Christian Reformed Church

Retirement FAQ

For The Ministers' Pension Plan

1 When can I retire?

You may retire as early as age 55, although your pension may be reduced if you begin receiving benefits before your Normal Retirement Age.

Normal retirement age under the plan is 66.

2 What is the Final Average Salary?

Final Average Salary (FAS) is the average cash salary of all participating CRC ministers serving in parish ministry during the three calendar years immediately preceding your last active year in the Plan.

If you leave the Plan for more than 24 months and later return, different Final Average Salaries may be used to calculate portions of your pension.

3 When should I contact the Pension Office?

We recommend contacting the Pension & Retirement Office at least three to six months before you plan to retire.
We can:

- Prepare a personalized pension estimate.
- Explain your retirement options.
- Compare payment options.
- Help you understand how each option affects your monthly pension and survivor benefits.

4 How do I get a pension estimate?

Contact the Pension & Retirement Office for a personalized estimate and walk through your retirement options at any time.

5 How is my pension calculated?

Your pension is based on a formula established in the Plan document—not on the amount contributed on your behalf.

Your benefit is calculated using:

- 1.46% of your Final Average Salary for each year of credited service earned from January 1, 1985, through December 31, 2010, plus
- 1.30% of your Final Average Salary for each year of credited service earned after December 31, 2010.

If you retire and begin benefit before age 66, an early retirement reduction may apply.

6 What if I die shortly after retirement?

That depends on the payment option you selected.

If you elected the Single Life Annuity with a Five-Year Guarantee and die before receiving 60 monthly payments, your beneficiary will receive the remaining guaranteed payments.

If you elected a Joint and Survivor option, benefits would continue according to the option you selected.

7 What happens if my spouse dies before I do?

If you elected a Joint and Survivor pension and your spouse dies before you, survivor benefits end. If you remarry, your new spouse is not eligible for survivor benefits.

8 What retirement payment option will I automatically receive?

If you are single:

- Your automatic benefit is a Single Life Annuity with a Five-Year Guarantee.
- You receive a monthly pension for life.
- If you die before receiving 60 monthly payments, your beneficiary receives the remaining guaranteed payments.

If you are married:

- Your automatic benefit is a 66⅔% Joint and Survivor Annuity.
- You receive a monthly pension for life.
- After your death, your eligible surviving spouse receives 66⅔% of your monthly pension for the remainder of their lifetime.

9 Can I choose a different payment option?

Yes. At retirement you may choose another payment option if it better meets your needs.

Available options include:

- *Single Life Annuity with Five-Year Guarantee*
- *50% Joint and Survivor Annuity*
- *66⅔% Joint and Survivor Annuity*
- *100% Joint and Survivor Annuity*

Each Joint and Survivor option may also include a 5-year, 10-year, or 15-year guaranteed payment period.

10 How does a 5-, 10-, or 15-year guaranteed payment period work?

The guaranteed payment with 5, 10, or 15-years provides you with a monthly benefit for **YOUR** life. If you die before the guaranteed payment period ends, your beneficiary will receive the remaining payments based on your chosen option of 5, 10 or 15 years.

11 Will choosing a different option change my monthly pension?

Yes. All payment options are actuarially equivalent, meaning they are designed to have the same overall value.

Generally:

- More protection for your spouse means a lower monthly pension for you.
- Less survivor protection means a higher monthly pension during your lifetime.

Who can I contact if I have questions?

Pension & Retirement Office
2969 Prairie Street SW, Suite 102
Grandville, MI 49418

Phone: 616-224-0722
Email: pension@crcna.org
Website: www.crcna.org/pension