

The Defined Benefit Scheme, or "DBS" is a typical defined benefit scheme.

You build up a pension based on your earnings and how long you have worked. If you pay contributions, this is usually a percentage of your pay. Your employer meets the rest of the cost of providing your pension.

Members' guide

[Our DBS members' guide](#) has all the details you need to find out how your pension works.

Scroll down to find out the highlights.

My membership

You build up a pension which we will pay you for life. The amount you build up depends on your "accrual rate" and your final salary at the time you leave or retire. Ask us or your employer if you are not sure what your accrual rate is. When you retire you can give up part of your pension for a tax-free lump sum.

Your employer may ask you to pay towards the cost of providing your pension - ask us or ask your employer if you are unsure how much this is.

While you are an active member of DBS we provide you with life cover. Find out more about this in the **'My pension if I die'** section below.

You can't transfer other pensions into DBS.

Keep us up to date with where you are - [fill out a change of address form here](#).

Can I pay more?

You can boost your pension by paying Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs). This buys you extra pension but in a different pension scheme called [Pension Builder Classic](#).

Monthly through your salary

If you are thinking of paying AVCs, first decide how much you would like to pay. Your AVCs are taken from your salary before tax. If you are a 20% tax payer and you pay an extra 2% of your salary a month, only 1.6% comes out of your pay.

You can start, stop, increase or decrease your AVCs whenever you like. [To start paying, or change your AVCs fill out an AVC form](#).

One off lump sum payment

You can pay one-off lump sums. [To do this, fill out an AVC form and send this to us.](#) The form has all the details you need to pay a lump sum.

Anything you pay into your pension is tax free up to a limit. As you will have paid tax on your lump sums you can claim any tax relief on your [self-assessment tax return.](#)

My retirement

When you are ready to take your pension, let us know.

We will pay you a pension for life. You have the option of giving up part of your pension for a tax-free lump sum which we'll pay to you soon as possible after you retire.

You don't have to keep your pension with us. You can transfer it to a 'defined contribution' pension who might offer flexible ways of taking your pension. You could take:

1. an adjustable income, called drawdown
2. cash lump sums in stages
3. your whole pension as a lump sum in one go

We'll tell you more about these options and how you can take advantage of them when you come to retire.

Helping you find pensions advice

While most people might be best off sticking with the pension options we can offer, there are more flexible ways you can access your retirement savings. For some people, these flexible options might be better.

Either way, it is worth exploring how these flexible options work and if you might be better of taking advantage of them. This is where an adviser comes in.

We have partnered with LV= Retirement Advice Services to help you understand all your options. They can also help you with any pensions you have outside the Church of England and they will look at all aspects of your situation.

[Find out how LV= can help you at our pensions advice page.](#)

My pension if I leave

If you leave before you retire, we'll keep your pension here with us until you decide to take it, transfer it to another provider or die.

We'll keep in touch with you and send annual updates to let you know how your pension is progressing.

If you move jobs and they have their own pension scheme, or you have a private pension you've set up you can move your pension into this, but you might need to [take financial advice first](#). Get in touch with us if you would like to do this.

My pension if I die

If you die before or after you retire, we will pay half your pension to your husband, wife or civil partner.

We guarantee your pension for 5 years so if you die within this period, we will pay the remaining payments as a lump sum.

If you die while still an active member of DBS we'll also pay a tax-free lump sum of at least 2x your salary.

Tell us the person, people or organisations you would like to leave any lump sum to - [fill out our nomination form](#).

If your circumstances change, complete a new form. To keep this tax-free we have discretion over who receives any lump sum but we'll be guided by your nomination form.

How to make a complaint

We make every effort to provide you with an efficient and effective service. However, if you are unhappy with the service you receive, please contact us first and we will do our best to resolve your issue.

If you have a complaint or dispute concerning your workplace or personal pension arrangements, you can also contact the Pensions Ombudsman. If you have general requests for information or guidance you can contact the Pensions Advisory Service.

The Pensions Ombudsman

Tel: 0800 917 4487

Website: www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk

The Pensions Advisory Service

Tel: 0800 011 3797

Website: www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk/

Pensions technical area

If you're looking for help with a technical question, and you can't find the answer on this page, [check out our technical area](#). You might find the answer there. If not, get in touch with us and we can help.

Contact us

We are here to help. You can contact us by:

Phone: 020 7898 1802 (9am - 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Email: pensions@churchofengland.org

Source URL: <https://www.churchofengland.org/about/pensions/defined-benefit-scheme>