



Fact Sheet

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VSAO Employee Benefits Scheme

Insured Employees

Staff in a junior academic position, student assistants, and resident and attending physicians.

Terms of Admission

The insurance covers employees with an annual qualifying salary that is at least the minimum salary defined in article 7 paragraph 1 of the Swiss Occupational Pensions Act (OPA) (CHF 22'050 as of 1 January 2023). Remuneration for overtime and other occasional allowances are not insured. In the case of part-time employment, the minimum annual salary can be reduced in accordance with the employment level. Detailed information is provided in articles 3.1 and 3.2 of the VSAO's regulations.

Start of Insurance Coverage

Insurance coverage begins with the start of the employment relationship. Insurance for the risks of death and disability, however, begins at the earliest on 1 January after the employee reaches the age of 17. Insurance for old-age benefits begins at the earliest on 1 January after the employee reaches the age of 24.

Insured Annual Salary

The insured annual salary corresponds to the annual qualifying salary minus the coordination deduction. The coordination deduction is currently CHF 25'725 (from 1 January 2023), which is 7/8 of the maximum Swiss old-age and survivors pension. For part-time employees, the coordination deduction is calculated as a corresponding percentage (e.g. if the employment level is 50%, the coordination deduction is CHF 12'862.50).

Regular allowances are deemed part of the insured salary. These include the following:

- Supplementary allowance
- Regular allowance
- Remuneration for night duty
- Stand-by duty onsite
- Lump sums for on-call duty
- Remuneration for night duty incl. vacation
- On-call duty offsite
- Sat/Sun duty
- Dental: Emergency duty/assistant
- Dental: Plaster models
- Dental: Payment for instructor
- Sat/Sun daytime work
- On-call duty, night-shift forensic medicine
- On-call duty, day-shift forensic medicine
- Remuneration for dean's office position insured in pension fund



Unpaid Leave

If employees take unpaid leave and then resume their previous activity with the same employer, they have the option of maintaining their risk insurance at their own cost. They can take out risk insurance for a period ranging from a minimum of 14 days to a maximum of two years. The application for maintaining of the risk insurance must be submitted to the VSAO before the unpaid leave begins. Further information is available under “Unpaid Leave” or in Appendix 3 of the VSAO’s regulations.

Buy-Ins to Increase Old-Age Benefits

Insured persons can make buy-ins to increase their old-age benefits

- a. in the form of voluntary deposits (regulatory buy-ins) before they become entitled to old-age benefits or a full disability pension. Such deposits are credited to the non-mandatory retirement assets.
- b. after a division of the vested benefit credit in the context of a divorce. The repayment is credited to the OPA retirement assets in the same proportion as at the time of pay-out. If it is not possible to determine the proportion of the OPA retirement assets at the time of pay-out, the procedure is as stipulated by federal law.

The maximum allowable individual buy-in can be calculated using the information in Appendix 1 of the VSAO’s regulations. The provisions of articles 79b BVG and 60a to 60d BVV 2 must be complied with in all cases. This restriction does not apply to buy-ins resulting from transfers of pension termination benefits in connection with a divorce.

Partners’ Pensions for Cohabiting Partners

The surviving cohabiting partner of a deceased insured person is entitled to a partner’s pension from the first day of the next month after the insured person’s death, but at the earliest when the continued salary payment ceases, if, at the time of the insured person’s death

- a. the surviving partner has at least one child from the relationship to support or
- b. the surviving partner is over the age of 45, the cohabitation relationship existed without interruption for the last five years of the insured person’s life and the insured person lived for the last five years of his or her life in a shared apartment or house with the partner
- c. and the reciprocal duty to support was agreed in writing on the corresponding VSAO form, which was submitted to the VSAO while both partners were living.

The surviving cohabiting partner must supply proof that he or she meets all named requirements.

Home Ownership Support

Actively insured persons are entitled to cash in or pledge assets from the pension fund to finance buying a home for personal use up to three years before the entitlement to receive old-age benefits takes legal effect. Conditions and the amount of eligible funds are defined in accordance with the legal provisions.

Death and disability benefits are not reduced if an employee cashes in or pledges assets. Further provisions are set out in point 5.6.1 of the VSAO’s regulations.

Retirement

The statutory age of retirement is when the insured person reaches the age of 65.



Early retirement is possible at the age of 58 at the earliest. Any reductions in benefits are borne by the insured person.

Partial Entitlement to Old-Age Benefits

Until the final withdrawal of old-age benefits, actively insured persons may request partial payout of their old-age benefits up to a maximum of two times if their employment level is reduced by at least 20% of a full-time position from their employment level prior to partial retirement and an employment level of at least 20% of a full-time position remains.

The retirement savings capital is divided in the ratio of the insured person's employment levels before and after the reduction. One part is used to determine retirement benefits. The other part is equivalent to the retirement savings capital of a fully employed insured person.

Temporary Disability Pensions

Temporary disability pensions are paid in the event of disability of at least 25% that is expected to be lasting. In the case of partial disability, the benefits are determined according to the degree of disability. Full disability pensions are payable for degrees of disability of 70% or higher. For a disability pension to be paid, the insured person must – after meeting the formal requirements for entitlement – have claimed a pension from the Federal Disability Insurance (IV) or the responsible social security provider and have been recognized as disabled by the IV. He or she must also have been insured with the VSAO upon commencement of the incapacity which led to the disability.

The insured person is not entitled to a pension while receiving daily allowance payments from the disability insurance (IV).

For detailed information on this, please see point 5.4.1 of the VSAO's regulations.

Departure from the Pension Fund without a Pension Claim

If the employment relationship is terminated without pension benefits becoming due, the insured person leaves the VSAO and receives pension termination benefits. The provisions on the voluntary continuation of insurance pursuant to article 47a OPA in Appendix 5 of the Pension Fund Regulations remain applicable. The amount of the pension termination benefits corresponds to the old-age savings balance at the time of departure, but shall be at least the minimum amount defined in article 17 of the Vested Benefits Act (FZG). Pension termination benefits are calculated according to the defined contribution principle pursuant to Article 15 paragraph 2 FZG. For further information on this, please see point 5.5 of the VSAO's regulations.