

# Beneficiary's *Guide*

Survivors' Benefits



This publication does not have force of law.

In cases of conflicting interpretation, the *Act respecting the Québec Pension Plan* and its regulations prevail over the contents of this publication.

A large print version and a Braille version are also available. To order a copy, call the Régie at 1 800 463-5185.

To obtain an audiocassette, contact the Magnétothèque at 1 800 361-0635.

All our services are free of charge.

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# Survivors' benefits

To learn about your rights and obligations as the beneficiary of survivors' benefits paid under the Québec Pension Plan, read this booklet carefully and keep it for future reference.

If you do not find all the answers to your questions, do not hesitate to contact the Régie des rentes du Québec. The address and telephone numbers are given on the back of this booklet. When contacting the Régie, you must give your social insurance number so we can locate your file.

## *Important!*



- Your surviving spouse's pension and orphan's pension are always paid on the last working day of the month. Payment dates are shown on your Notice of Acceptance, on our Internet site, and in a document that will be sent to you at the beginning of the year with your income tax slips.
- Pensions are indexed each year in January to reflect the rise in the cost of living.

## **Death benefit**

### **Amount of the death benefit**

The death benefit is a lump-sum payment of 2 500 \$. The benefit is paid on a priority basis to the person or benevolent society that paid the funeral expenses provided an application is filed with the Régie with proof of payment within 60 days following the death. After 60 days, if no application has been filed with proof of payment, the benefit can be paid to the deceased's heirs. If there are no heirs or if the heirs have renounced the estate, the Régie pays the benefit in the following order of priority to:

- the surviving spouse;
- the descendants of the deceased (children);
- the ascendants of the deceased (parents).

If the amount paid for the funeral expenses is less than 2 500 \$, the difference is granted to the heirs. If there are no heirs, it will be paid according to the same priority indicated above.

### **The death benefit and income tax**

The death benefit is taxable. A Relevé 2 slip, in the name of the estate, will be sent a few days after the benefit is paid. We suggest that you contact the Québec Ministère du Revenu and the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency if you would like additional information about the income tax rules that apply to a death benefit.

## The surviving spouse's pension

### Amount of your pension

The amount of your surviving spouse's pension was calculated on the basis of:

- the contributions that your spouse made to the Québec Pension Plan;
- your age.

In addition, your pension was calculated taking into account whether you have custody of any of the deceased contributor's children, whether you are disabled or whether you are already receiving a retirement or disability pension from the Régie.

If you do not receive the maximum surviving spouse's pension, a Statement of Employment Earnings showing the earnings on which your deceased spouse contributed to the Plan is enclosed with the Notice of Acceptance. It is in your best interest to make sure that the earnings shown are correct. Note that the asterisk (\*) indicates the years for which your spouse did not make the maximum contribution on the basis of his or her employment earnings.

If any of the amounts are wrong, you can have them corrected by sending the Régie one of the following documents for each year in question:

- the original of a TP4, T4 or Relevé 1 slip (this document will be returned to you);
- a letter from your spouse's employer, indicating the year and your spouse's earnings and contributions;

- a Notice of Assessment from the Québec Ministère du Revenu or the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency, if he or she was self-employed.

After studying the documents submitted, the Régie will notify you in writing of its decision. If the amount of your pension is increased, any amount owing will be paid retroactively.

## *Important!*

The amount of a surviving spouse's pension varies according to age. It increases at age 45\* and 55 and decreases at age 65. At age 65, you can apply for an Old Age Security pension from the federal government and in some cases, for the Guaranteed Income Supplement.

- \* If payment began before 1994, in some cases there will be no change to the amount of the surviving spouse's pension at age 45.

## **Dependent children**

The Régie considers a dependent child to be:

- a child under age 18 who lives with you; or
- a child under age 18 who does not live with you but whom you support.

If you are under 45 years of age and you no longer have a dependent child of the deceased, you must inform the Régie because your pension will have to be reduced. It is preferable to inform the Régie as quickly as possible to avoid having to repay amounts to the Régie.

If, however, a child of the deceased again becomes your dependent while you are under age 45, you must also inform the Régie so that your pension can be increased.

## Your pension and income tax

- Your surviving spouse's pension is subject to income tax. Therefore, at the beginning of each year, the Régie sends you a Relevé 2 slip, which you must enclose with your income tax return. The slip shows the total amount that you received as a surviving spouse's pension during the preceding year.
- If you wish, you can ask the Régie to deduct an amount from your pension every month for federal and provincial income tax purposes. **It is up to you to decide how much will be deducted.** You can apply for income tax deductions by using the form found on our Internet site or by calling the Régie at one of the numbers shown on the back of this booklet.





## **If you remarry**

You do not lose your entitlement to a surviving spouse's pension by remarrying. If your new spouse dies, you may apply for another pension, but the Régie will pay you only the greater of the 2 surviving spouse's pensions.

## **How long is the pension paid?**

As a rule, your surviving spouse's pension is payable for life. However, it will be terminated when you reach 65 years of age if you are receiving the maximum retirement pension payable for the year in which you reach that age.

