

# OMERS Pension Plan enrolment for part-time employees

**M**embership in the OMERS Primary Plan is voluntary for your position. This is established by your employer's policy.

You can choose to be enrolled in OMERS as soon as you have worked a specific number of hours or you have earned a specific amount.

## How much do I have to earn or work to be eligible for OMERS?

Once you have met one of the following two conditions for membership during **each of the two immediately preceding calendar years**, your employer will offer you membership in the OMERS Primary Pension Plan. (Note: These conditions are established by the *Pension Benefits Act*.) At the time of the offer of membership, you will receive detailed information about the Plan.

The two conditions are:

- you worked at least 700 hours; or
- you earned at least 35% of the CPP earnings ceiling\* including overtime and vacation pay.

\*The 2011 CPP earnings ceiling is \$48,300; therefore, 35% of the 2011 CPP earning ceiling is \$16,905.

### Example A

Jack is hired on May 1, 2009. Between that date and December 31, 2009, he works more than 700 hours. Again in 2010, he works more than 700 hours. Therefore, Jack is eligible to enrol in OMERS on January 1, 2011.

Note: Most part-time employees become eligible to enrol in OMERS by satisfying the 700-hour condition.

### Example B

Grace is hired on August 15, 2009. Between that date and December 31, 2009, she works 480 hours and earns more than 35% of the CPP earnings ceiling. In 2010, she works more than 700 hours. Therefore, Grace is eligible to enrol in OMERS on January 1, 2011.

## Can I use my previous employment with another OMERS employer?

Yes, the conditions can be met through employment with one or more OMERS participating employers. If you worked for another participating OMERS employer, your previous employment period may help you to become eligible to enrol in OMERS sooner. You may even be eligible to enrol immediately.

Important: Your prior employment period must be recent and can be used even if you were not enrolled in OMERS with your prior employer.

If you wish to use this previous employment to help you meet the conditions for membership, please contact your current employer to find out what documentation you will need to provide.

## What is an example of an OMERS participating employer?

Over 900 Ontario municipal employers participate in OMERS. Examples include: cities, towns, villages, libraries, police, fire departments, school boards, children's aid societies, independent hydro utilities, health units, homes for the aged and many more.

If you are uncertain if your former employer is an OMERS participating employer, please contact OMERS Client Services at 1-800-387-0813 or 416-369-2444.

### How does an OMERS pension differ from an RRSP?

Both pensions and RRSPs are designed to provide retirement income. A pension is a promise of a regular income payment (usually monthly). An RRSP is an investment account that you can convert into a stream of income at retirement (e.g., by purchasing an annuity from an insurance company).

The retirement income you receive from an RRSP is based on the amount of contributions made and the investment income earned on those contributions over time. If investment returns are good, you will have more income; if they are poor, you will have less income. With this type of savings arrangement, it is not easy to estimate future retirement income and the RRSP-owner assumes the investment risk.

Unlike an RRSP, the OMERS Primary Pension Plan is a *defined benefit* pension plan. That means OMERS pays a specific pension according to a formula that is based on your years of membership in the plan and your earnings near retirement. Your OMERS pension income does *not* fluctuate with investment returns.

### The OMERS difference

OMERS provides great value for members, including:

- a predictable pension benefit, based on member earnings and service
- early retirement options
- a “bridge” benefit for members who retire before age 65
- inflation protection
- disability benefit options in the event a member becomes disabled and can’t work
- survivor benefits to protect a member’s family when a member dies
- the option to transfer monies and service from any public or private employer sponsored registered pension plan in Canada into OMERS to provide for a larger pension benefit upon retirement (subject to certain conditions).
- portability options for members who change their job before they retire – members can take their pension to over 900 OMERS employers across Ontario, and transfer options to other Canadian registered pension plans are available.

For over 45 years, OMERS has been providing world-class pension benefits to municipal and local government employees in Ontario. The OMERS Primary Plan is a multi-employer pension plan that serves over 280,000 municipal employees and pays a monthly pension to over 113,000 retired members, surviving eligible spouses and eligible children.

For more information about OMERS, visit the OMERS website at [www.omers.com](http://www.omers.com).



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