
FOR YOUR BENEFIT

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOCAL 295 IBT EMPLOYER GROUP BENEFIT FUNDS
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WHAT'S MY PENSION WORTH



Historically, retirement planning in the United States rested on what is called the “Three Legged Stool” basis. The first leg of the stool is your Social Security benefits. The second leg is your private pension, and the third and final leg is savings.

Your pension is called a defined benefit plan. The entire cost of this plan is paid by your employer as part of your collective bargaining agreement. Unlike many common plans in non-union workplaces, your plan generates a monthly income to you. This monthly income can be taken on a single life or a joint life basis. If you wish your spouse to continue to receive a monthly income after your death, then you may take a reduced amount and he/she will receive either all or a portion of your benefit for the remainder of your spouse’s life. If you do not choose this reduced survivor pension, then your pension is payable to you for life with a total of 60 monthly payments guaranteed from your pension start date.

Other plans, such as 401(k) plans, do not have guaranteed income. The balance in the account is based on the accumulation of the contributions to the plan and market performance. All the investment decisions lie with the participant. In your plan, the investment decisions are made by the Board of Trustees who rely on outside professional investment consultants and managers to guide them in making investment decisions.

Unlike Social Security, your plan has a full benefit at an earlier age. Under present law, full Social Security benefits are payable to you

only after you attain your full retirement age which can range anywhere from 65 to 67. You may take a benefit as early as 62 but it is greatly reduced. Your plan pays a full, unreduced monthly benefit as early as age 58 if you have the required years of service.



So, what is the dollar value of your pension? Assume the following – a male who retires at age at 58 with 30 years of service has an estimated monthly benefit of \$3,000. Based on current rates, he would have to have a balance of more than \$630,000 to generate this monthly income. As you can see, this leg of your stool is very valuable.

While, in theory, the 401(k) plans in many non-union companies can accumulate substantial sums, in reality many do not. The average amount of money in 401(k) accounts for people over age 55 in the United States in 2015 was less than \$110,000. Based on current rates, this would generate a monthly income of only about \$525. And, remember that all of the money in these accounts is subject to risk and could decrease at any time.

Your pension benefit is a very valuable leg of your retirement stool. If you are nearing retirement age, please contact the Fund Office to discuss your pension options.


Your pension plan has paid out nearly \$350 million in pension benefits over the last ten years.


ANNUAL NOTICE ABOUT THE WOMEN'S HEALTH AND CANCER RIGHTS ACT OF 1998


A federal law known as the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998 (WHCRA) requires group health plans and insurance companies that provide coverage for mastectomies to provide certain mastectomy related benefits or services to persons covered by the Welfare Fund.

This Plan has historically provided the benefits required under the WHCRA and continues to make these benefits available to eligible persons. This notice is a brief overview of the benefits required under the WHCRA and your rights under the law.

Under the provisions of the WHCRA, a group health plan eligible person who is receiving benefits in connection with a mastectomy, and who elects breast reconstruction in connection with the mastectomy is entitled to coverage for:

 all stages of reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy has been performed;

 surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance; and

 prostheses and treatment of physical complications of mastectomy, including lymph edema.

Coverage for these benefits or services will be provided in a manner determined in consultation with the eligible person's attending physician.

If you are eligible in the Plan and currently receiving, or in the future receive benefits under this Plan in connection with a mastectomy, you are entitled to coverage for the benefits and services described above in

the event that you elect reconstruction of the affected breast.

Eligible dependents are also entitled to coverage for these benefits or services on the same terms. Coverage for the mastectomy-related services or benefits required under the WHCRA will be subject to the same deductibles and coinsurance or co-payment provisions, if any, that apply to any other medical or surgical benefits provided by the Welfare Fund.



CHANGE IN PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROVIDER FOR MEDICARE ELIGIBLE RETIREES

The Trustees of the Funds strive to continue to bring you the finest providers in the most economical way possible. The Welfare Fund will change prescription drug providers effective January 1, 2018 for eligible retirees who have Medicare coverage with the Fund. This change will not affect the pre-Medicare retirees or active members and their dependents. The Medicare supplemental medical insurance through United American will not change.

The Medicare drug plan provider will be changed to Humana as of January 1, 2018. All plan provisions remain the same. There will be no change in benefits.



You will be receiving introductory letters from Labor First and Humana in the near future. You will also be receiving a new prescription drug card. Your existing card for Aetna will no longer be used after December 31, 2017. Please continue to use your existing card until that date. In January, you will have to provide your new Humana card to your local drug store. Your United American card will still be used both before and after January 1, 2018.

SCAMS AND FINANCIAL ABUSE

No matter how old we are we can become the victim of a scam or financial abuse. This often happens to older adults that have limited resources and fixed incomes. Why do these scam artists focus on the older adults? The following things are assumed about older people.

