

TimeWise

We have a new look & feel, including a new website.

.....
We are excited to share our new brand with you.

Behavioural Finance

Part 5: Recency Bias

The final section of our behavioural finance series.

Election of employee delegates

Consider being a candidate!

What do I need to do to retire comfortably? - Jeff, a retirement planning story.

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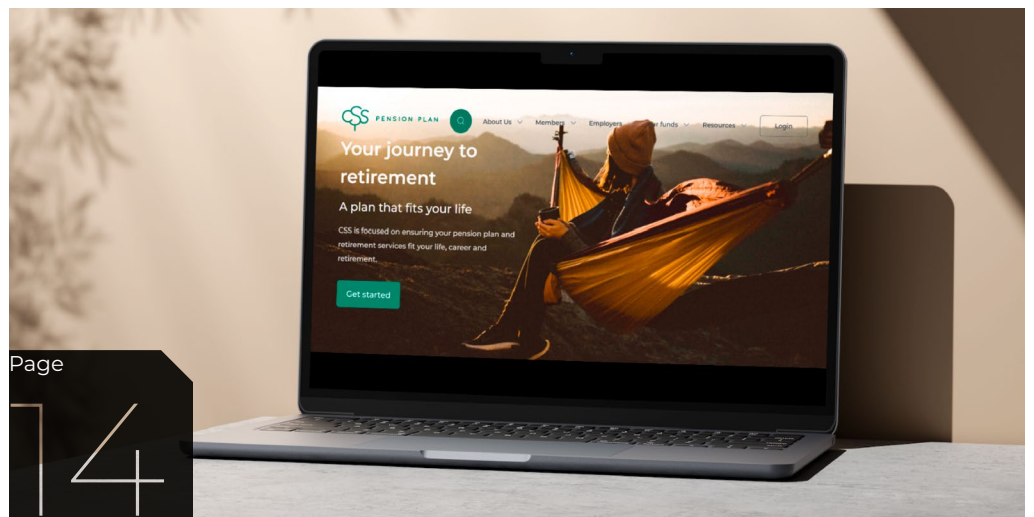
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Your Plan

Behavioural Finance Part 5: Recency Bias

In recent editions of TimeWise, we've examined a number of common human behaviours that can hurt our retirement wealth-building. For your reference, here are links to the previous articles: [Overconfidence](#), [fear of missing out](#), [loss aversion](#), and [herding](#).

In the final segment of our five-part look at behavioural biases, we'll look at a phenomenon called **recency bias**.

Recency bias, also known as availability bias, is a type of thinking bias that influences our decision-making and perceptions. It refers to the tendency of people to give more weight or importance to recent events or information while disregarding older or less recent data when making judgments or decisions. A potential pitfall of this bias is that it can lead us to overestimate the significance of recent events and underestimate the significance of events that have happened in the more distant past.

Recency bias shows up in decision-making in all aspects of our lives such as investment decisions, risk assessment, news consumption and even personal memories. It can impact our decision-making by causing us to focus on recent information that is readily available in our minds, leading us to a skewed perspective.

Some examples:

- **Performance review at work** – if your supervisor succumbs to recency bias, they will tend to remember your most recent work most vividly and will base your overall performance review on the quality of that work; and, they may assume your future work will be of similar quality.
- **Investing** – recency bias shows up in our tendency to overweight recent performance over past performance. It impacts our decision-making by causing us to focus on the most recent information that is readily available in our minds; we also assume that recent performance will continue into the future.


Reasons why recent events tend to have a more significant impact on our decision-making include:

- Recalling information close in time or relevant to us is easier. Our brains are wired to work better when things are familiar. It is easier for us to make the link between what we know and how it impacts our current situation.
- Recent events often carry more weight in our decision-making than older events and experiences because the recent ones are seen as more important because they are more easily remembered. For example, research has shown that we humans are much more able to remember the final numbers/digits/objects of a string of numbers/digits/objects, whether presented visually or audibly.

A very good example in recent times: Our experience with low inflation rates and low interest rates over the last number of years led many to believe that low inflation and low interest rates would continue indefinitely, despite the fact that we have seen high inflation and high interest rate environments in the past (for example, the 1970s).

To counteract the effects of recency bias, there are steps we can take to consciously consider and incorporate a broader range of information, both recent and historical, before making decisions. This includes taking a longer-term perspective (this is particularly important in decisions concerned with wealth-building); seeking out diverse sources of information and an objective perspective; and simply being aware of the potential biases, like recency bias, that can impact our judgment.

