

## **Categories of Beneficiaries and Criteria for award of Non-Contributory State Pensions**

### **(i) The Legal and Institutional Framework**

1. The State Pension Programme is regulated under Chapter 23:81 for subordinate Police Officers (from Inspector downwards) and 23:80 for all other Public Officers who qualify for Pension Benefit, under the 1990 Revised Laws of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

All of the following categories of applicants must be on the Permanent Establishment.

a) Officers who, according to the Public Service (Amendment) Act No. 1 and Pensions (Amendment) Act No. 3 of 2005 opted to retire:

- at age 60 and were employed/appointed before February 1, 1976 will receive a monthly pension for life, providing that he/she served continuously for no less than ten (10) years.

Such an officer may be granted early retirement from age 55 (if approved by Cabinet) using the same criteria above.

- at age 55 and were appointed before February 1, 1976 will receive a monthly pension for life with the same provisions as those which obtain at age 60.

Such an officer may be granted early retirement from age 50 (if approved by Cabinet).

b) In the case of Officers appointed after February 1, 1976 the same Compulsory and optional ages apply. However, State Pension Benefits will only be awarded between the ages of 55 and 60 or 50 and 60, whichever is applicable.

In all categories the Dominica Social Security Scheme will award old age pension from age sixty (60), for life.

With respect to teachers and nurses, the compulsory retirement age is 60, and the optional, 55.

- c) The State's Pension Programme is a Non-contributory programme. A Contributory Pension Programme representing the Public and Private Sectors and self-employed individuals from age 60 is directed by the Dominica Social Security Scheme. It means therefore, that there are Retirees who benefit from both programmes at the same time.
2. Both programmes are established by law.
  3. a) The Programme is implemented through the following Government Offices in the following sequence:
    - the Accountant General's Office/Treasury Dept. is informed in Writing of the Officer's prospective retirement date by the Public/Police Service Commission, whichever is applicable. The Officer Himself/herself, the Director of Audit, the related Ministry/Dept.- all receive a copy of the said communication).
    - the Ministry concerned requests the Officer's Personal File from the Establishment & Personnel Services Dept./Police service Commission which are the Depts. Responsible for the safe-keeping and updating of personal records of all Government employees.
    - the necessary 'Pensions and Awards' forms (5-7 copies) are completed, included in P.F. and forwarded to the Accountant General's Office for processing/computation of benefits based on information contained in the personal records.
    - upon completion of computation the documents (including P.F.) are forwarded to the Office of the Director of Audit for verification of computation.
    - Once verified, all documents are returned to the Accountant General's Office for onward submission to the Financial Secretary's Office for approval of payment.

If there are any errors in computation or any discrepancy which will have a bearing on the outcome of the benefit to be paid , all documents are returned to the Accountant General's Office for follow-up action.

Approval for payment must be endorsed by the Minister for Finance.

The prospective pensioner is informed by letter through the Accountant General's Office of the award of pension benefits.

b) The actual monitoring of the programme is conducted by the Accountant General's Office .

## **(ii) Programme Costs and Coverage**

- 4) There are approximately 1143 beneficiaries annually.  
No records of Numbers re gender/age, etc. There are both male and Female pensioners, ages range from 50 and older with respect to the Public Service.
- 5) Islandwide/National – no geographical boundaries.
- 6) \$23,000,000 - \$25,000,000
- 7) Funding for programme obtained from local revenue/resources
- 8) No statistics available/No studies done by the Accountant General's Office.
- 9) I suggest that the question be directed to the Financial Secretary's Office.

See attached document for computations of Pension.

### **(iii) Implementation Procedures**

10. See response to 3 (a) of Part (i)
11. There are periodical discussions organized by the Public Service Training Centre. Official language is English- Spoken by the majority.
12. There is an established welfare service under the direction of the Ministry of Community Development.
13. Free health care is available to all Government-owned Institutions from age 60 for pensioners and non-pensioners alike.

### **(iv) Monitoring mechanisms and complaints procedures**

14. Monitoring procedures?
15. Complaint mechanisms?
16. Legal action taken against the program?

### **(v) Existing Studies and Evaluations of old age pensions**

17. & 18. Information was not available.

**Note: Information pertaining to laws and regulations with respect to police pension is attached for ease of reference.**

## **IV. Questionnaire**

Considering the above definition, please list and describe the old age pension programmes(s) implemented by the State including both contributory and non-contributory pensions. **In cases where there has been more than one programme implemented, please provide a separate reply to the questions below for each programme.** Please also provide distinct responses if the same programme had different implementation procedures during the last five years.

### **(i) The legal and institutional framework**

1. Provide details of the legal framework by which the programme(s) is established:  
Social Security Act Chapter 31:01 of the Revised Laws of Dominica (1990)

(a) Please indicate the retirement age/ eligibility age for the pension and if it takes into account the nature of the occupation (e.g. formal or informal employment) of the potential beneficiaries.

✓ **60 years, no account is taken of nature of occupation**

(b) Are there any restrictions, including a qualification period for receiving the pensions?

✓ **Yes, a minimum of ten (10) years contributions is required.**

(c) Please indicate whether it is a contributory or a non-contributory programme.

