

BCGREA MEMBERSHIP GUIDANCE

March 2026

BCGREA MEMBERSHIP:

Persons receiving a pension from a plan administered by the British Columbia Pension Corporation, and/or their spouses, are eligible for Membership. The surviving partner of a person who received a pension from a plan administered by the BCPC is eligible to continue their membership but will need to provide a new Person ID (PID¹) once their spouse's pension has been transferred into their name (if applicable).

TYPES OF MEMBERS:

The Association membership consists of **Active Members, Honoured Members, Life Members and Associate Members.**

Every person receiving a superannuation allowance under the Pension (Public Service) Act of British Columbia, and their spouse, is eligible for enrollment as an **Active Member** upon application and payment of dues in accordance with the Association Bylaws.

Every person receiving a pension under a Plan administered by the Pension Corporation or its successor, other than the Pension (Public Service) Plan, shall be eligible for enrollment as an **Associate Member** upon application and payment of dues in accordance with the Association Bylaws. Associate Members can attend meetings but cannot vote or hold office.

Active Members who have paid dues continuously for twenty years become **Life Members.** Active Members who have rendered distinguished service to the Association are eligible for **Honoured Membership.**

For a broader definition regarding membership categories, see BCGREA Policies And Procedures contained in the bylaws available on the BCGREA website at:
<http://bcgre.ca/constitution-bylaws/#2>.

DUES:

New PSPP recipient member applicants must pay their annual dues by having payments deducted (DCO) annually from their February pension payment by the Pension Corporation. The current year's dues are waived for the first year for new (or converting) DCO applicants, including those members joining/converting in January and February, because the DCO deductions commence the following year.

¹ Person ID (PID) is a unique 8-digit number, beginning with either a 1 or a 2, that the Pension Corporation assigns to every member when they start contributing to a pension plan. They can be found at the top right of any official correspondence that the Pension Corporation sends to the member (such as the member's benefit statement). They are also the first 8 digits (after RPS) on the member's Greenshield EHC card IF THE MEMBER IS THE ORIGINAL PENSION CONTRIBUTOR. **The beneficiary spouse of a member will have a new PID assigned to them when they start to receive the survivor pension.**

New **non-PSPP recipient** applicants are not eligible to pay their dues by DCO, so they must pay the dues for the year of application at the time of joining the Association.

Honoured and **Life** members who achieved that designation **prior to January 1, 2010 were exempted from paying annual dues.** Those members who achieved their designation after January 1, 2010, are recognized for their achievement but continue to pay annual dues.

Dues Payments

Existing members not on DCO must pay their dues by cheque, cash or electronically by January 2nd of each year.

If a cash member wishes to change to DCO, they should contact the Branch Membership Chair or Central Support (CS) to provide their PID. **CS will verify if their PID is from the Public Service Pension Plan and thereby eligible for DCO.** If they can convert to DCO, their current year's fees will be waived and payment will start in February of the year after their request.

Non-PSPP recipient and "grandfathered cash pay member's" dues collection may be done by CS if the Branch requests that service. CS will be able to accept payment electronically, cheque or money order. If the branch chooses to collect the dues, those dues should be transferred to the Provincial Treasurer according to a schedule outlined in the financial guidelines.

DATABASE/MEMBERSHIP LIST:

CS has been assigned the responsibility for updating and maintaining the Central Membership Database (CMD). The current format for the CMD is the **Findjoo** online database and it is organized to capture as much contact information as reasonably possible for each member. CS will prepare Branch specific reports for each of the branches monthly and upload them to the appropriate folder in the **Sync.com** secure FTP site for downloading and use by the branches. The standard output format is an Excel spreadsheet. Reports include current, resigned and deceased members' records. New entries since the last update are highlighted in **Yellow**.

Note that using Sync is mandatory for transferring files with significant amounts of member's personal data. Sending membership lists as email attachments is NOT secure and contravenes our Information Sharing Agreement with the PSPP.

If a branch membership person would like training to use Findjoo and/or Sync secure storage, they should contact Jodine to arrange it.

CENTRAL SUPPORT MANAGER: Jodine Ducs

Tel: 1-250-751-8814, Info@bcgre.ca.

Jodine's duties are to maintain the CMD using updates received from Branch Membership Chairs or individual members and to receive and respond to phone calls and emails concerning Association membership queries. She is also responsible for submitting the list of DCO members to Pension Corporation in January of each year for automatic dues deductions from members'

February pension payment. Central Support receives monthly obituary notices of retirees from the Pension Corporation and updates the CMD.

Membership Chairs should have a critical look at their database to ensure changes have been made and saved. The easiest way to do this quickly may be to review the “Last Update” column in the monthly membership report to see when the latest change was made to a record. The current Information Sharing Agreement with the Pension Corporation allows us to receive updated address printouts for all members that we have a valid Person ID (PID) for, so it is beneficial to request a PID for all members (even those who are exempt from paying dues) so we can keep their contact information current. The address reports are provided to CS in March and September of each year, allowing a semi-annual update on addresses.