## **Can you receive two pensions?**

If you contributed to the Québec Pension Plan, you could be entitled to a retirement pension or a disability pension in addition to your surviving spouse's pension. If so, the Régie pays the two pensions in a single monthly amount. This is called a combined pension. However, the amount you receive is not necessarily the sum of the two pensions. A combined pension is subject to a maximum amount determined by the *Act respecting the Québec Pension Plan*. The amount of the retirement pension or the disability pension does not change. However, when either is combined with a surviving spouse's pension, that pension may decrease.

## The orphan's pension

### To whom is an orphan's pension paid?

An orphan's pension is paid if the child is under 18 years of age. It is paid to the person who supports him or her, or to a person designated by the Régie.

*Important!*

An orphan's pension is paid even if the child works.



## **Only one pension payable**

An orphan's pension cannot be paid for a child who is already receiving another orphan's pension or a pension for a disabled person's child under the Québec Pension Plan or the Canada Pension Plan.



## **Taxation of the pension**

The orphan's pension is subject to income tax. Therefore, at the beginning of each year, the Régie sends you a Relevé 2 slip for each child, indicating the total amount of benefits paid during the preceding year.

Even if the pension is not paid directly to your child, it must nevertheless be considered as his or her personal income, and not as part of your income.

## Other useful information

### Direct deposit

Direct deposit is a free service offered by the Régie. This service allows your pension to be paid directly into your account at the financial institution of your choice in Canada. If you live in another country, you may also be able to benefit from direct deposit, since it is available in 26 other countries, including the United States of America.



You can sign up for direct deposit by Internet, telephone or mail. If you sign up by Internet or telephone, be sure to have a personal cheque at hand in order to provide the necessary information. If you sign up by mail, use the application form that can be found on our Internet site, at our client services centres, at most banks and caisses Desjardins and at the riding office of your member of the National Assembly.

### If you live outside Canada and the United States of America

Your pension can, in certain cases, be paid by direct deposit in U.S. dollars or in the currency of your country of residence. This service is safe and eliminates transaction fees for cashing cheques in Canadian dollars or other currencies. If you would like to benefit from this service, you can obtain the application form on our Internet site or by contacting the Régie.

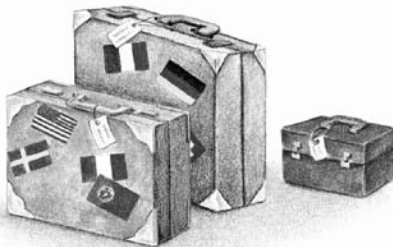
## *Important!*

If you choose direct deposit, your pension will be deposited in your account on the last working day of the month.

### **If you move**

**If you receive your pension by direct deposit,** you must notify the Régie if you move. You must also notify us if you change your place of banking or bank branch. But be careful! Do not close your old account until the first pension payment has been deposited in the new one. You can inform the Régie of any such changes by Internet, telephone or mail, making sure to indicate your social insurance number.

**If you receive your pension by cheque,** please advise us of your new address as soon as possible to ensure that you receive your next cheque on time. You can inform us by Internet, telephone or mail.





## If you are dissatisfied with a decision

You can ask the Régie to review any decision regarding your pension (starting date, pension payment, etc.), if you believe that the decision is not justified. However, if you choose to do so, you must apply no later than 12 months after the date of the Notice of Acceptance and submit any information or documents that support your application for review.

After reviewing your file, the Régie will inform you in writing of its new decision.

## *Important!*

Under the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information*, the information you provide to the Régie des rentes du Québec is confidential. It cannot be given to any other person without your authorization. However, the *Act* provides that such information may be disclosed to other public bodies, for example, for the purpose of research.

# Your satisfaction is our priority!

## Services Commissioner

If you believe your situation has not received all the attention it deserves, you can contact the Services Commissioner, who will treat your complaints and comments completely independently. The Commissioner has the power to make recommendations to facilitate the resolution of disputes and improve client service. Complaints are kept strictly confidential and there is no need to fear personal repercussions.

You can contact the Services Commissioner by mail or through the Internet. You can also call the Régie. (See the back cover of this brochure.)



# How to reach us

For more information about the Québec Pension Plan and the system for financial security after retirement, contact the Régie:

## By Internet

[www.rrq.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.rrq.gouv.qc.ca)

 **Régienet**

On-line services

## By telephone

Québec region (418) 643-5185

Montréal region (514) 873-2433

Toll-free 1 800 463-5185



Service for the hearing impaired

(TDD/TTY required) 1 800 603-3540

## By mail

Régie des rentes du Québec

Case postale 5200

Québec (Québec) G1K 7S9

## In person

At one of our client services centres. Our addresses and telephone numbers are available on our Internet site under “How to reach us”, or you can contact us by telephone.

We suggest that you call us before coming to the office. In most cases, you can obtain the information you need by telephone.

**Régie des rentes**

**Québec**

