

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

We have 4 guides to help explain how your DBS pension works. Here are links to all 4, or scroll down the page to find out the highlights.

- [My membership](#) - find out the highlights and what happens when you join
- [My retirement](#) - understand what you can do with your pension
- [My pension if I leave](#) - know your options when you leave
- [My pension if I die](#) - see what will pass on to your loved ones

When we work out your pension, we often need to use actuarial factors to make sure you receive the correct and fair amount. [Find out more about how actuarial factors can influence your pension.](#)

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.

Can I save more?

You can boost your pension by saving 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 saving AVCs, first decide how much you would like to save. Your AVCs are taken from your salary before tax. If you are a 20% taxpayer 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 saving, 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](#).

Plan for your tomorrow

We all have different aims for retirement. But, are you on course for the retirement you want?

Use our planning for retirement page to find out if you're on track. The earlier you do it, the easier it is.

[Start planning ahead](#)

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 financial advice

With something as important as your finances, you don't want to worry that you've got things wrong. This is where a financial adviser comes in.

A financial adviser will find out what financial products you already have, the support your employer provides, confirm what you are entitled to from the State, and tell you where any gaps in your finances lie. They can also advise you on complex things like tax, and trusts.

To ensure you are on the right track, we've partnered with Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services (EFAS) who are specialists in advising those who work or serve for the Church of England.

[Find out how EFAS can help you](#)

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 usually 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 - [head to PensionsOnline to add your nomination](#).

If your circumstances change, remember to update your nomination. To keep this tax-free we have discretion over who receives any lump sum but we'll be guided by your wishes.

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.

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 head to MoneyHelper.

The Pensions Ombudsman

Tel: 0800 917 4487

Website: www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk

MoneyHelper

Website: <https://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-problems>

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>