We recognize that the actions and decisions of our members have a significant impact on the long-term retirement outcome they are able to achieve. We believe it is important to not only provide our members with high-performing investment products but to also equip them with the information, tools and professional assistance to make the best decisions they can when it comes to their retirement saving.

A key benefit of belonging to a pension plan of a size and scale such as our CSS plan is that we have the collective resources to provide our members with valuable information (like this article) to increase awareness of common human biases such as recency bias, to make retirement planning professionals available to our members to provide them with retirement planning education, information and tools, and to provide an objective perspective to assist our members with their decision-making. 



Investment performance update.

As the Plan looks at year-to-date (YTD) performance, we find our Balanced and Equity Funds underperforming their benchmarks. Although disappointing, it is important to remember that we do expect our funds to underperform from time to time, and we need to be aware of the potential perils of recency bias in our decision-making (see part 5 of our behavioural finance series on page 1). What follows is an examination of some of the contributing factors to this recent underperformance along with a discussion of several aspects of the Plan's disciplined investment strategy.

As we have discussed in the past, one of CSS' key investment beliefs is the protection of our members' capital. This does not mean that the Plan's investments can never incur losses, as some level of risk is necessary to generate the returns required to provide a reasonable pension income, but it does mean we have a preference for investment styles and strategies that provide downside protection while maintaining long-term return expectations.

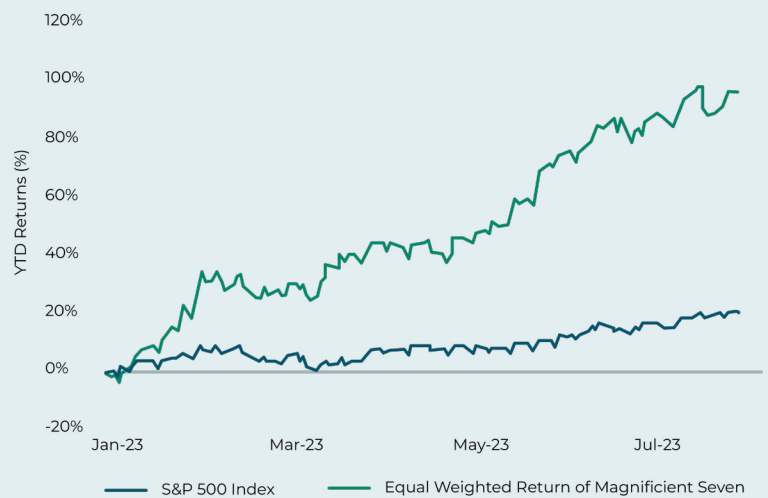
This belief is particularly important for those members who are near or in retirement and are sensitive to the frequency and depth of negative returns when they occur. A prime example of the benefits of this philosophy played out in 2022, an exceptional year in which both stock and bond markets incurred significant negative returns. Rising interest rates and inflation in 2022 poked a hole in significantly overvalued technology sector equity valuations and led to falling valuations for bonds. The Plan's Balanced Fund benchmarks recorded a -9.21% return in 2022, but the Plan's investment managers protected against some of these losses providing a -5.86% return for the year; this represents a positive 3.35% of outperformance or value-add for our members invested in the Balanced Fund.

As we find ourselves at the midpoint of 2023, market excitement around the potential of artificial intelligence (AI) has reignited market sentiment for technology companies expected to benefit from this megatrend. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the companies perceived to benefit the most from AI are the mega-cap U.S. technology companies. These have been the

most popular and trendy stocks in the recent past.

Apple, Microsoft, Nvidia, Amazon, Alphabet, Tesla and Meta, what are now called the "magnificent 7" in the financial press, account for most of the S&P 500's year-to-date (YTD) returns.

