

# Firefighters Pension Scheme (FPS)

## Election to opt out of the FPS 2015

Please complete the details below

Personal details:			
Full name			
National Insurance Number			
Date of birth			
Email address			
Phone number			
Address			
Fire and Rescue Service details:			
Fire and Rescue Service			
Employee/payroll number			
Role (you wish to opt out of)			
<p><b>If you have more than one job you can opt out from one, some or all of the jobs and you should only provide details of the job(s) in which you wish to opt out.</b></p>			
Have you opted out before?	Yes (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/>	No (please tick)
<p><b>Main reason for opting out of the pension scheme</b>  <i>(please select the main reason listed below)</i></p>			
A	Financial Affordability	<input type="checkbox"/>	
B	Other private pensions/investments	<input type="checkbox"/>	
C	Lack of information about scheme benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	
D	Concerns about retirement age or flexibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E	Changes to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme	<input type="checkbox"/>	
F	Not intending to remain a firefighter long enough to benefit	<input type="checkbox"/>	
G	Re-joining after retirement from Fire and Rescue Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	
H	Annual Allowance implications (tax)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I	Following Auto Enrolment	<input type="checkbox"/>	
J	Other <i>(please specify)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Please read the information overleaf and then complete the declaration			

**Before you sign the declaration to confirm you wish to opt out of the scheme, please read the following important information**

**The main benefits of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme:**

- i. The Firefighters' Pension Scheme (FPS) 2015 is a defined benefit scheme, which means that there is a formula to calculate your pension. Specifically, it is a Career Averaged Revalued Earnings (CARE) scheme, as the amount you receive is based on your 'averaged' salary across your time in the scheme.
- ii. The FPS is an unfunded public sector scheme. There is no fund or investment as such and benefits in payment are paid from current contributions made by the member and employer and topped up as necessary by the Government.
- iii. The pension is guaranteed by the Government and means that unlike some money purchase schemes which can be impacted by stock market turbulence, the value of firefighters' pensions is secure and guaranteed as it is index linked.
- iv. A member of the FPS 2015 may choose to commute (give up) some of their pension for a tax-free lump sum at retirement. This can be paid at a rate of £12 for every £1 commuted up to a maximum of 25% of the total value of your 2015 pension, which may be equivalent to as much as 35.7% of the pension.
- v. Active members of the FPS 2015 can choose to nominate an individual to receive a lump sum death in service benefit of three times final pay.
- vi. A survivor's pension is payable to an eligible surviving adult partner or any eligible children (under 23) of an active member who dies in service.
- vii. If you are no longer able to work as a firefighter because of illness or injury, you may be eligible to receive pension benefits payable immediately, enhanced in the case of serious ill health
- viii. Pension contributions will be deducted from your earnings before you pay tax. For example, at a tax rate of 20%, every £10 of contributions only costs you £8. The extra £2 is tax relief from the government. It may cost you less if you pay tax at a higher rate.
- ix. If you are not thinking of a long-term career in the fire service and leave, you may be able to transfer your benefits out of the scheme into another registered pension scheme or leave them in the fire and rescue scheme as deferred and take them at state pension age.
- x. Your normal pension age in the FPS 2015 is 60, but you don't necessarily have to wait until age 60 to retire. You can apply to take your benefits at any time after age 55, but they will be reduced to reflect that you are taking them before age 60.
- xi. If you are a transitional member with membership in a legacy scheme, then opting out will mean that those benefits will also become deferred until at least age 60.

**Did you know....**

A pension scheme is a plan to help you save for retirement. It will provide a regular monthly income during your retirement and is payable for the rest of your life.

The Firefighters' Pension Scheme is one of the most valuable pensions available in the UK and is an extremely important part of your total remuneration package.

Your employer cannot ask you or force you to opt out. If you are asked or forced to opt out, you can tell the Pensions Regulator – see [www.tpr.gov.uk](http://www.tpr.gov.uk)

If you change your mind, you can opt back in by writing to your employer and asking to be opted back into the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015.

**Your Fire and Rescue Service also pays in:**

In addition to the monthly contributions that you pay into the Firefighters' Pension Scheme, your Fire and Rescue Service also pays in. The current employer contribution rate is 37.6%.

**Where to find out more about the Firefighters' Pension Scheme**

[www.fpsmember.org](http://www.fpsmember.org)

**When can the opt out take effect from:**

- You can only sign and date this form once you have started in the post from which you wish to opt out of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme membership. You cannot sign and date the form before then as it will be treated as an invalid opt out.
- Your decision to opt out will take effect from the next pay date after your election is received.
- If you remain opted out, once every three years you will be automatically re-enrolled into the Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015, to allow for your employer to comply with automatic enrolment provisions under the Pensions Act 2008.

If after reading about the main benefits of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme and its value, you still wish to opt out of the scheme, please complete the declaration overleaf and return the entire form to your Fire and Rescue Service.

**Declaration:**

*Please read each of the statements below and if you agree, sign, date and return the form to your Fire and Rescue Service:*

- ✓ **I HAVE READ** the notes on opting out of Firefighters' Pension Scheme 2015 (FPS 2015) and I have decided that I do not wish to be a member of the scheme.
- ✓ **I UNDERSTAND** that I am giving up my right to benefits from the FPS 2015 and any transitional benefits attached from being a former member of either the FPS 1992 or FPS 2006 scheme, and that having opted not to be a member I shall only have a limited right to future entry.
- ✓ **I ALSO UNDERSTAND** that if I have more than two years' membership of the FPS 2015, my benefits will be deferred and not payable in full until my state pension age.
- ✓ **I FURTHER UNDERSTAND** that if my decision not to be a member of the FPS proves to be financially to my detriment, neither I nor my dependants will have any right to claim compensation or any form of gratuity in lieu of pension rights.
- ✓ **I DECLARE** that by opting out of the FPS 2015 I am knowingly giving up the opportunity to participate in the scheme which would provide a guaranteed package of benefits which are backed by law, including:
  - a secure annual pension, added life cover, a tax-free cash option, serious ill health cover and survivor benefits

Full name (please print)	
Signature	
Date	

**Return this entire form to your payroll team**