Fact Sheet

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Occupational Pension Fund of the Canton of Zurich (BVK)

Insured Employees
The staff of the University of Zurich are insured with the BVK, the occupational pension fund of the Canton of Zurich, with the exception of staff in junior academic positions, student assistants, and resident and attending physicians.

Terms of Admission
All staff (cf. Insured Employees) are insured with the BVK provided they are subject to the mandatory occupational benefits provision defined in the Swiss Occupational Pensions Act. The Act sets the minimum annual insured salary (incl. the 13th-month salary) at CHF 21,330.00 (since 1 January 2019). The annual gross salary of part-time employees must be at least equal to this amount.

Start of Insurance Coverage
Risk insurance: Risk insurance coverage begins on 1 January of the year in which the insured person completes the age of 18.
Full insurance: Full insurance coverage begins on 1 January of the year in which the insured person completes the age of 21.

Insured Salary
The insured salary forms the basis for the amount of contributions paid into the fund as well as for the calculation of risk benefits. The insured salary corresponds to the qualifying salary minus the coordination deduction. The coordination deduction is currently CHF 24,885 (since 1 January 2019), which is 7/8 of the maximum Swiss old-age and survivors’ pension.
For part-time employees, the insured salary is adjusted in accordance with the employment level. (For instance, if the employment level is 50%, the coordination deduction is CHF 12,442.50.)

Qualifying Salary
The qualifying salary is the fixed annual salary (incl. 13th-month salary) or the monthly or hourly wage calculated as an annual salary, in accordance with the Swiss Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Act. Regular allowances are deemed part of the qualifying salary.

Payments for treating privately or semi-privately insured patients are not part of the qualifying salary (cf. article 19 paragraph 2 of the BVK pension fund regulation). Occasional salary components are likewise not insured (cf. article 19 paragraph 3 of the BVK pension fund regulation).
Permanent and regular allowances include the following activities:

- Supplementary allowance
- Regular allowance
- Remuneration for night shift
- Stand-by duty on-site
- Lump sums for on-call duty
- Night shift hours, incl. vacation
- Stand-by availability
- Sat/Sun duty
- Dental: emergency duty/assistant
- Dental: plaster models
- Dental: payment for instruction
- Sat/Sun daytimework
- On-call duty, night shift forensic medicine
- On-call duty, day shift forensic medicine
- Remuneration for dean’s office position insured in pension fund

**Unpaid Leave**

Detailed information about unpaid leave is available under “Unpaid Leave” or in the BVK pension fund regulation articles 25 and 26.

**Investments to Increase Savings Balance in Pension Fund**

Insured persons are entitled to invest in order to increase their savings balance. Insured employees must contact BVK directly to learn whether they are eligible to invest and, if so, in what amount, cf. the table in Appendix V of the BVK pension fund regulation since 1 January 2019. Data privacy rules dictate that the Human Resources department has no access to data on the complete insurance coverage of employees. General information about investments can be obtained directly at www.bvk.ch.

**Cohabiting Partners**

Cohabiting partnerships, also in the case of same-sex couples, are deemed equal to marriage if all the following conditions are met:

- Neither partner is married, the partners do not have a registered partnership, nor are they closely related so as to prohibit a marriage or a registered partnership;
- At the time of the insured person’s death, the partners maintained a common household that can be proven to have lasted at least five years without interruption;
- The reciprocal duty to support one another was agreed in writing and the agreement was submit-ted to BVK within three months of the death of the insured person. Further information can be found in the BVK pension fund regulations article 54, paragraph 2.

The surviving partner may claim benefits in accordance with articles 48 - 51 of the BVK pension fund regulations, with the exception of cases in which the surviving partner currently receives survivors’ benefits from an occupational pension fund or received a lump-sum payment from an occupational pension fund in the amount of the conversion rate of the pension.
Human Resources

Home Ownership Support
Every five years an insured person can claim an amount for residential property for their own use for:

a) the acquisition and construction of residential property,
b) a share of a residential property, or
c) repayment of a mortgage.

More information can be found in the pension fund regulation article 65, para. 1-8.

Pension Termination Benefits without an Insured Event
Insured persons under the age of 60 who leave their employer and thus BVK for a reason other than retirement, death, or disability (a so-called insured event) are entitled to claim their savings capital as a vested benefits payout. This also applies to insured persons who, in accordance with Article 27, paragraph 2 of the BVK pension fund regulations, are requesting a vested benefits payout instead of an old-age pension.

The amount of the vested benefits payout corresponds to the savings balance at the time an employment relationship ends, in accordance with article 15 of the Swiss Federal Vested Benefits Act.

Upon entering the service of a new employer, all assets are transferred to the registered pension fund of the new employer. If this is not possible, the insured person informs the BVK whether he or she wishes to maintain the pension protections as defined in the federal provisions by concluding a vested benefits policy or opening a vested benefits account. If no such instructions are sent, the BVK transfers the assets, including interest, to the BVG Substitute Occupational Benefit Institution after a minimum of six months and a maximum of two years after the insured person was entitled a vested benefits payout.