

December 30th, 2022

OPG Rectifies Pension Beneficiary Issue for All Current Active and Retired Pension Plan Members

Members may recall the Bulletin we sent out on September 20th regarding OPG's unilateral announcement that they would be changing the eligibility for survivor pensions and benefits. We explained that, in the normal course, a married pension plan member will designate their spouse as the beneficiary of spousal benefits, which at OPG generally include both a survivor pension and other post-retirement benefits ("OPEBS" - mainly post-retirement health and dental benefits). In some circumstances, particularly where the member has both a spouse and a permanently disabled child, the member will seek to have the spousal benefits made payable to the dependent child after the surviving spouse is deceased.

OPG had notified some members of the OPG Pension Plan that, despite representations they've made in the past, the Plan would no longer allow for the designation of both a spouse and a dependent child as beneficiaries (one after the other), meaning a member could designate EITHER a spouse or a dependent child as their beneficiary, but not both.

The PWU filed grievance OPG-P-187 seeking to prevent OPG from eliminating the benefit to members and retirees of being able to designate both a spouse and disabled child as beneficiaries.

OPG has now announced an amendment to the OPG Pension Plan to allow members hired before January 1, 2023 (including retirees) to maintain the dual designation option. The PWU has reviewed the language of the Plan Amendment and has indicated that it will withdraw its grievance on a without prejudice or precedent basis once the Amendment is made.

We are pleased that the problem has been resolved for all PWU active members and retirees. New hires will be subject to the existing plan language allowing for the designation of either a spouse or child as beneficiary, but not both. However, unlike existing members and retirees, they would take their new job on those terms and, we expect, will not be promised anything different.

Members and retirees can now rest assured that their rights in this regard have been protected.

In Solidarity,

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