



# WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

## Partial withdrawal guidelines

The Fiji National Provident Fund Board recently approved changes to the Partial Withdrawal policies for members, which came into effect on April 6, 2009. The changes have been implemented to safeguard the core function of the Fund, that of a savings scheme, to ensure members are financially secure when they retire. These changes are aimed at strengthening and adding value to the retirement benefits of members. This two page lift-out detail the new guidelines and requirements for each ground of withdrawal. Apart from meeting the requirement for withdrawals, members need to pay a \$20 processing fee with each application. For more information contact any of our officers at the Information Centre on (679) 330 7811 or email your queries to info@fnpf.com.fj

### 1. EDUCATION ASSISTANCE SCHEME

#### Local Education Assistance Guidelines

The member is permitted use of funds within Education eligibility for the following:

- Form 7 and tertiary level education and other equivalent courses recognised by the Ministry of Education and/or TPAF Accreditation.
- FNPF will assist tuition fees for secondary school education only for students with special needs to attend special schools where there is an Assessment report from a qualified specialist submitted stating that the student/child has special needs or is mentally challenged.
- Education is for member, spouse, children, brother/sister only. If the student to be assisted is a member of the Fund and has eligibility for education assistance, the member applying will not be permitted the use of his/her funds.
- The maximum assistance for tuition fees is \$2,000 per student per semester.
- Accommodation and meals at hostels approved / recognised under the FNPF education assistance scheme. The maximum assistance for accommodation will be benchmarked with USP small room charges.
- The Fund does not assist short courses running less than a total of 90 hours.

#### Documents to be Submitted with Application

- The member must apply on the prescribed application Form (PW02) for education assistance and completed forms and documents of evidence must be originals.
- Evidence for tuition fees
  - Invoice from institute confirming tuition fees to be paid.
  - Documents confirming relationship of the student to the member.
- Evidence for accommodation
  - Evidence from institute that student is an enrolled tertiary student.
  - Invoice for accommodation from institute or hostel.
  - Documents confirming relationship of the student to the member.

#### Method of Payment

Payment is made direct to the school or institute.

#### Overseas Education Assistance Guidelines

- Assistance is for the member, spouse and/or children only.
- Assistance is for tuition fees and accommodation costs for

- Assistance may also be extended for Incidental Expenses not exceeding \$5,000.
- The amount applied for must be within the member's Education eligibility.
- The maximum withdrawal permitted is F\$20,000 per student per year inclusive of incidental expenses not exceeding \$5,000.
- If both parents are applying for the same student, their joint withdrawal should not exceed F\$20,000 for the one student.
- Where member's eligibility is less than 50% of the full cost of the course, the member must show evidence of funds to cover the difference.
- Payment will be made direct to the institute and/or member's bank account.
- Payment overseas is made by bank draft or telegraphic transfer and the related bank fees will be paid for by the member from the funds withdrawn.

#### Documents to be submitted with application

- The member must apply using application Form W30/3.
- Acceptance letter and invoice from overseas tertiary institute stating the duration of the course, details of fees, due dates for fees payment and school bank account details.
- Certified copies of the student's passport pages showing details of passport holder, the validity of the passport and the student's visa covering the period of study.
- If the visa is not available at the time of application, approval will be granted on the condition that payment will be processed after sighting the student's visa or Approval in Principle letter submitted with:
  - a signed Memorandum of Understanding between the member and FNPF
  - a signed Indemnity from the member.
- Evidence of other funds where FNPF eligibility or funds applied for do not cover the full course costs. Documents confirming the relationship of the student to the member.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's bank account number for payment deposits.

For accommodation

- Evidence from the institute that student is an enrolled tertiary student
- Invoice for accommodation from the institute or hostel.

**Method of Payment** Payment is made direct to the school/institute, and/or member.

### 2. LOCAL AND OVERSEAS MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

Where a member, his/her spouse, parents and children require medical treatment locally or overseas due to an urgent medical condition, and has produced satisfactory evidence of the same, the Fund may permit the member to withdraw part of the funds in his/her account to assist with the related expenses.

#### Guidelines

- The assistance is for the member, spouse, parents and children only.
- The amount applied for must be within the member's Partial eligibility.
- Where the member's eligibility is less than 50% of the cost of the full treatment, FNPF may request evidence of other funds available to meet the shortfall before releasing any FNPF funds.

#### Documents to be Submitted with Application (Local Treatment)

- The member must apply on the prescribed application Form (W30/3).
- Evidence of relationship of the patient to the member.
- Recent detailed medical report from a doctor registered under Part II of the Medical Practitioners Act.
- Breakdown of cost of treatment from medical institution where the patient is undergoing treatment.
- Documents of evidence from the member's banker confirming the member's bank account number for payment deposits.

