

**The Board of the Pension Protection Fund
and the
Freedom of Information Act 2000**

The Board of the Pension Protection Fund

The Board of the Pension Protection Fund (“the Board”) was established to pay compensation to members of eligible defined benefit pension schemes, when there is a qualifying insolvency event in relation to the employer and where there are insufficient assets in the pension scheme to cover Pension Protection Fund levels of compensation. The Board is a statutory corporation established under the provisions of the Pensions Act 2004. The Pension Protection Fund became operational on 6 April 2005.

Introduction to the Freedom of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 came into force on 1 January 2005. It affects all public authorities and gives you a right (unless an exemption applies) to:

- be told if information is held; and
- be given that information.

The term ‘public authority’ includes most public organisations and Government Departments in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (Scotland have their own Act), and includes the Board.

The Information Commissioner is responsible for overseeing the Act (together with the Data Protection Act 1998). By law, the Board and all other public authorities must:

- adopt and maintain a ‘publication scheme’;
- confirm or deny (when requested) whether or not information is held; and
- provide that information (or explain why it will not be provided) within 20 working days.

Most requests for information will be free of charge, although sometimes we might make a charge for postage, photocopying, tapes or disks.

What is a publication scheme?

The main purpose of a publication scheme is to make information readily available without the need for specific written requests. Our publication scheme explains:

- the classes of information that we already publish or intend to publish;
- how we will publish the information (for example, on our website); and
- whether or not we will make a charge for the information.

It is not a full list of Board publications as the list changes and we update publications and our website regularly.

The Information Commissioner has approved our publication scheme and it is available on our website at <http://www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk/index/publications.htm> .

What about information not listed in the publication scheme?

Not all of the recorded information we hold will be included in our publication scheme. This does not necessarily mean that it is not available, but you will need to make a written request for the information you want. A request may relate to information recorded in any form – for example, paper, email or electronic – and to information held by us, not just documents published by us.

How do I ask for information from you?

- You should ask for information in writing (letter, email or fax).
- Don't forget to provide your name and a contact address so that we can send you your information.
- You will need to describe the information you want to help us identify, find and provide it for you, but you do not have to tell us why you want it and we will not ask.
- You may specify the format in which you would prefer us to provide the information.

Please note that if you want information about yourself as an individual, then the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 apply, not those of the Freedom of Information Act.

What will you do with my request?

- When we receive your request, we will normally respond within 20 working days.
- We will tell you whether you need to pay a fee (if there is a fee, you must pay this before we send the information).
- In most cases, we will confirm whether or not we hold the information you want.
- If we don't hold the information, we will tell you who does (if we know).
- If we decide not to provide the information you have asked for, we will tell you why.

- If there is a delay, we will tell you why and let you know when you can expect to receive the information or an explanation of why the information will not be provided.

Can information be withheld?

The purpose of the Act is to encourage openness amongst all public authorities, but there are some exemptions to providing information. For example, we may withhold information where:

- we are not allowed to release it under section 197 of the Pensions Act 2004 or other legislation, or it would be a contempt of court to release it;
- it is legal advice;
- it was provided in confidence;
- it is personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998;
- it is due to be published in the future;
- it is already reasonably available to you from another source; or
- it would affect the investigations of the Pensions Regulator.

We may:

- refuse requests from anyone who repeatedly asks for the same or very similar information;
- withhold information where the cost of releasing it is more than £450; or
- in some cases, not tell you whether we hold the information you have asked for.

Sometimes, we may need more than 20 working days to find information and decide whether or not we can release it. If this is the case, we will respond to you within 20 days of receiving your request to let you know that it will take us longer to deal with it. We will try to tell you when we expect to be able to respond in full.

What if I'm not satisfied with how you have dealt with my request?

You can complain by writing (letter, email or fax) to the Board Secretary at the Board of the Pensions Protection Fund (see below for full contact details).

We will either respond in full to your complaint within 20 working days or let you know as soon as we can if we expect to take longer than this.

If you are still not satisfied with our response, you can complain to the Information Commissioner (see below for contact details).

Contact details

If you have any questions about your rights under the Freedom of Information Act, please contact the Board Secretary at:

Knollys House
17 Addiscombe Road
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 6SR

Website: www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk

Email: information@ppf.gsi.gov.uk

Tel: 0845 600 2541

Fax: 020 8633 4903

You can also get leaflets and more information about Freedom of Information from:

The Information Commissioner
Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Website: www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk

Email: mail@ico.gsi.gov.uk

Phone: 01625 545 745

Fax: 01625 545 510

The Lord Chancellor's Department
Information Rights Division
Department for Constitutional Affairs
6th Floor
Selborne House
54 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 6QW

Website: www.foi.gov.uk

Email: informationrights@dca.gsi.gov.uk

Phone: 020 7210 8034

Fax: 020 7210 8388