

**FIREFIGHTERS' PENSION SCHEMES
2018/06**

| | |
|-------------------------|---|
| WHO SHOULD READ: | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scheme members• Unions• Employers |
| ACTION: | To read and circulate to all appropriate parties |
| SUBJECT: | Implementation of a one stage Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure |

The purpose of this circular is to:

- Confirm the implementation of a one stage Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure with effect from 1 May 2018

This circular sets out the changes to SPPA's administration of the Scheme's IDRP appeal procedures.

Section 50 of the 1995 Pension's Act requires occupational pension schemes to provide a disputes procedure which allows someone with an interest in the scheme to ask for a matter in dispute to be resolved. SPPA's IDRP process currently incorporates two stages, but with effect from 1 May 2018 this will move to a one stage process. This includes appeals made on non-medical grounds, for example where a member disputes the level of their pension. Medical appeals arising from both the pension and compensation schemes will continue to be reviewed by a medical board provided by Health Management Ltd. There are no changes to the current processes for medical appeals.

In making this change, SPPA has consulted with the Scottish Firefighters' Pension and Scheme Advisory Boards which include stakeholders covering member and employer representatives. Details of the membership of both Boards are available on the SPPA website. SPPA has also consulted with The Pensions Ombudsman regarding this change.

The transition to a one stage process will provide a more focussed and resilient service for SPPA customers. This will remove some of the duplication that unavoidably occurs with a two stage process and will provide a quicker overall conclusion to a dispute. The Pensions Ombudsman supports a one stage process in providing a more timely outcome for individuals.

The process continues to ensure that the final IDRP decision will be independent of any consideration already provided by SPPA on the dispute.

Information on the new procedure will be available on the SPPA website. The IDRP guide and application form will be amended for the implementation date of 1 May 2018.

Any IDRP appeals received at SPPA prior to this date will be dealt with under the current two stage process.



It should be noted that this does not affect SPPA's Complaints Handling Procedures which will remain as a two stage process.

Lorraine Gallagher
Policy Business Manager
27 April 2018

Contact information

Please contact lorraine.gallagher@gov.scot if you have any enquiries about this circular.

Scottish Public Pensions Agency
7 Tweedside Park
Tweedbank
GALASHIELS
TD1 3TE

www.sppa.gov.uk
Telephone: 01896 893000



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

An agency of



The Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba