

NEW ENGLAND CARPENTERS BENEFIT FUNDS MERGERS

Frequently Asked Questions

December 2017

Question: *Will the Connecticut and Rhode Island Fund offices be closed?*

Answer: There are no plans to close these offices; however, over time it may make sense to consolidate certain processes. If any changes occur at any of the Fund offices that will affect members, we will communicate to members in advance.

Question: *Will there be changes to my health coverage on January 1, 2018?*

Answer: No, your health coverage will continue with no benefit changes on January 1, 2018. If you have any questions regarding your coverage you will continue to contact your current Fund office:

New England Carpenters Benefit Funds – (800) 344-1515
Connecticut State Carpenters Benefit Funds – (800) 922-6026
Rhode Island State Carpenters Benefit Funds - (401) 467-6813

Question: *Will there be a change to my monthly pension check?*

Answer: There will be no changes to your monthly pension check for January 1, 2018. For Connecticut and Rhode Island retirees, sometime in early 2018, the check will indicate that the check is issued by the New England Carpenters Pension Fund. If you have any questions, or need to make changes to your tax withholdings or your direct deposit information, you will continue to contact your current Fund office.

Question: *Are the Benefit Funds being merged because of the local union mergers?*

Answer: No, the Benefit Funds mergers and local union mergers are unrelated.

Question: *Are the Benefit Funds being merged because they are failing?*

Answer: No. This merger will strengthen the Funds financially now and into the future, through elimination of some duplicative administrative expenses and increased purchasing power of a member base of over 20,000. Stronger Funds will create more opportunity for financial security and stability for today's New England area Carpenters and future generations of Carpenters.

Question: *Will the value of pension credits that I have earned change?*

Answer: No.

Question: *Will Connecticut and Rhode Island employers continue to send contributions through the Connecticut Carpenters Employer Portal?*

Answer: Yes.

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Question: *Will contribution rates change as a result of the Benefit Funds mergers?*

Answer: Contribution rates are determined in collective bargaining agreement between NERCC and the Employers and will not change on the effective date of the mergers, January 1, 2018.

Question: *Will the reciprocity process between New England, Connecticut and Rhode Island continue?*

Answer: Yes, the current reciprocity processes will continue for the foreseeable future.

Question: *I am a Rhode Island resident, and a current member of Local 1305 in Massachusetts. After Locals 1305 and 94 merge, what benefits will I have going forward?*

Answer: Assuming you are eligible, you will continue to maintain your same Health Fund coverage through Blue Cross Blue Shield. Any benefits you have accrued under the New England Carpenters Guaranteed Annuity Fund and New England Carpenters Pension Fund will remain in effect.

Question: *I am a Massachusetts resident, and a current member of Local 94 in Rhode Island. After Locals 1305 and 94 merge, what benefits will I have going forward?*

Answer: Assuming you are eligible, you will continue to maintain your same Health Fund coverage. Any benefits you have accrued under the Rhode Island Carpenters Pension Fund will remain in effect, and your annuity benefit will be provided through the new Southern New England Carpenters Annuity Fund. You will be receiving a separate notification regarding Plan rules for that new Annuity Fund.

Question: *How will coverage for new members in the merged Massachusetts-Rhode Island Local be set up?*

Answer: By state of residence.

Question: *Who do I call if I have a question about my benefits?*

Answer: As a general rule, you should continue to call your current Fund office. The only exception to this rule will be the Vacation Fund. For hours worked after January 1, 2018, please call the New England Carpenters Vacation Savings Fund at 1-800-344-1515.