#### Documents to be Submitted with Application (Overseas Treatment)

- Evidence of relationship of the patient to the member.
- Referral from patient's local doctor for overseas treatment.
- Confirmation letter from the overseas hospital on patient's treatment, date of admission, length of stay and breakdown of cost of treatment.
- A letter confirming and detailing medical coverage from the insurance company where the patient has a medical insurance cover.
- Certified copies of the patient's passport pages showing details of passport holder and the validity of the passport.
- Letter from employer confirming leave granted if patient is currently employed.
- Visa to cover period of medical treatment is to be produced before payment is released. (Approval will be granted, but payment processing will be subject to a copy of the visa submitted to the Fund).
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's bank account number for payment deposits.

#### Method of Payment

- Payment will be made to the member and or medical institute / insurance companies depending on the urgency of funds to be paid before the treatment and arrangements between the member and the institute.
- Payment overseas will be made by bank draft or telegraphic transfer and the related bank fees will be paid for by the member from the funds withdrawn.

### 3. FUNERAL ASSISTANCE

Funeral assistance will be provided to members who are facing financial difficulties caused by the death of immediate family members and to assist in acquiring the immediate requirements for burial or cremation of their recently deceased family member.

#### Guidelines

- Assistance is for funeral expenses of the member's spouse, children, parents, brother and/or sister.
- The amount applied for must be within Partial withdrawal and housing eligibility.
- The maximum withdrawal permitted is F\$1,500 for each funeral.
- Payment is made direct to the member.

#### Documents to be submitted with application

- The member must apply using application Form W30/3
- Certified copies of the Notice to the undertaker or Medical certificate of cause of death, stamped and signed by the hospital medical superintendent/SDMO prior to burial/cremation.
- Police Order for Burial
- Evidence of relationship of deceased to the member
- Completed 'Additional Information' Form
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's bank account number for payment deposits

**Method of Payment** Payment is made direct to the member's bank account.

### 4. UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Where a member is unemployed, FNPF will permit the member to withdraw part of the balance in his/her account to assist with basic needs such as education, medical and housing for him/her and his/her immediate family members within the set guidelines.

#### Guidelines

- The assistance is for needs of the member, his spouse, parents or children only.
- The assistance is for housing, education or medical needs.
- The member should have unemployment eligibility.

- The maximum withdrawal permitted is F\$500.
- This assistance is permitted only once a calendar year.

#### Documents to be submitted with application

- The member must apply on the prescribed application Form (W30/3).
- Housing - evidence of hardship for housing purposes.
- Medical - evidence of hardship for medical purposes.
- Education:
  - Letter / invoice from school confirming child is enrolled and stating fees owing.
  - Birth certificate of student to show relationship to the member.
- Termination letter from employer within the last six months. Alternative verification such as FNPF contribution history and other means as proof of an unemployed member shall be accepted.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

### 5. EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES OVERSEAS

The Fund permits members to withdraw funds for assisting them with settling into a new country of employment.

#### Guidelines

- The member cannot withdraw to assist anyone else.
- The maximum assistance permitted is F\$5,000.
- The member may use Partial eligibility only.

#### Documents to be submitted with application

- The member must apply on the prescribed application Form (W30/3).
- Certified copy of member's letter of recruitment and employment contract from overseas employer.
- Certified copies of the member's passport pages showing details of the passport holder and the validity of the passport.
- Certified copies of the member's visa and work permit for the country to be employed in.
- Acceptance of resignation from employer.
- Ticket for travel or travel itinerary to the country of employment.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

#### Method of Payment

- Payment can be made into a member's bank account in Fiji or overseas or by a bank draft posted to a reliable address.
- Any bank charges for the purchase of a bank draft or telegraphic transfer will be deducted from the member's withdrawal payment.

### 6. RE-EMPLOYMENT FOR SECURITY SERVICES OVERSEAS

The Fund permits members to withdraw funds for self, spouse, parents and children for overseas security services recruitment.

#### Guidelines

- The maximum assistance permitted is F\$5,000 within Partial eligibility only.
- Assistance is permitted once only per person.

#### Documents to be submitted with application

- The member must apply on the prescribed application Form (W30/3).
- Certified copy of recruitment letter and/or employment contract
- Certified copies of the member's passport pages showing details of the passport holder and the validity of the passport.
- Certified copies of the member's visa for the country of employment.
- Acceptance of resignation from employer if employed in the last six months.
- Ticket for travel or travel itinerary to the country of employment.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

#### Method of Payment

- Payment can be made into a member's bank account in Fiji or overseas or by a bank draft posted to a reliable address overseas subject to visa.
- Any bank charges for the purchase of a bank draft or telegraphic transfer will be deducted from the member's withdrawal payment.

