Fact Sheet
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VSAO Employee Benefits Scheme

Insured Employees
Staff in a junior academic position, student assistants, and resident and attending physicians.

Terms of Admission
The insurance covers employees with an annual qualifying salary that is at least the minimum salary defined in Article 7 paragraph 1 of the Swiss Occupational Pensions Act (BVG) (CHF 21,330, as of 2019). Remuneration for overtime and other occasional allowances are not insured. In the case of part-time employment, the minimum annual salary can be reduced in accordance with the employment level. Detailed information is provided in Articles 3.1 and 3.2 of the VSAO’s regulations.

Start of Insurance Coverage
Insurance coverage begins with the start of the employment relationship. Insurance for the risks of death and disability, however, begins at the earliest on 1 January after the employee reaches the age of 17. Insurance for old-age benefits begins at the earliest on 1 January after the employee reaches the age of 24.

Insured Annual Salary
The insured annual salary corresponds to the annual qualifying salary minus the coordination deduction. The coordination deduction is 7/8 of the maximum Swiss old-age and survivors’ pension of CHF 28,440.00 (7/8 = CHF 24,885.00), status as of 2019. For part-time employees, the coordination deduction is calculated as a corresponding percentage (e.g. if the employment level is 50%, the coordination deduction is CHF 12,442.50).

Regular allowances are deemed part of the insured salary. These include the following:
- Supplementary allowance
- Regular allowance
- Remuneration for night duty
- Emergency duty
- Lump sums for on-call duty
- Remuneration for night duty incl. vacation
- On-call duty, off site
- Sat/Sun duty
- Dental: emergency duty/assistant
- Dental: plaster models
- Dental: payment for instructor
- Sat/Sun daytime work
- On-call duty, night shift forensic medicine
- On-call duty, day shift forensic medicine
- Regular remuneration for dean’s office position
Unpaid Leave
If employees take unpaid leave and then resume their previous activity, they have the option of maintaining their risk insurance at their own cost. They can take out risk insurance for a period ranging from a minimum of 14 days to a maximum of two years. The application for maintaining of the risk insurance must be submitted to the VSAO before the unpaid leave begins. Further information is available under “Unpaid Leave” or in Appendix 3 of the VSAO’s regulations.

Buy-Ins to Increase Old-Age Benefits
Insured persons can make buy-ins to increase their old-age benefits in the form of voluntary deposits (regulatory buy-ins) before they become entitled to old-age benefits or a full disability pension. Such deposits are credited to the non-mandatory retirement assets. The maximum allowable individual buy-in can be calculated using the information in Appendix 1 of the VSAO’s regulations. The provisions of Articles 79b BVG and 60a to 60d BVV 2 must be complied with in all cases. This restriction does not apply to buy-ins resulting from transfers of pension termination benefits in connection with a divorce.

Partner’s Pensions for Concubinage Partners
The surviving concubinage partner of a deceased insured person is entitled to a partner’s pension from the first day of the next month after the insured person’s death, but at the earliest when the continued salary payment ceases, if, at the time of the insured person’s death, he or she

a. has at least one joint child to support or
b. is over the age of 45, the concubinage relationship existed without interruption for the last five years of the insured person’s life and the insured person lived for the last five years of his or her life in a shared apartment with the partner
c. and the reciprocal duty to support was agreed in writing on the corresponding VSAO form, which was submitted to the VSAO while both partners were living.

The surviving concubinage partner must supply proof that he or she meets all named requirements.

Home Ownership Support
Actively insured persons are entitled to cash in or pledge assets from the pension fund to finance buying a home for personal use up to three years before the entitlement to receive old-age benefits takes legal effect. Conditions and the amount of eligible funds are defined in accordance with the legal provisions.
Death and disability benefits are not reduced if an employee cashes in or pledges assets. Further provisions are set out in point 5.6.1 of the VSAO’s regulations.

Retirement
The statutory age of retirement is when the insured person reaches the age of 65. Early retirement is possible at the age of 58 at the earliest. Any reductions in benefits are borne by the insured person.
Partial Entitlement to Old-Age Benefits
Until the final withdrawal of old-age benefits, actively insured persons may request partial payout of their old-age benefits up to a maximum of two times if their employment level is reduced by at least 20% of a full-time position from their employment level prior to partial retirement and an employment level of at least 20% of a full-time position remains.
Old-age benefits are generally administered in the form of a retirement pension. The actively insured person may also apply to receive a full or partial payout of the old-age savings balance in the form of a lump-sum payment instead of a retirement pension. A corresponding communication must be submitted in writing to the VSAO at least one month before the entitlement to receive benefits takes legal effect. Written agreement of the spouse is required for insured persons who are married.
In all cases, the savings balance is paid out as a lump sum instead of as a retirement pension if the retirement pension is less than 10% of the minimum Swiss old-age and survivors’ pension.

Temporary Disability Pensions
Temporary disability pensions are paid in the event of disability of at least 25% that is expected to be lasting. In the case of partial disability, the benefits are determined according to the degree of disability. Full disability pensions are payable for degrees of disability of 70% or higher. For a disability pension to be paid, the insured person must – after meeting the formal requirements for entitlement – have claimed a pension from the Federal Disability Insurance (IV) or the responsible social security provider and have been recognized as disabled by the IV. He or she must also have been insured with the VSAO upon commencement of the incapacity whose cause led to the disability.
The insured person is not entitled to a pension while receiving daily allowance payments from the disability insurance (IV).
For detailed information on this, please see point 5.4.1 of the VSAO’s regulations.

Departure from the Pension Fund without a Pension Claim
If the employment relationship is terminated without pension benefits becoming due, the insured person leaves the VSAO and receives pension termination benefits. The amount of the pension termination benefits corresponds to the old-age savings balance at the time of departure, but shall be at least the minimum amount defined in Article 17 of the Vested Benefits Act (FZG). Pension termination benefits are calculated according to the defined contribution principle pursuant to Article 15 paragraph 2 FZG. For further information on this, please see point 5.5 of the VSAO’s regulations.