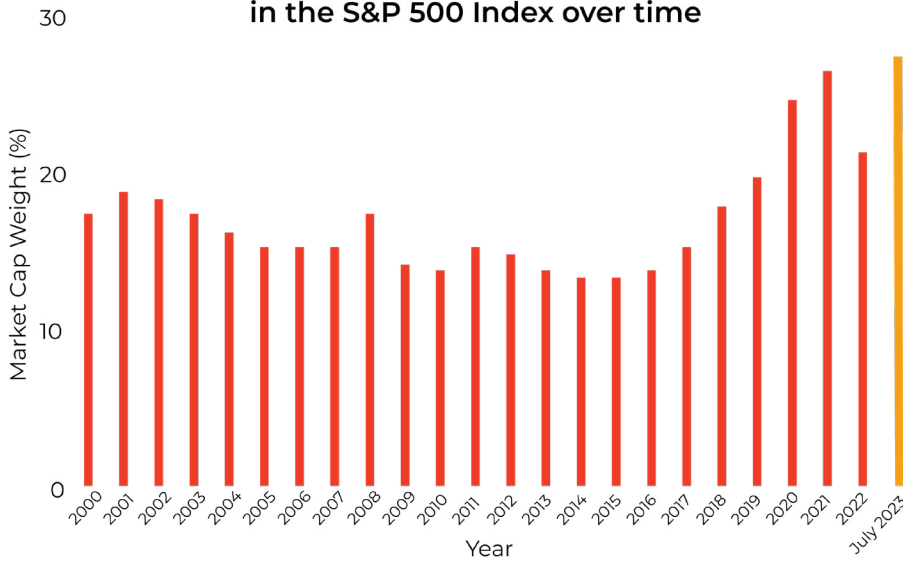
Exhibit 1: YTD Returns of the "Magnificent Seven" vs. the Market



Source: Factors and The Magnificent Seven | BlackRock

As a consequence of this recent performance, the U.S. stock market concentration is again reaching all-time highs. You have to go back more than 100 years to find a period with even more market concentration.

Exhibit 2: Market cap weight of top 7 companies in the S&P 500 Index over time



Source: Morningstar Direct as of 7/31/23. Market cap weight of top 7 names calculated as of December 31 of each corresponding year (with the exception of 7/31/23). For any year where Alphabet was part of the top 7, both the A Class and C class were included in the calculation (GOOGL and GOOG).

From a pension plan and a fiduciary perspective, these trends create a number of concerns.

First, is the impact on diversification. Diversification is another key investment belief of CSS and very much related to our protection of capital belief. Typically, broad market benchmarks like the S&P 500 are perceived to be diversified, but that is not currently the case given the concentration levels noted above. Contrary to the market, our U.S. large-cap equity manager currently looks very different, as it is more broadly diversified across industry sectors and companies. This broader diversification and lack of concentration in the mega-cap tech stocks has led to significant underperformance compared to the S&P 500. This is a leading contributor to our Equity and Balanced Fund underperformance relative to the benchmark YTD.

Members may expect that this short-term underperformance should lead to termination of a manager or a change in investment strategy, but as a prudent investor concerned for the protection of our members' capital, we cannot ignore this high level of concentration and the risk that it can pose in periods of market stress or idiosyncratic (peculiar market) events. We know from

history that market-cap weighted indexes generally experience greater drawdowns in these types of events and high levels of concentration can exacerbate this experience. Our U.S. equity portfolio is positioned to protect against these types of outcomes, but at the expense of fully participating in speculative run ups in prices, as appears to be occurring in 2023.

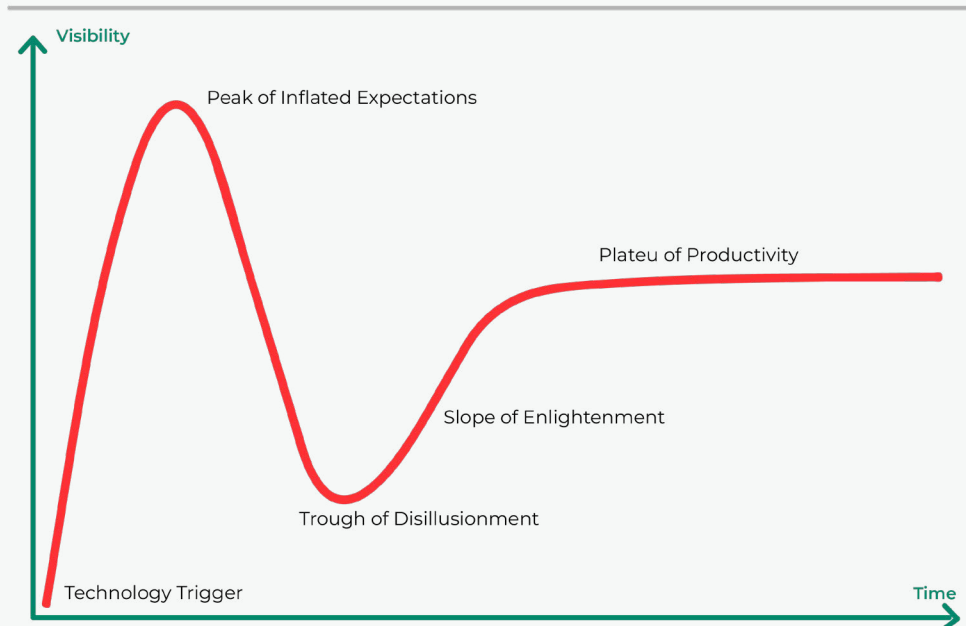
2 Second, returns for mega-tech stocks have driven their valuations to excessive levels compared to history.

