over three years' previous unused allowance to offset the charge). Most people will not be affected, but if you have been contributing to the pension scheme for many years or have transferred in a large amount from a previous pension provider and are promoted and your pay increases, you may be affected.

- Standard annual allowance
The standard annual allowance for 2023-24 is £60,000 and will remain the same for 2024-25.
- Tapered annual allowance

If you have taxable income of over £200,000, a tapered annual allowance of between £60,000 and £10,000 may apply for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

To calculate your annual allowance for the scheme year, you must multiply your pension growth by 16.

Example

Annual pension at 6 April 2022 = £35,000

Annual pension at 5 April 2023 = £38,000

Pension growth = £38,000 - £35,000 = £3,000 x 16 = £48,000

For the purposes of this statement your pension growth has been calculated using your pensionable pay at 31 March. If this amount is near to the £60,000 standard allowance or within £10,000 of your individual tapered allowance for 2023/24, you should ask for a calculation of your pension input period amount, using your pay as at 5 April.

You can find more information, including an annual allowance checking tool, on the Government's website www.gov.uk/tax-on-your-private-pension/annual-allowance

An [annual allowance factsheet](#) is also available.

Lifetime allowance

The lifetime allowance is the maximum amount of pension savings you can have before a tax charge is made. To calculate how much of your lifetime allowance you have used, multiply your annual pension by 20, divide this by the lifetime allowance and multiply by 100.

From 6 April 2023 to 5 April 2024 the Lifetime Allowance threshold is reduced to NIL.

From 6 April 2024 the Lifetime Allowance is abolished.

The standard maximum tax-free lump sum in relation to the Lifetime Allowance is restricted to £268,275.

The excess lump sum will be taxed at your marginal tax rate.

The excess lump sum is treated as taxable income

From 6 April 2023 the income at which the additional tax rate (40%) applies is reduced to £125,140

Please see the [lifetime allowance factsheet](#) for more information.