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Information sheet on continued insurance for external insured persons (external insurance in accordance with Art. 47a OPA)

Since 1 January 2021, insured persons over the age of 58 have been able to voluntarily continue their insurance with Asga, provided that their employment relationship was terminated by the employer. The new article 47a OPA introduces many new features for our insured persons, and will probably also raise some questions. We have summarised the main answers to them for you:

1. Who can take out continuing voluntary insurance – and who cannot do so?

Insured persons who no longer have compulsory insurance after their 58th birthday because their employment relationship was terminated by their employer can continue their insurance voluntarily.

A severance agreement between the employer and the employee will be treated in the same way as termination by the employer, if the employee provides written evidence that the severance was initiated by the employer.

Insured persons who have terminated their employment relationship themselves and self-employed persons who voluntarily join an occupational benefit scheme cannot benefit from continuing voluntary insurance in accordance with Art. 47a OPA.

Voluntary continued insurance in accordance with Art. 47a OPA is only possible for insured members who are also insured under the Swiss OASI system.

2. What does voluntary continued insurance mean?

The insured person has the possibility of continuing:
- at least the risk insurance (disability and death)

or additionally
- the pension scheme (savings process)

. In both instances, the termination payment is retained by Asga even if only the risk insurance is continued.

When registering, the insured must tell us whether they want to continue saving or not. The saving process can no longer be included at a later date. If the insured continues to pay savings contributions, they can exclude them again later. However, re-inclusion is no longer possible afterwards.

3. Who finances the contributions during voluntary continued insurance?

All the contributions (employee’s and employer’s contributions) must be paid in full by the insured person.
These contributions are made up as follows:

- Risk contributions
- Administrative costs
- Savings contributions (if pension scheme is continued)
- Any recovery contributions in accordance with Art. 51, Sec. 3 of the Pension Fund Regulation (employee contributions only)

4. What are the consequences of resuming work and joining a new pension fund?

If the insured person joins a new occupational benefits institution, Asga must transfer to the new institution the proportion of the termination payment that can be used to purchase the full benefits stipulated by the regulations.

▾ *Please refer to the following page.*

5. When does voluntary continued insurance end?

- Insurance ends in the event of death, disability, or upon reaching the reference age.
- In principle, the insurance ends when the insured person takes up a new position and their retirement assets are transferred to a new pension fund. If less than two-thirds of the termination payment are needed to purchase the full benefits of the new institution permitted by the regulations, voluntary insurance will be continued with Asga unless notice of termination is given. If more than two-thirds of the termination payment are needed to purchase the full benefits permitted by the regulations of the new occupational benefits institution, continued insurance with Asga will automatically end. A retirement pension will be payable to the insured person in respect of the remaining portion.
- The insurance may be terminated by the insured person at any time by giving 30 days' advance notice to the end of the next month. If the insured person does not have a new job and is not registered as unemployed, the retirement benefit becomes due. If the continued insurance has already lasted more than two years, only the retirement pension may be drawn (no lump-sum withdrawal is possible – see also point 8).
- The occupational benefits institution may terminate the voluntary insurance as of the last booked payment if contribution arrears are not settled within 30 days of a single warning.

6. To what extent are the benefits insured?

The occupational benefit is continued to the same extent as with the previous employer. An increase or reduction of the pension solution (pension plan) by the former employer results in an adjustment of the voluntary continued insurance. The scope of benefits cannot be determined independently. If an expansion of the plan by the former employer results in a high financial burden, the external insured person may request that the voluntary continued insurance be maintained at the previous level.

Any exemption from unemployment insurance cover must be clarified by the insured person with the relevant unemployment insurance office directly.

7. What happens if the former employer changes their pension scheme?

To ensure equal treatment, persons who have claimed voluntary continued insurance are likewise transferred to the new pension fund.

8. Is it possible to make a lump-sum withdrawal or a withdrawal for home ownership?

If the continuation of the insurance has lasted for more than two years, the insurance benefits must be received in the form of a pension. The termination payment can no longer be drawn in advance or pledged to purchase residential property.

9. Which salary can still be insured?

As a general rule, the salary and degree of employment reported before the employment relationship was terminated shall apply. At the insured person's request, a salary lower than the previous salary can be insured for the entire occupational benefits, but the minimum coordinated OPA salary must be insured at the very least. An annual salary higher than that insured with the last employer is not possible. In addition, the insured salary cannot be set at CHF 0.00 (temporary suspension of insurance).

The salary may be adjusted once per year with effect from 1 January of the following calendar year. Written notification by no later than 30 November of the current year using the change notification form is sufficient. In the absence of a written notification, the chosen option will remain in force. The change notification form can be accessed at www.asga.ch.

10. How must the application for voluntary continued insurance be made?

The application is made using the application form (application for continued insurance for external insured persons), which can be downloaded at www.asga.ch. We also require confirmation of notice given by the employer and a copy of the passport/identity card.

▾ *Please refer to the following page.*

11. What is the time limit for applying for voluntary continued insurance?

.Registration for continuation must be submitted by the insured person in writing within 90 days of issuance of the exit statement using the relevant registration form and enclosing the employer’s notice of termination. Continued insurance begins immediately after the end of the previous pension fund relationship. If the registration deadline expires unused, continuation is no longer possible.

12. Can voluntary continued insurance be suspended temporarily?

No, it is not possible to suspend the insurance.

13. When are the contributions payable?

We require the contributions to be paid directly by the insured person monthly in advance. The invoice must be settled within 30 days. If contributions are not paid on time, interest on arrears and administrative costs are charged as specified in the cost regulation with effect from the due date.

14. Can a voluntary purchase be made during voluntary continued insurance?

Yes, voluntary purchases can be made, provided that there is potential for purchases in accordance with Art. 15 of the pension fund regulation.

15. Is partial retirement or deferral of retirement beyond the ordinary retirement age possible?

No, partial retirement or deferral of retirement beyond the reference age is not possible. Persons who are already partially retired may continue pension provision for the active portion.

The regulatory provisions in accordance with Article 12a of the Pension Fund Regulation apply.

This information sheet only provides an overview, and the information contained herein does not constitute a legal claim. The legal and regulatory provisions are exclusively authoritative for the assessment of individual cases.