Tesla's forward valuation (next 12 months) marked at 78.8X as of June 20, while Nvidia traded at 56.8X, Amazon at 46.0X and Microsoft at 35.2X. Outsized earning expectations and optimism related to AI are contributors to these very high valuation levels. One of our investment partners recently noted:

"While AI will create meaningful long-term growth opportunities both for leaders in the space and productivity gains broadly across the real economy, many of these developments remain relatively distant promises. In the meantime, AI likely lies somewhere in the initial arc of a classic technology hype cycle."

Accordingly, these stocks are vulnerable to price declines as lofty expectations take longer to realize than originally anticipated. We saw a similar phenomenon during the tech bubble of 2000 and, to a lesser extent, the over-valuation and subsequent rapid decline of marijuana stocks when marijuana was legalized in Canada in 2014.

Gartner Hype Cycle



In addition to the uncertainty around AI, there remains a number of other challenges facing markets including war, inflation, rising rates, banking chaos and recession. It seems unusual that with all these heightened risks the S&P 500 has moved back into overvalued territory as measured by the Cyclically Adjusted Price to Earnings (CAPE) ratio.

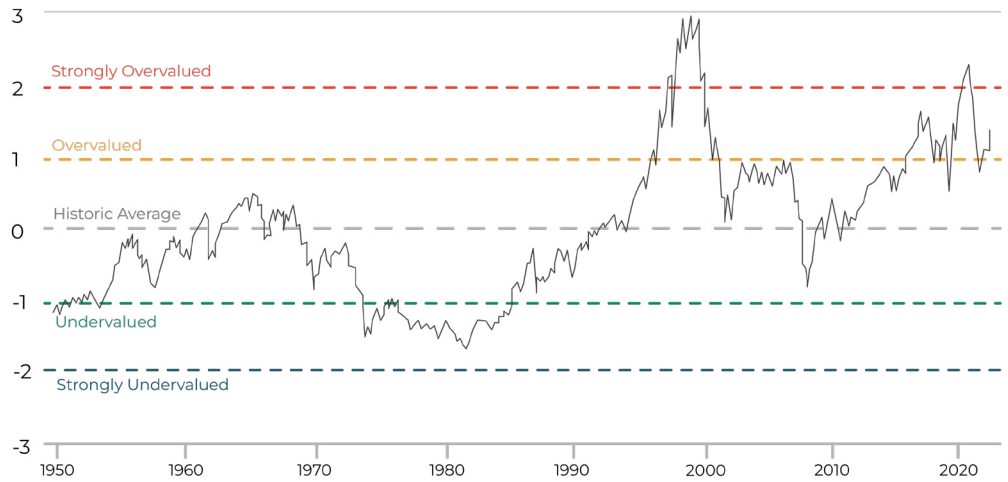
In conclusion, while we share in the disappointment of short-term underperformance to benchmarks – after all, our own retirement savings are invested in the same pension plan - CSS continues to believe that being disciplined is important to achieving our long-term goals. This can be extremely challenging when not owning certain stocks in concentrated markets can really hurt short to medium-term performance.

We are aware our members can look at this performance and become impatient and anxious as they believe they are missing out. As long-term investors, we believe our strategy to invest in a diversified portfolio of equities with reasonable valuations and quality characteristics will pay off in the long run. 💰

The Price/Earnings Model: **Overvalued**

Updated July 31, 2023

Chart shows current CAPE value as # of standard deviations above/below historic average.



“We believe our strategy to invest in a diversified portfolio of equities with reasonable valuations and quality characteristics will pay off in the long run.”

Your employer believes in your financial future!

Your future self will thank you. Perhaps your future self will even thank your employer!

A pension plan is a great way to build your retirement. You and your employer each contribute to CSS Pension Plan, and when you retire – you will turn your savings into retirement income.

The CSS Pension Plan is one of Canada's largest defined contribution pension plans. As a member, you have access to low-cost, well-diversified, professionally managed investment options. Research indicates that with large-scale pooled plans, like the CSS Pension Plan, every \$1 of member contribution provides an average retirement income of \$4.19 compared to \$1.94 from group RRSPs or small defined contribution plans.¹

Your employer believes in your financial success now and well into your retirement years, and as such, they have brought the CSS Pension Plan to you. By having the CSS Pension Plan as part of your total rewards package, your employer shows their commitment to you and your overall financial wellness.