✓ **Contributory**

2. In the event that the programme is not established by law, please provide details of the administrative regulations or other relevant programmatic document available that are at the origin of its implementation.

✓ **N/A**

3. Please describe the institutional framework used to implement the programmes:

(a) Please indicate which governmental authorities, structures and mechanisms, including those at the federal, state/provincial, municipal and local level were involved in the design, implementation and monitoring of the programmes(s).

✓ **Dominica Social Security Board (which is appointed by the Minister)**

(b) Were civil society organizations involved in the elaboration of the legal framework, the implementation and monitoring of the programme(s)? If yes, please describe their role.

✓ **Yes, through consultation with stakeholder groups in order to get their input into changes being contemplated.**

(ii) **Programme costs and coverage**

4. Please indicate the number of beneficiaries of the programme (annually) if available, please provide details on their profile (eg. sex, age, ethnicity, origin..)

Five year summary data:

<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>No. of Pensions in Payment</b>	<b>No. of Lump Sum (Grants) Paid</b>
2004	2,971	143
2005	3,090	123
2006	3,191	139
2007	3,496	138

2008	3,775	164

5. Which geographical areas are covered by the programme in the country (national, regional, local)?

✓ **National**

6. What is the annual budget of the programme(s)? What is the percentage of the GDP does this constitute?

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
<b>Age Benefit</b>	16.56	17.67	19.64	23.22	25.97
<b>GDP ( Current Prices)</b>	611.4	641.27	671.13	702.32	734.45
<b>% of GDP</b>	2.71	2.76	2.93	3.31	3.54
<b>GDP (Constant Prices)</b>	428.21	442.48	459.35	467.71	477.37
<b>% of GDP</b>	3.87	3.99	4.28	4.96	5.44

7. Please give details and indicate the sources of funding utilised for the programmes(s) and the main costs involved at the various stages of implementation. In particular, is the programme operated with national, regional, local public resources? Are external resources used for this programme?

✓ **Contributions collected on earnings of employees—a percentage of which is paid by the employer—and self-employed persons constitutes the main source of income and this is supplemented by the income earned on surplus funds invested.**

✓ **No external resources are utilized for the programme.**

8. Please indicate approximately how many potential beneficiaries were not reached by the programme. Have studies been undertaken to assess the reasons for coverage gaps? Please provide details of their profile (eg. sex, age, ethnicity, origin) if available.

✓ **Data not available**

9. What is the average amount of the pensions in relation with the national average income or minimum salary? How is the pension calculated?

Average Minimum Wage (Annual)	Average Annual Pension Male	Average Annual Pension Female
<b>2008</b>		
E.C\$6,600.00	E.C\$8,327.00	E.C\$5,616.00

- ✓ **30% of average weekly insurable earnings for the first ten years of contributions, with incremental increases of 1% for every year thereafter. The average earnings are determined from the best ten of the last fifteen years of contributions.**

**(iii) Implementation procedures**

10. What procedures are utilised in order to pay the beneficiaries?

- ✓ **Review contribution history to ascertain cumulative contribution and, thereby, establish entitlement—i.e. weekly rate of pension.**
- ✓ **Based on entitlement, beneficiaries are paid through a Financial Institution on a fortnightly or monthly basis—as per request of claimant**

11. What procedures are utilized in order to inform beneficiaries about the programme? Is information made available in more than one language?

- ✓ **Brochures, through the media, stakeholders meetings, outreach meetings, visits to work places. Where necessary, information is imparted through use of local dialect.**

12. Were other services (such as social work, subsidised services) provided to the beneficiaries in connection to the pension? If yes, please describe them.

- ✓ **No**

13. Do beneficiaries of the programme access other public services at special conditions, in particular for health services?

- ✓ **No**

**(iv) Monitoring mechanisms and complaints procedures**

14. Please describe the monitoring procedures utilized in order to oversee the implementation of the programme(s) and the entities responsible for monitoring.

- ✓ **Requirements for submission of Certificate of Life Forms annually.**

15. Are there any complaints mechanisms or procedures attached to the programme, which are available for its implementation? If yes, please describe them.

- ✓ **Yes, appeal to a Tribunal.**

16. Have there been instances when any legal action was taken against the programme or those responsible for its implementation? If yes, what were the circumstances of the legal action and the basis for the complaint(s)?

✓ **No**

**(v) Existing studies and evaluations of old age pensions**

17. Please provide any studies, in particular needs assessments, utilised in order to develop the programme(s).

✓ **Triennial Actuarial evaluations**

**(vi) Other available social schemes that benefit older persons**

The Expert would welcome information pertaining to other social protection schemes that benefit older persons, in particular in-kind benefits such as user fees exemptions and subsidised services.

Please provide information about existing schemes guaranteeing that older persons have access to health services and essential drugs, housing support including access to water and sanitation, life-long education, social work and care services.

✓ **Recent decision by Government to exempt persons over 65 years of age from payment of user fees at Government health facilities.**

✓ **“Yes, We Care” programme—providing in-house care and supplies to older persons without such support and otherwise.**