

Leaving PUBLICA

If your employment relationship is terminated and you are not yet entitled to retirement benefits, your insurance relationship with PUBLICA will come to an end. You will receive your vested benefits in the form of termination benefits. This document contains answers to frequently asked questions.

❏ Who is my contact at PUBLICA?

Information about your contact at PUBLICA can be found at publica.ch (under “Ihre Vorsorge” > “Ihre Ansprechperson”).

❏ I'm moving to a new job and leaving PUBLICA. What happens now?

Your termination benefits will be transferred to the pension fund of your new employer.

❏ What happens if I don't yet have a new employer when I leave PUBLICA?

Your termination benefits will be transferred to a vested benefits institution, i.e. a vested benefits account at a bank or a vested benefits policy at an insurance company. This transfer can be divided between a maximum of two payment addresses. If you wish to retain your death and disability cover, you can arrange continuing insurance with the Substitute Occupational Benefit Institution.

❏ I'm ending my employment relationship between the earliest possible regulatory pension age and the age of 65. Am I obliged to draw retirement benefits?

If you are continuing to work or are registered as unemployed you can request termination benefits instead of retirement benefits.

❏ Can I remain insured with PUBLICA even though my employment relationship has been terminated?

If the employment relationship is terminated after your 58th birthday but before you reach the ordinary retirement age, either by your employer or by mutual agreement but at your employer's instigation, you can continue to maintain your insurance coverage. If you wish to do so, you must notify PUBLICA in writing within three months of your employment relationship being terminated.

Who will notify PUBLICA about the termination of my employment relationship?

Your previous employer will inform PUBLICA of the termination of your employment relationship using the form available on publica.ch (under “Ihre Vorsorge” > “Vorsorgethemem” > “Austritt”). You do not need to give notice of termination of your insurance relationship yourself.

❏ How much will my termination benefits be?

Your termination benefits will be calculated on the basis of your insurance relationship. They consist of:

- the termination benefits as per the regulations *or*
- the termination benefits as set out in Article 17 of the Federal Act on the Vesting of Occupational Old Age, Survivors' and Disability Pensions (VBA), *or*
- the retirement assets as set out in Article 15 of the Federal Act on Occupational Old Age, Survivors' and Invalidity Pension Provision (BVG/OPA).

These three sums are compared to establish which is the highest, and that amount is then paid out. For further details, please see your most recent pension certificate. This will indicate the termination benefits you have acquired

as at 1 January of the year concerned. You can find further information about the pension certificate at publica.ch (> Ihre Vorsorge > Überblick).

☒ Who notifies PUBLICA of the address for payment?

Please tell your former employer as soon as possible where you wish your termination benefits to be transferred. They will then supply PUBLICA with the information required for the transfer using the departure form available at publica.ch (> Ihre Vorsorge > Vorsorgethemen > Austritt). This will ensure your payment is made as rapidly as possible. If, when the form is completed, it is not yet known where your termination benefits are to be transferred, PUBLICA will contact you. If we have not received a payment address within six months of your departure, we will transfer your termination benefits to an account in your favour at the Substitute Occupational Benefit Institution. Your termination benefits will earn interest until they are transferred. You can find the current interest rates at publica.ch (> Ihre Vorsorge > Überblick > Zinsen).

☒ Can I have my termination benefits paid out in cash?

You can request cash payment if:

- you are leaving Switzerland permanently (enclose a written confirmation of deregistration from your most recent place of residence in Switzerland; note: restrictions apply if you are moving to an EU member state, Iceland, Norway or the Principality of Liechtenstein.) For further details, please see our information sheet "Cash payment of vested benefits on departure to an EU or EFTA country" on the website publica.ch (Documentation > Information sheets) *or*
- you are taking up self-employment and are no longer subject to mandatory occupational pension provision (you must supply us with a confirmation from the compensation office that you are self-employed as well as additional documents demonstrating that your self-employed activity is your main occupation) *or*
- the termination benefits are less than your annual contribution.

☒ Does my spouse have to agree to cash payment?

In the case of married persons, we also require the written consent of the spouse in the form of a certified signature in order to effect any cash payment. For registered partnerships, we also require the certified signature of the partner.

Certification can be obtained in the following ways:

- at the offices of PUBLICA in Bern in the presence of a customer advisor (please register in advance by mail to info@publica.ch) *or*
- by a notary *or*
- by the commune *or*
- by the relevant Swiss embassy or consulate.

The person giving consent must also identify themselves by means of a valid personal identification document with photograph (passport, ID card, driving licence). The handwritten signature must be appended in person at one of the stipulated locations.

☒ What do I need to bear in mind about cash payment of termination benefits if I am not living in Switzerland or resident there for tax purposes?

When paying out termination benefits in cash to individuals who are not living in Switzerland or resident there for tax purposes, PUBLICA is obliged to deduct withholding tax and forward it to the tax authorities. The individual subject to withholding tax can, until the end of March of the following year, request a ruling on the status and scope of their tax liability. This request should be sent to the tax administration of the Canton of Bern (Steuerverwaltung des Kantons

Bern, Zentrale Veranlagungsbereiche, Quellensteuer, Postfach, 3001 Bern). Under certain circumstances, the withholding tax deducted may be reimbursed. Application forms can be obtained from the tax administration mentioned or at fin.be.ch (taxme.ch). Further information about withholding tax can be found in the information sheets on that website.

❑ **I am terminating my employment relationship before 1 January in the year in which I turn 21. How much will my termination benefits be?**

In this case you were only insured with PUBLICA for death and disability. Since you only paid contributions for those risks, you will not have acquired any retirement assets. For this reason, you will not receive any termination benefits unless you paid vested benefits into PUBLICA when you joined, in which case you will be entitled to those benefits plus interest. You can find information on interest rates at publica.ch (> Ihre Vorsorge > Überblick > Zinsen).

❑ **Will I be notified when my termination benefits have been transferred?**

Yes, you will receive a final departure statement from PUBLICA once the payment has been made.

❑ **What do I need to know about risk cover for death and disability after I leave?**

You remain insured with PUBLICA for the risks of death and disability for one month after your departure. If you enter into a new pension relationship before the end of that month, responsibility passes to your new pension institution.

❑ **Where can I obtain further information?**

Please address any questions you have directly to your contact at PUBLICA. You can find their details at publica.ch (> Ihre Vorsorge > Ihre Ansprechperson).