LIFE AND HONOURED MEMBERS:

1. Members are eligible for **Life Member** recognition after 20 years of continuous dues payments and this is done at the branch level. Some branches provide a certificate, pin and life membership card. Pins are currently available for purchase through the Merchandise Committee and life membership cards can be requested from CS. The Branch establishes recognition practices.
2. Members who have rendered distinguished service to the Association at either the Provincial or Branch level are eligible for **Honoured Member** recognition. Candidates for Honoured Membership are nominated and recommended at a regular Branch meeting and the recommendation is forwarded in writing to the Provincial Secretary to be presented at a Provincial Directors Meeting or AGM for approval or rejection by a majority vote. The approved candidate is presented a certificate and pin at time of approval. The Branch Membership Chair will request a laminated Honoured Card from Central Support for presentation to the member.
3. The CMD will be updated to reflect the Life or Honoured recognition and to track whether they are exempt from paying dues.

REPORTING OF CONTACT INFORMATION CHANGES TO CENTRAL SUPPORT:

1. It is important to be aware that every member with a valid email address on file in the CMD can update their contact details by signing into the Member Portal on the BCGREA homepage.
2. If a Branch Membership Chair is notified of a change of address, phone number or email address by email, they will forward the notice to Central Support for updating in the CMD or update the Findjoo CMD directly if they are authorized and trained.
3. If a Branch Membership Chair is notified of a change of address, phone number or email address by a letter, phone call or personal contact, they will summarize the new contact information in an email and send it to Central Support for updating in the CMD or update the Findjoo CMD directly if they are authorized and trained.

FEBRUARY DCO DEDUCTIONS BY PENSION CORPORATION:

The Pension Corporation uses Person Identification Numbers (PIDs) to enable dues deductions and **accuracy of the PID is critical.**

It is also necessary to ensure that the member receives their pension from the Public Service Pension Plan. The simplest and most effective way to confirm this is to ask the member which pension plan they are a member of. Alternatively, an Employer list published yearly in Pension Corporation Annual Report will indicate if the Ministry of member employment is valid for DCO purposes. The Employer list can be obtained from CS or see the appendix of the Annual Report available on the Public Service Pension Plan website at: <https://pspp.pensionsbc.ca/web/public-service/annual-report>. Alternatively, check with the member to confirm which agency pays their pension.

1. After receipt of Central Support's DCO information in early February, the Pension Corporation deducts the dues from the member's February pension cheque.
2. Upon completion, Pension Corporation forwards reports and a cheque for the total amount of Member deductions to the Provincial Association Treasurer in March.
3. The Provincial Treasurer allocates the funds based on the formula of \$10/ registered member in the branch less the branch bank balance on December 31 of the previous year. If the branch bank balance exceeds the calculated amount, no payment will be made for that fiscal / calendar year.

NEW MEMBER APPLICATIONS

1. RECEIVED BY CENTRAL SUPPORT

With our online application process through Findjoo, most new member applications are received by CS and are checked for completeness and CS will contact the applicant if more information is required. The member information will be entered into the CMD, a copy of the application form will be posted to a sub-folder of the Branch folder on Sync.com and the Branch Membership chair will be notified of new members via the monthly membership report. **It is not necessary to print off or retain a paper copy of the application at the branch.**

CS will prepare a permanent, laminated card for new members (if requested) and mail it to the applicant. If the card has been mailed to the applicant, the monthly membership report will have a "Yes" in the column labelled "Laminated Card".

Branches should also consider sending a welcome letter to new members that lists meeting dates and has any current Branch information.

2. RECEIVED BY BRANCH

If the application is received as an email attachment, it should be forwarded directly to CS for entry into the CMD. If the application is a paper submission, the application needs to be either mailed to CS or scanned and sent digitally. CS will complete the data entry and will mail out a laminated card(s) to members. Once the application has been uploaded to the Sync sub-folder, it

is not necessary to retain a paper copy. If a paper copy is retained, it should be stored securely or, alternatively, shredded.

BRANCH TRANSFERS:

Members in good standing may transfer their membership to another Branch and shall carry all seniority and privileges of membership to that Branch. When a member moves to a new branch and wants to transfer their membership, the membership chair who is contacted by the member requesting a transfer will contact CS to detail the wishes of the member and CS will change the branch designation in the CMD. The other impacted branch will be informed of the changes by CS through the monthly membership report. CS will issue a new laminated membership card in accordance with the member's wishes.

DEATH OF A DCO MEMBER:

1. In the event the annuitant dies, the Branch will notify CS and the annuitant will be removed from the CMD. If the spouse is the beneficiary of the annuitant's pension, they can resume DCO using their newly assigned PID.
 - (a) The Branch Membership Chair or CS will advise the spouse of the option to continue membership with BCGREA and will request the new PID. This information will be relayed to CS.
 - (b) If the surviving spouse is not receiving a (survivor) pension from a plan administered by the Pension Corporation, they are allowed to continue their membership but will have to pay their annual dues by cash, cheque or electronically.

Every attempt should be made to update the status of surviving spouses with CS before the end of the calendar year to allow smooth transition for DCO.