

What are spouse contributions?

Spouse contributions are contributions you can voluntarily make on behalf of your spouse. There is no limit on how much or how often you can contribute but once paid, they belong to your spouse. Your spouse can't get them back until the benefit becomes payable.

As the DFRDB scheme does not have a fund, these contributions are paid to the Military Superannuation and Benefits (MSB) Fund and the benefit is paid out of the MSB Fund. You continue to be a DFRDB member and your spouse will become a beneficiary of the MilitarySuper scheme.

Who is eligible to make spouse contributions?

To be able to make spouse contributions you must be a current contributing DFRDB member. You cannot make spouse contributions if you are a former DFRDB member with a deferred benefit.

Who is a spouse?

To be eligible to receive spouse contributions, your spouse must be a person who shares a marital or couple relationship with you.

A marital or couple relationship exists if you have been living together as husband, wife or partner on a permanent and bona fide domestic basis for a continuous period of at least three years.

If the period is less than three years, the MSB Board will need to consider evidence to determine if spouse contributions can be received. This includes, but is not limited to, evidence establishing any of the following:

- your spouse is wholly or substantially dependent on you
- your relationship was registered under a law of a state or territory as a prescribed type of relationship
- you are legally married
- you have a child of both of you within the meaning of the *Family Law Act 1975*
- you have a child born of the relationship or adopted during the relationship
- you jointly own a home which is your usual residence.

- any other evidence that the MSB Board may consider relevant.

What does my spouse get?

Your spouse will get a benefit, only payable as a lump sum, not as a pension.

The benefit comprises the contributions you paid and MSB Fund investment returns.

Investment returns may be negative from time to time and as a consequence the value of the benefit will rise and fall. It is therefore possible that the benefit might be less than the amount you contributed, particularly over a shorter term.

The benefit is subject to tax when it becomes payable, at the same concessional rates that apply to other superannuation benefits.

How do I pay them?

You will need to register your intention to pay spouse contributions by completing an Application to Pay Spouse Contributions form (MACo3).

This form provides:

- information required to determine the eligibility of your spouse,
- identification and contact details of your spouse, and
- an opportunity for your spouse to quote his/her Tax File Number.

ComSuper will advise you and your spouse if spouse contributions can be accepted. If so, you can either:

- make arrangements with your Pay Unit to start deductions from your salary, or
- pay them direct to ComSuper by cheque or money order. Each contribution must be accompanied by a Spouse Contributions–Deposit Form (MACo4). Note that the first time you pay contributions by this method on or after 12 December 2008, you will be required to supply identification. Further details are available on the MACo4 form

You will be advised if your spouse is not eligible to receive spouse contributions.

How are they invested?

Your spouse, not you, has a choice of five investment strategies. Your spouse can invest in one or a combination of these strategies and can even have a different strategy for existing contributions and future contributions.

Initially, these contributions will be invested in the 'Default' strategy which is the Growth strategy.

Your spouse can switch to another strategy at any time, free of charge, using the Member Investment Choice form (MIC1). The Trustees may introduce a fee to switch investment strategies in the future but your spouse will be notified in advance if this happens.

You should refer your spouse to the book titled 'Your guide to Investment Choice' before considering investment choices. Your spouse may also wish to consult a licensed professional, such as a financial planner, solicitor or accountant, to determine which options best suit his or her personal circumstances.

When can my spouse get the benefit?

Generally, the benefit cannot be paid until your spouse permanently retires from the workforce after reaching his or her preservation age. Payment is not related to the payment of your DFRDB benefit in any way.

Preservation age is based on date of birth, as shown in the following table:

Date of Birth	Preservation age
Before 1/7/1960	55
1/7/1960 – 30/6/1961	56
1/7/1961 – 30/6/1962	57
1/7/1962 – 30/6/1963	58
1/7/1963 – 30/6/1964	59
After 30/6/1964	60

All or part of the benefit may be paid earlier:

- if your spouse becomes totally and permanently incapacitated

- on severe financial hardship grounds
- on compassionate grounds

It can also be claimed when your spouse ceases or changes employment after reaching age 60. The benefit must be paid out on reaching age 65.

In the event of your spouse's death, the benefit will be paid to:

- your spouse's dependants, or
- a dependent person(s) your spouse nominated in writing and included in his or her will, or
- your spouse's estate.

Can my spouse rollover the benefit?

Yes, the benefit can be rolled over at any time. Note that access to the benefit from the rollover institution will be subject to the same preservation conditions as outlined above.

What happens if we split up?

The benefit belongs to your spouse, regardless of whether he or she ceases to be your spouse. If this happens you would not be able to continue paying spouse contributions.

What else could I pay?

Spouse contributions are one of a range of voluntary contributions (collectively called 'ancillary contributions') you can now pay. Separate fact sheets are also available for:

- Additional Personal Contributions
- Transfer Amounts
- Salary Sacrifice Contributions

Spouse contributions



Australian Government

Defence Force Retirement &
Death Benefits Scheme

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Where can I get the investment guide and forms

The investment guide and forms referred to in this fact sheet are available on the MilitarySuper website at www.militarysuper.gov.au.

If you need more information...

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DFRDB Customer Service Centre

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FACT SHEET