How can you make the most of this part of your employer's total rewards package? Consider the following tips and information.

1. Saving can improve your well-being.

Your pension plan savings can help you feel more financially secure now (and into your retirement); this reduces your financial stress. Financial stress can lead to physical and mental stress – which can take away from your ability to enjoy work and life.

Canadians say money is their top source of stress and this can lead to anxiety, depression and mental health challenges.²

“Employers investing in retirement plans are investing in the performance of employees while they're working for their companies. When people are financially insecure, they cannot be fully present at work [and in life].”³

Saving into a pension plan is one way that could help you improve financial wellness. There are other ways that you can tackle this type of stress:

- Use the online tools that CSS provides to help you understand if you are on track for the retirement you envision
- Take the time to understand your current financial situation such as debt, savings and budgeting considerations

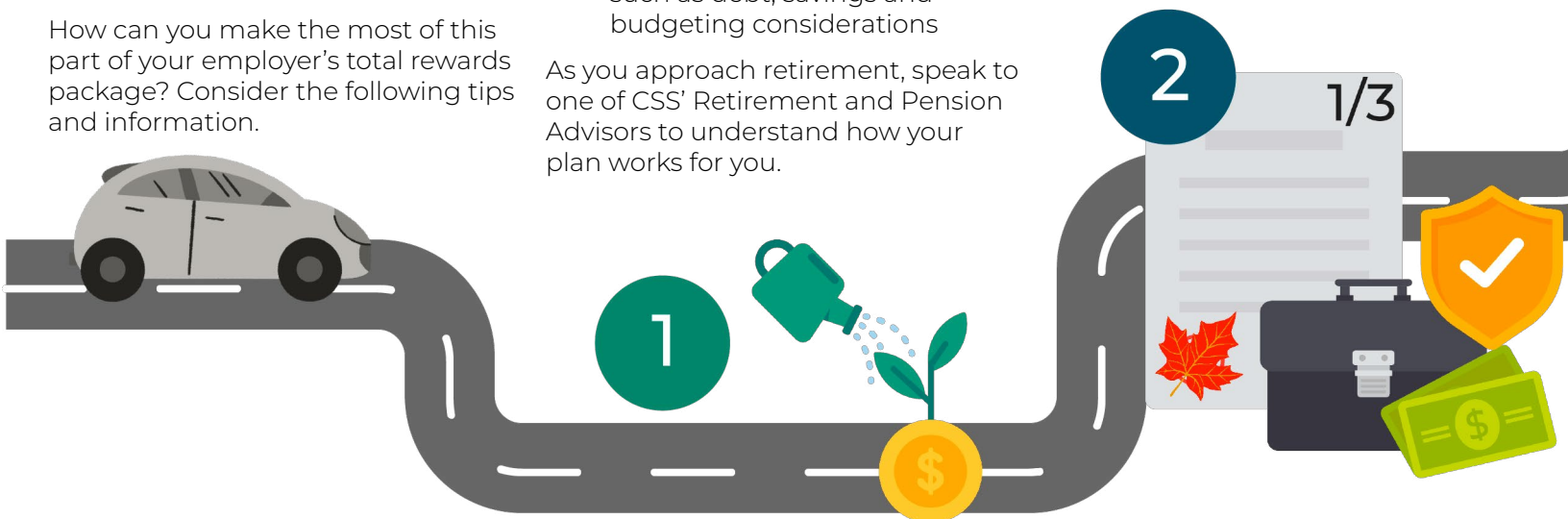
As you approach retirement, speak to one of CSS' Retirement and Pension Advisors to understand how your plan works for you.

2. Just one in three Canadians belong to a pension plan

Only 38% of working Canadians are part of a registered pension plan. It is important to your employer, and to CSS, that we provide a valuable pension to you and many others in the co-operative and credit union industry.

Did you know that 66% of Canadians would rather have a lower salary and a pension (or better pension) than a higher salary with no pension (or worse pension)?⁴ That same research also indicated that “while older Canadians who are closer to retirement are more likely to take the pension over the salary, half of young workers under 35 still choose the pension over salary.”

Reflecting on those people who don't have a retirement plan in place, almost 75% of those people have less than \$1000 in savings. This suggests that access to a retirement savings plan (like CSS Pension Plan) is a major driver of savings behaviour for retirement (see footnote 1).



