

Election to join the 50/50 section

How does the 50/50 section work?

There are two sections in the LGPS (NI) from 1 April 2014 – the main section and the 50/50 section. The main section is where you pay normal contributions and get your normal pension build up. The 50/50 section allows you to pay half the contributions and build up half the amount of pension. However, you will still keep the full value of life cover. This can be used as a short-term option if your financial circumstances are difficult, instead of opting out of the Scheme.

You can elect to move from the main section to the 50/50 section at any time by completing this for and returning it to your employer. You will be moved to the 50/50 section from the next available pay period after your employer receives your signed form.

If you are a member of the Scheme in more than one job you can elect to join the 50/50 section in one, some or all of your jobs. A separate election form must be completed and returned to your employer for each job.

If you choose to move to the 50/50 section you will continue to pay any extra pension contributions or additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) in full (not at half rate). The only exception to this is that any additional pension contributions (APCs) you are paying to purchase extra pension would have to stop (unless those APCs are to purchase pension 'lost' during a period of authorised unpaid leave or absence or during a period of unpaid additional maternity, paternity or adoption leave).

How long can I remain in the 50/50 section?

The 50/50 section is designed to be a short-term option for when times are tough financially. Your employer is required to automatically put you back into the main section of the scheme at regular intervals and they will tell you when this is about to happen. You can choose to opt back into the 50/50 section again if you wish.

If, during a pay period, you go onto no pay due to sickness or injury and you are still on no pay at the beginning of the next pay period, your employer will move you back into the main section of the Scheme. This means that you will start to build up full pension again, even though you will not be paying pension contributions. On return to work you can opt to move back to the 50/50 section again if you wish.

You can choose to move back to the main section of the scheme at any time (provided you are under age 75 and you remain in a job that qualifies you for membership of the scheme) by completing and returning an election form to your employer. This form can be downloaded from our website - www.nilgosc.org.uk. You will be brought back into the main section of the Scheme from the next available pay period after your employer receives the completed election form. If you are in the 50/50 section in more than one job you can elect to move back into the main section in all or some of the jobs.

If you get another job with your employer you will be put into the main section of the Scheme in that new job. You can then opt to move to the 50/50 section in that job if you wish.

If you change jobs and move to a new employer where you are eligible to join the LGPS (NI) your new employer will put you into the main section of the Scheme. You can then opt to move to the 50/50 section in that job if you wish.

Can my employer ask me or force me to join the 50/50 section?

No, your employer cannot ask you or force you to join the 50/50 section. If you are asked or forced to join the 50/50 section you can inform The Pensions Regulator at: <http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/contact-us>.

Returning the completed form

This form should be returned to your employer's Payroll or Human Resources Department where it will be kept as a record of your election to join the 50/50 section. It should not be returned to NILGOSC. It is important that you fully complete this form. If it is incomplete, or you do not provide sufficient detail for your employer to identify the job(s) in which you wish to join the 50/50 section, the form will not be accepted and will be returned to you for clarification.