### 7. RESETTLEMENT OVERSEAS ON PROVISIONAL RESIDENCY VISA

Where members have been granted provisional residency visas waiting to meet other criteria for full permanent residency, FNPF permits them to withdraw part of their funds to assist with settling in the new country of residency.

#### Guidelines

- The member cannot withdraw to assist anyone else.
- The member may use Partial eligibility to a maximum of \$10,000.

#### Documents to submit with application

- The member must apply on the prescribed application form (W30/3).
- Certified copy of member's provisional residency visa for country of intended permanent residency.
- Certified copies of the member's passport pages showing details of the passport holder and the validity of the passport.
- Employer's letter accepting the member's resignation.
- Letter stating that the member has no intention to return to Fiji to reside or work in the next twelve months.
- One-way ticket for travel or travel itinerary to country of employment.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

#### Method of Payment

- Payment can be made into a member's bank account in Fiji or overseas or by a bank draft posted to a reliable address overseas.
- Any bank charges for the purchase of a bank draft or telegraphic transfer will be deducted from the member's withdrawal payment.

### 8. PRE-RETIREMENT ASSISTANCE

This assistance has been suspended

### 9. PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL BY MEMBERS OVER 55 YEARS OF AGE

Where members are over the age of 55 years and are still members of FNPF, the Fund permits them to withdraw funds at any time for their various needs.

#### Guidelines

- The member must be 55 years of age according to FNPF records.
- There is no limit to the amount applied for.
- The member must complete an Indemnity form indemnifying the Fund of any loss of benefit where the withdrawal of funds would affect the pensionable amount that would be payable when the member withdraws fully on the age of 55 years.
- Payment is made direct to the member.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming member's bank account number for payment deposits.
- A processing fee of F\$20 is applicable for every withdrawal made and there must be a minimum standing balance of F\$1,000 in the member's account.

#### Documents to be submitted with the application

- The member must make an application using Form W30/3.
- Birth certificate where member has not withdrawn under Ground 1 and is applying for the first time under this assistance.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

#### Method of Payment

Payment is made direct to the member's bank account within three working days.

### 10. PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL OF FUNDS - EXCESS CONTRIBUTIONS

Excess contributions are contributions paid in excess of the statutory contribution rate. Section 30(3) of the FNPF Act allows members to withdraw these contributions at any time subject to guidelines approved by the Board.

#### Guidelines

- Excess contributions withdrawal can be permitted only if the member has an excess contribution balance.
- Documents of evidence not required.
- Members can only withdraw 50% of their total excess contribution balance once in a calendar year.
- Any other partial withdrawal made by a member with an excess balance, will be treated as if it is an excess contribution withdrawal and reduce the excess balance first.

#### Documents to submit with application

- The member must make an application using Form W30/3.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

#### Method of Payment

Payment is made direct to the member's bank account within three working days.

### 11. LOW INCOME EARNERS (GROSS WAGES LESS THAN F\$150 PER WEEK)

This policy provides the guidelines for the processing of member benefits for low income earners.

#### Guidelines

- This assistance will be available to all low-income earners who earn gross wages less than F\$150 per week for 37 working hours.
- This policy only allows for members who want to apply for their own and next of kin's educational expenses.

- The assistance to these members will be subject to the individual member's Education eligibility and for hardship in the education related expenses only.
- The maximum amount applicable for this scheme is F\$500 per calendar year.

#### Documents to be submitted with application

- The current pay slip of the member is required to verify the gross wages.
- Documents of evidence and detail of hardship is necessary where applicable to support the request for financial assistance.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

#### Method of payment

This assistance will be paid directly into the member's bank account and / or others.

### 12. SHORT TERM RE-EMPLOYMENT FOR TOUR OF DUTY

This policy permits a member to withdraw part of the balance of his/her account to assist with his/her family's short term basic needs while away overseas on tour of duty.

#### Guidelines

- The member cannot withdraw to assist anyone else.
- The member may use partial eligibility only.
- The maximum amount applicable for this scheme is F\$500 only.

#### Documents to be submitted with the application

- The member must make an application on the prescribed application form (W30/3).
- Certified copies of the member's passport pages showing details of the passport holder and the validity of the passport.
- Certified copies of the member's visa for the country to be employed in.
- Certified copy of recruitment letter/ employment contract attested by the Ministry of Labour.
- Certified copy of Ministry of Labour licence for the local recruiting agent.
- Member's name to be confirmed on the listing provided by the Ministry concerned.
- Evidence from the member's Bank confirming the member's account number.

#### Method of Payment

This assistance is paid directly into the member's bank account, and/or others.

### Applications that do not meet the above requirements will not be accepted

#### REMEMBER!

*It is important for you to leave enough money in your FNPF account for your future. Any withdrawals accessed under approved grounds will reduce the amount available for your retirement. Therefore, plan your withdrawals wisely, as it will affect your retirement fund.*