

New starters guide



Welcome to the Environment Agency Pension Fund (EAPF)

Our pension fund is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). It gives you tax efficient savings and a guaranteed future income.

Capita looks after the day to day administration of the EAPF and will be your main point of contact for any questions you have about your benefits. Their details are shown at the end of this guide.

We hope our guide helps you to understand the basics of your pension, but if you'd like more in depth information, please visit our website at www.eapf.org.uk or read our full **Scheme Guide**.

Top 5 things to know about your pension

1. It's a 'defined benefit' scheme which means it's not based on investment performance. We'll use a 'defined formula' calculation to work out how much you'll get and we'll promise to give you a guaranteed future income each year when you retire.
2. The Scheme is flexible, you can choose to pay less in the **50:50 Section** or more by paying into Additional Pension Contributions (APCs) or Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs).
3. You can take your benefits on leaving your contributing employment at any time from the age of 55 to 75.
4. The benefits you get include a pension and the option to take a tax free lump sum when you retire as well as immediate life cover and ill health protection.
5. There are also benefits for your loved ones such as pensions for dependants should the worst happen, there's also a life cover lump sum payable if you die.

How do you become a member?

When you start work with the Environment Agency, you automatically become a member of the LGPS unless you're employed on a contract of less than 3 months.

If your contract is less than 3 months, you don't automatically become a member of the EAPF, but you're still entitled to join the Scheme by making an election to your Fund employer.

If you've started working for Natural Resources Wales or Shared Service Connected Limited, you can't join the EAPF however, you may be able to join their pension scheme (if this affects you, please contact your employer for more details).

How is my pension worked out?

Your pension builds up at a rate of 1/49th of your pensionable pay and the money you pay into your pension will be built up each year. This will be revalued each year in line with inflation (Consumer Price Index).

So, if you contributed for 1 year on a pensionable pay of £24,000, you'd receive:

£24,000 / 49 = £489.79 (this amount is then revalued in line with inflation the following year)

For more details see our full **Scheme guide**.



How much will you pay?

The amount you contribute will depend on your pensionable earnings. These are split into contribution bands and are reviewed on 1 April every year.

Here are the pay bands and rates that apply from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022:

| Band | Main Section contribution rate 1/49th accrual | 50:50 Section contribution rate 1/98th accrual* | Pensionable pay range from 1 April 2021 based on the assessed pensionable pay you receive |
|--------|--|--|---|
| Band 1 | 5.5% | 2.75% | Up to £14,600 |
| Band 2 | 5.8% | 2.9% | £14,601 to £22,900 |
| Band 3 | 6.5% | 3.25% | £22,901 to £37,200 |
| Band 4 | 6.8% | 3.4% | £37,201 to £47,100 |
| Band 5 | 8.5% | 4.25% | £47,101 to £65,900 |
| Band 6 | 9.9% | 4.95% | £65,901 to £93,400 |
| Band 7 | 10.5% | 5.25% | £93,401 to £110,000 |
| Band 8 | 11.4% | 5.7% | £110,001 to £165,000 |
| Band 9 | 12.5% | 6.25% | £165,001 or more |

*50:50 Section contribution rates only apply if you've chosen to be in the 50:50 Section instead of the Main Section.

You'll find more information in our factsheet '[How much will I pay into the LGPS?](#)'.

What is your Normal Pension Age (NPA)?

Your NPA is simply the age you can retire and take the pension you've built up in full. In the LGPS the NPA is the later of your state pension age (SPA) or age 65.

You don't need to have reached your NPA in order to take your pension. Once you've contributed over a 2 year period, you can choose to retire and draw your pension at any time between age 55 and 75. Please note that your SPA today won't necessarily be your SPA in the future, as the Government review the SPA every five years and so this is assessed at the point your benefits are paid. For more details, see our factsheet '[When can I take my LGPS pension?](#)'.

Go digital and register to EAPF Online!

Registering to EAPF Online is easy! All you need to do is visit portal.eapf.org.uk with your National insurance number and personal details, and click '[Register](#)'.

Online, you'll have access to your personal information and a retirement illustrator, which lets you model your pension benefits at different retirement ages to something other than your NPA. You can also access your annual pension statement online.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will I receive my annual pension statement?

You'll automatically receive your annual pension statement via our online portal **EAPF Online**. We send you a pension statement in August to give you details of the benefits that you've built up as at 31 March. If you've joined the Scheme in late March (and didn't receive your first salary payment until the April), or you joined after March, you won't get your first annual pension statement until the August of the following year.

See our 'Go digital' section on page 3 for details on how to register if you haven't already signed up.

Can I transfer my existing pension into the EAPF?

When you join the Scheme, you can ask to transfer any eligible previous pension(s) you have into the Fund. If your request is accepted, the value of the transfer would give you additional pension or membership, which is used to give you additional benefits when you retire.

If you want to transfer a pension into the EAPF, you'll need to do this **within the first 12 months of joining** by completing the transfer section on your **New Starter Form (Pen 1)** (this contains more information on the transfer process and is provided by your employer when you start employment).

Asking to investigate a transfer doesn't commit you to going ahead with it. We'll provide the information about what your potential transfer means if you decided to move it in to the EAPF, but you have to let us know if you want to go ahead.

If you have other benefits in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) these may be automatically combined with your EAPF benefits unless you choose to keep them separate. If you'd prefer to keep them separate, you must let us know in writing.

How do I decide who receives my life cover lump sum payment?

You can decide who you wish your life cover lump sum to be paid to by completing and returning an Expression of Wish form (Pen 16) to Capita. Your employer will provide this form along with your New Starter Form (Pen 1). You can also make a nomination online by registering to **portal.eapf.org.uk** or download a paper form from **www.eapf.org.uk/forms**

Can I pay less contributions instead of opting out?

If you're struggling financially and are thinking of opting out, you could instead, join the 50:50 Section of the Scheme. The 50:50 Section allows you to pay half the contributions for half the benefits, though your employer will continue to contribute at their full rate. If you're interested, you can download a **50:50 Section form** to apply.

If you decide to opt out, you can leave the EAPF at any time on or after your first day of eligible employment, by giving your employer notice in writing and completing an **Opt Out form** (which can be found on our website). We'd recommend that you read our factsheet **'Things to consider before opting out of the LGPS'** before making any decisions.



Next steps and getting in touch

If you have an enquiry or complaint about the EAPF or your pension benefits within the LGPS, please contact Capita using the details below:

Contact details

If you have any questions regarding your pension entitlement you can contact our pension administrator, Capita, by:



Using the **'Contact the EAPF'** button on the website at **www.eapf.org.uk**



Emailing **info@eapf.org.uk**



Following on twitter
@EAPensionFund



Calling **0800 121 6593**



Sending your query to
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