3. Present bias: A retirement savings conundrum

Would you like \$100 today or would you like \$120 one month from now? How about \$100 one year from now versus \$120 in 13 months? The decision you are faced with is the idea of “present bias” and it can make saving now a bit tougher. We often focus on our current self and our current needs, wants and desires – and put less focus on our future self. We almost see that future self as a stranger ... “why would I want to save for a stranger?”

Being aware of this bias will help you care for that future you. There are great ways that your CSS Pension Plan and your employer are helping you navigate this bias:

- Contributions made via payroll ... this is a simple way to save for retirement.
- Matched contributions ... rewarding you for saving now for your future self.
- Mandatory enrollment ... full-time eligible employees take part in the CSS Pension Plan.
- Education and awareness ... CSS provides tools and education to help you see what saving now can mean for your future.

4. Savings can reduce spending

Creating a budget that includes retirement savings may help you organize your spending patterns and build good savings habits. Building a budget that includes retirement savings is a great way to help you understand where the money is going and where you can make positive changes like paying down high-interest debt and creating short-term savings.

A budgeting tool that may help you with this regard is the Budget Planner available on the Canada.ca website.

5. Value of a good pension plan

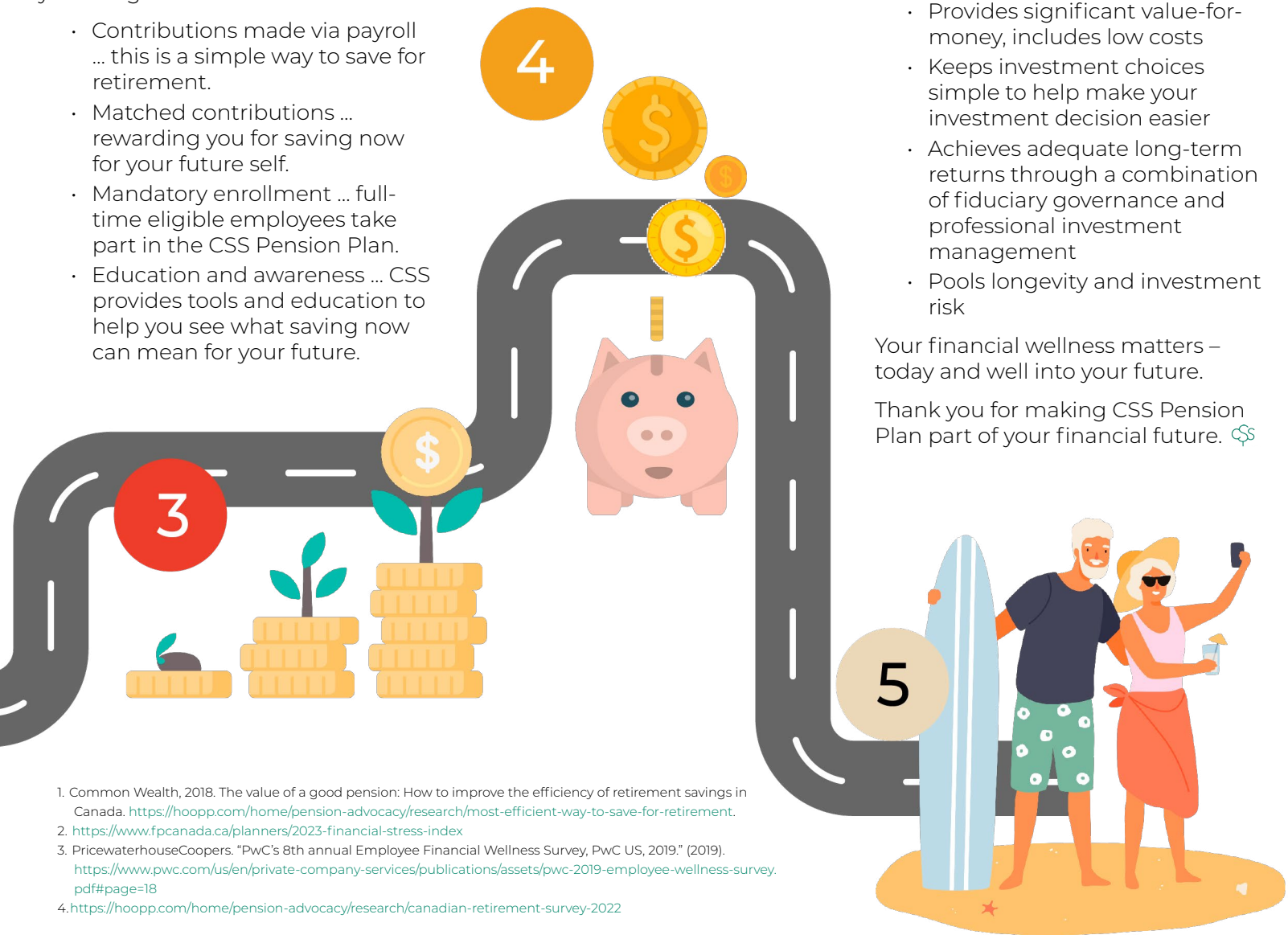
Reaching financial security in retirement can be a challenge. The combination of government programs (e.g., CPP, OAS), personal sources (e.g., TFSA, RRSPs) and employer-sponsored sources (e.g., CSS Pension Plan) will help you to keep up with your retirement living needs. Your CSS Pension Plan is a great tool for you to use to obtain financial security in retirement.

