
STATUTORY INSTRUMENTS

2008 No. 653

The National Health Service Pension Scheme Regulations 2008

PART 3

BENEFITS FOR PRACTITIONERS ETC.

CHAPTER 3.A

INTRODUCTION

Qualifying service

3.A.5 Meaning of “qualifying service”

(1) In this Part, references to a member’s qualifying service, are references to the aggregate of the following periods—

- (a) the member’s pensionable service under this Part other than such pensionable service as is referred to in regulation 3.A.3(1)(c) (transferred-in service);
- (b) in the case of a person in respect of whom a transfer value in respect of his rights under another pension arrangement has been accepted under Chapter 3.F (transfers), a period equal to the person’s period as an active member in any occupational pension scheme in respect of which the rights accrued;
- (c) any period treated as qualifying service under paragraph (3) or under regulation 3.A.6, and
- (d) where the member ceased to be an active member under Part 2 not more than 12 months before becoming a member under this Part, any period of qualifying service under Part 2.

(2) Paragraph (3) applies if the member is a locum practitioner who—

- (a) ceases to be engaged as such a practitioner and so ceases to be treated as being in pensionable service; and
- (b) is re-engaged as a locum practitioner before the expiry of a period not exceeding three months from the date of such cessation.

(3) Where this paragraph applies—

- (a) a locum practitioner is treated as continuing to be in qualifying service during the period of non-engagement as such a practitioner and is not required to re-join the Scheme on being re-engaged as a locum practitioner; and
- (b) that period does not count as practitioner service.

3.A.6 Qualifying service: disregard of breaks in service

(1) This regulation applies for the purpose of calculating the qualifying service of a member whose pensionable service ceases for an interval (other than in circumstances where regulation 3.A.5(3) applies).

(2) If the interval—

- (a) does not exceed one month, or
- (b) is due to a trade dispute,

the member's qualifying service before and after the interval is treated as continuous for the purpose of calculating the member's qualifying service after the interval (but the period of the interval is ignored).

(3) For the purposes of paragraph (2) it does not matter if the member's pensionable service before the interval is treated separately from that after the interval for the purpose of calculating the member's benefits.

(4) If—

- (a) a person who is an active member ceases to be employed in the employment that qualifies the person to belong to the Scheme and becomes a deferred member, but not a pensioner member, in respect of the service in that employment, and
- (b) after a period not exceeding 12 months the person becomes employed again in such an employment and becomes an active member again in that employment,

qualifying service in the earlier employment is treated as a single continuous period of qualifying service with that in the later employment.

(5) If—

- (a) a person who is an active member in an employment opts to cease to be such a member whilst continuing to be employed in the employment and becomes a deferred member, but not a pensioner member, in respect of that service, and
- (b) after a period not exceeding 12 months the person becomes such an active member again in that employment,

qualifying service in the earlier period of active membership is treated as a single period of qualifying service with that in the later period of such membership.

(6) Paragraphs (2), (4) and (5) do not apply if—

- (a) the person has received a repayment of contributions under regulation 3.C.16 in respect of the earlier period (but see paragraph (7)); or
- (b) the person's rights under the Scheme in respect of that period have been extinguished under regulation 3.F.7 because a transfer value payment has been made.

(7) Paragraph (6)(b) does not apply if the person repays to the Secretary of State any contributions repaid to the person as mentioned in that paragraph together with any interest on those contributions, before the expiry of the period of 6 months beginning with the date on which the member becomes a member again.

(8) If—

- (a) a member is a deferred member or pensioner member in respect of the period of pensionable service before pensionable service ceases for an interval, and
- (b) the periods of pensionable service before and after pensionable service ceases for an interval are not treated as a single period of continuous service under regulation 3.A.4(5) or regulation 3.G.3(2)(a),

the period of pensionable service in respect of which the member is a deferred member or a pensioner member is treated as qualifying service in relation to the period after the interval.