- They have a lot of assets.
- They have trouble remembering things.
- They are often isolated and long for company.
- They have strong values about politeness and find it difficult to turn people away.
- When taken advantage of they are embarrassed to report the event.

*How do they find us? Who does this?
Where do they get the information?*

Telephone calls, US Postal Service, internet, social media and in person. These people are professionals at separating us from our money. They are what used to be called “snake oil salesmen.” It can be someone calling with a familiar charity name who hopes you’ll donate. Sometimes it’s a trusted professional, a banker or even a loved one. Every time you purchase something, whether online or through a catalogue you are asked for your email address or ZIP code. They are tracking purchases and where they come from. Most of the time this is for innocent marketing research. However, many times, on the order form, you are being asked if you agree to allow them to provide your information to other retailers. Innocent enough, but then the mail starts coming – the magazines, the emails. Before you click “submit” read all the boxes; check or uncheck to make sure you’re not agreeing to something you don’t want!

Make sure your caller ID works; don’t answer a call unless you recognize the caller. Many calls are “robo calls.” If you don’t speak when you first pick up, the caller hangs up. Many times, you’ll get a call asking for a charitable donation. Have them mail you the donation envelope – don’t give them your credit card over the phone. Some of these charities are phonies. When you get the mailer, you can check them out before you write the check. Shred your paperwork like credit card statements. Local banks often have “shred it” days. Check with

your local bank to see if they have one. Check with your community board. You don’t always have to be a customer of the bank to use its “shred it” services.

Be careful with social media. Don’t post addresses of where you are or where the family event is being held. Leave off the school or church names when you post family pictures.

By the way, there is no Nigerian prince waiting to send you \$500,000. If you’ve met someone you like and they want to borrow money, dump them!

Banks, utilities and the IRS will never send you an email or call you and request personal information. The IRS will never demand money over the phone or tell you to appear in court via telephone or email. Keep an eye on your credit cards all the time. Closely review your credit card statements. Shred all your credit card statements before throwing them away.

There are government fraud programs.

- It is illegal for companies offering Medicare drug plans to charge a fee, or to offer free food to get you to enroll in a plan. Visit www.medicare.gov or call 1.800.MEDICARE (1.800.633.4227).
- Social Security calls from a phone number with a 323 area code. Report to the SSA Inspector General at 1.800.269.0271 or online at <https://oig.ssa.gov/report>.
- The IRS will not call you. They will not ask you to pay by wire or pre-paid cards. To speak with the IRS, call 1.800.829.1040.

Much of what we discussed here doesn’t just apply to retirees and older adults. It applies to everyone. We should be careful with our personal information. We shouldn’t be afraid to live our lives in this age of technology. Technology is a very useful tool and can make our lives much easier.

You can cancel or suspend your credit cards if you suspect misuse even if you simply forgot you made that purchase. Many credit card companies have wallet protection services where you can list all your credit cards and important documents so if your wallet is lost, you only need to make one call.

Keep your passwords safe. Make them difficult for other people to figure out but easy for you to remember – not an easy task.

LOCAL 295 IBT EMPLOYER
GROUP PENSION TRUST FUND AND
EMPLOYER GROUP WELFARE FUND
Sixty Broad Street, 37th Floor
New York, New York 10004



PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
WILKES-BARRE, PA
PERMIT #188

CONGRATULATIONS YOU'RE GOING TO MOVE

How to Get Started

First Things First... Two Weeks Before the Move/Address Change

You can make the Change of Address process faster and easier by notifying everyone who sends you mail of your new address and the date of your move, two weeks before you move. Most bills and statements have an area for making an address change notification. If you receive your bills electronically you can usually make your notifications online.

Next: File the Change of Address Order with the United States Postal Service.

When the Change of Address (COA) request is made online, there is a \$1 identity validation fee. When you enter your credit card or debit card number and billing address, the USPS can electronically verify your card's information with the issuing bank. If you prefer not to use your credit card, you can fill out PS Form 3575, acquired from your local post office.

Warning: There are third party websites that will

charge you fees of \$40 or more to submit your Change of Address. The Postal Service is not affiliated with the businesses that own these sites and, unfortunately, will not be able to assist you, or offer any refunds for activity on ANY non-USPS site.

Fill out the online form at:

<https://moversguide.usps.com/>

To File Change of Address at the Post Office

- No fee required
- International addresses (moving TO an international address) are eligible by using the "Movers Guide" only.

Pick up a "Movers Guide" at your local Post Office and follow all instructions.

Let the Fund Office Know about the Move

Most importantly, notify your Fund Office of your change of address. To continue to get the explanations of benefits, identification cards, newsletters and the all-important pension check, we need your correct address. A change of address must be in writing. We cannot accept a change of address over the telephone.