What makes a pension plan good? Research shows that (see footnote 1) the CSS Pension Plan hits the mark in many ways:

- Ensures that its membership is saving by making participation mandatory
- Provides significant value-for-money, includes low costs
- Keeps investment choices simple to help make your investment decision easier
- Achieves adequate long-term returns through a combination of fiduciary governance and professional investment management
- Pools longevity and investment risk

Your financial wellness matters – today and well into your future.

Thank you for making CSS Pension Plan part of your financial future. 💰



1. Common Wealth, 2018. The value of a good pension: How to improve the efficiency of retirement savings in Canada. <https://hoopp.com/home/pension-advocacy/research/most-efficient-way-to-save-for-retirement>.
2. <https://www.fpcanada.ca/planners/2023-financial-stress-index>
3. PricewaterhouseCoopers. "PwC's 8th annual Employee Financial Wellness Survey, PwC US, 2019." (2019). <https://www.pwc.com/us/en/private-company-services/publications/assets/pwc-2019-employee-wellness-survey.pdf#page=18>
4. <https://hoopp.com/home/pension-advocacy/research/canadian-retirement-survey-2022>

Reaching special milestones in your life while still managing your pension.



Whether you're getting married, buying your first home or starting a family, here are a few tips for managing these special milestones in your life while having a CSS account.

Getting married or living common-law

Changing your marital status

You've found someone you want to spend your life with. What does this mean for your pension and your new spouse*?

Well, once you're married or living common-law, your spouse has certain entitlements to your pension funds.

This means, in the event you pass away before you retire, your spouse (married or common-law) has first claim to your pension funds and investment

earnings as defined by pension laws – even if you designate a different person as beneficiary.

Although, if your spouse dies before you, any named beneficiary(ies) will receive your pension benefits (net income tax).

If you pass away after you retire, your spouse is entitled to certain benefits depending on the type of retirement income option you chose:

- **Joint and Last Survivor Pension** – Your full monthly pension payment will continue to your spouse for the balance of the guarantee period. Once the guarantee period ends, your spouse will receive a pre-selected percentage of the pension for the rest of his or her life.
If both you and your spouse die before the guarantee period ends, then the monthly pension payments will continue to your beneficiary(ies) or estate for the rest of the guarantee period, and then stop.
- **Variable Benefit payments** - Your surviving spouse is automatically entitled to all the funds remaining in your

VB account, if any, when you die (unless your spouse waives this right).

**The definition of a spouse varies by province/territory. Please refer to the definition of spouse according to the provincial/federal pension legislation noted on your CSS Pension Plan annual statement.*

Changing your status or name

If you decide to change your marital status or name, it is important to let CSS know so we can keep your account details current. Complete a [Member Information Change form](#) and submit the required documentation to CSS to update your information.

Your relationship has come to an end

If you and your current spouse decide your relationship will come to an end, your spouse may still have some rights to your pension funds. The division of pension funds upon relationship breakdown depends on the pension laws in your jurisdiction. Contact us for more information.

It is important to review your designation regularly to ensure it fits with your current situation.





Starting a family

Maternity, paternity, or adoption leave

Starting a family is an exciting time in your life. If you are expecting a child, you may need to take time off work. You can choose whether to contribute to the CSS Pension Plan while you are on leave.

If you decide you want to contribute, you must make your contributions through your employer.

Depending on your province's pension laws and your employer's policy, you may be responsible for both the employee and employer contribution amounts.

While it may be difficult to make both the employee and employer contribution amounts while on leave, the following options can help you build your pension either in advance or after of your time away:

- "Topping up" your account before you go on leave
- Making additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) when you return to work

Check with your employer for more information.

Owning your first home

Saving up for a down payment

You've started saving up for a down payment to buy your first home. But first, how much can you afford?

Start by getting pre-approved for a mortgage that will help you determine how much house you can afford. You'll need to decide if a fixed rate or variable-rate mortgage will work best for you.

Members often ask if they can withdraw their CSS funds for a down payment to buy a home. Unfortunately, while you're working for a CSS employer and actively contributing to the CSS Pension Plan, you cannot withdraw or transfer your funds out.

Even after you're no longer working for a participating employer, you cannot withdraw any locked-in funds as a cash lump sum. Locked-in pension funds must be used to provide a retirement income.

Instead, consider the Home Buyer's Plan, which lets you withdraw up to \$35,000 from your RRSP to buy or build your first home in Canada. Although your funds in the CSS Pension Plan are not eligible for the Home Buyers' Plan, personal RRSPs are eligible for this program.

Find out more about the Home Buyers' Plan on the [Canada Revenue Agency website](#).

Once you've saved enough up for a down payment, you can start looking at homes within your price range. Soon you will find the perfect one and put an offer in. Once you go through the entire home buying process, congratulations! You will get the keys to your first home.

Other life events

We understand there are plenty of other life events that you may be going through, but no matter the life event CSS is here for you.

Should you need to make any adjustments to your account, it's important to check-in with CSS to make sure your account reflects your current circumstances. We can help you find the information you need to help guide you through the process, for instance:

- Retiring
- Arranging survivor benefits
- Changing your contact information
- Taking a leave
- Leaving your employment
- Living in retirement

Visit our [Life events](#) section on our website to learn more about managing your account through types of life events.

Or, contact us and speak to one of our Retirement and Pension Advisors to discuss your specific life event at css@csspension.com or toll-free 1-844-427-7736. 💬



What do I need to do to retire comfortably? That's a different number for everybody – A CSS member story

Being in the twilight of his career, Jeff doesn't associate retirement with being a certain age, but rather a time in his life when he feels he has reached his financial goals and is ready to enjoy his savings comfortably.

Jeff has been a pension plan member with CSS for almost nine years, since starting at Bee Maid Honey Limited as a National Sales Manager. He resides in Calgary, working remotely from home while his head office is stationed in Winnipeg, which means his pension account is under Manitoba legislation.

When Jeff first started at Bee Maid, his employer talked to him about the low fees CSS offers, and the opportunity to gain returns on his pension was very appealing to him. Yet when he was younger, Jeff admits that having a pension plan was not a top priority when he first started working.

“I want to shift away from the common mindset of retiring at age 65, and rather, know what I need to live, travel and take care of my children,” Jeff says, although no specific retirement date is in sight.

"I could have cared less at 25, but now looking back I wish it was more of a priority, and I hope the younger generation, my children included, can see the value in having a pension plan," he expresses.

Having a pension plan like CSS, Jeff enjoys the benefit of having his pension come right off his cheque and appreciates the simplicity of the Plan.

"CSS does a very good job of making it easy for everyone to understand their pension plan," he said.

To help Jeff understand his pension plan, he recently attended a CSS Retirement Income Options (RIO) workshop. He learned about the investment funds CSS offers (Balanced, Equity, Bond, Money Market), our retirement income options (Variable Benefit payment, monthly pension, or a combination of both) and more.

Listening to our Retirement and Pension Advisors, he understood that CSS is working hard to grow his retirement income and maximize his potential.

"But you need to have other sources. You still need other income and save money outside the Plan," he said. "CSS is just one component to the bigger picture."

The biggest take away from attending the RIO workshop and talking to his CSS Retirement and Pension Advisor was understanding his entire picture for retirement and the various income sources available:

- Government sources [like Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS)]
- Workplace sources (employer pension plans and other registered pension plans)
- Personal sources (RRSP, TFSA, etc.)

To him, he really appreciates how CSS helped him understand all his options.

"If I was to retire today, they would help me see what my CPP and OAS, etc. will look like," he said.

When it comes to investments, Jeff considers his investment style somewhere between aggressive and conservative.

"I am more aggressive with my other investments and am in the Balanced Fund with my CSS funds," he said.

Although the last few years in the markets have been hard, Jeff did appreciate the transparency CSS provided when explaining the investment funds and markets in his workshop.

"CSS was very transparent. They know they didn't have a great year last year, but no one really did. But they weren't hiding that, which I found honest and refreshing," he said.

Jeff learned recently that he became eligible to retire at the age of 50.

Even though he doesn't have a date or timeframe in mind of when he exactly wants to retire, he is taking steps toward building his retirement pot.

"Once I know in my heart what I need to live, travel, take care of my children, we can call it a day," he said.

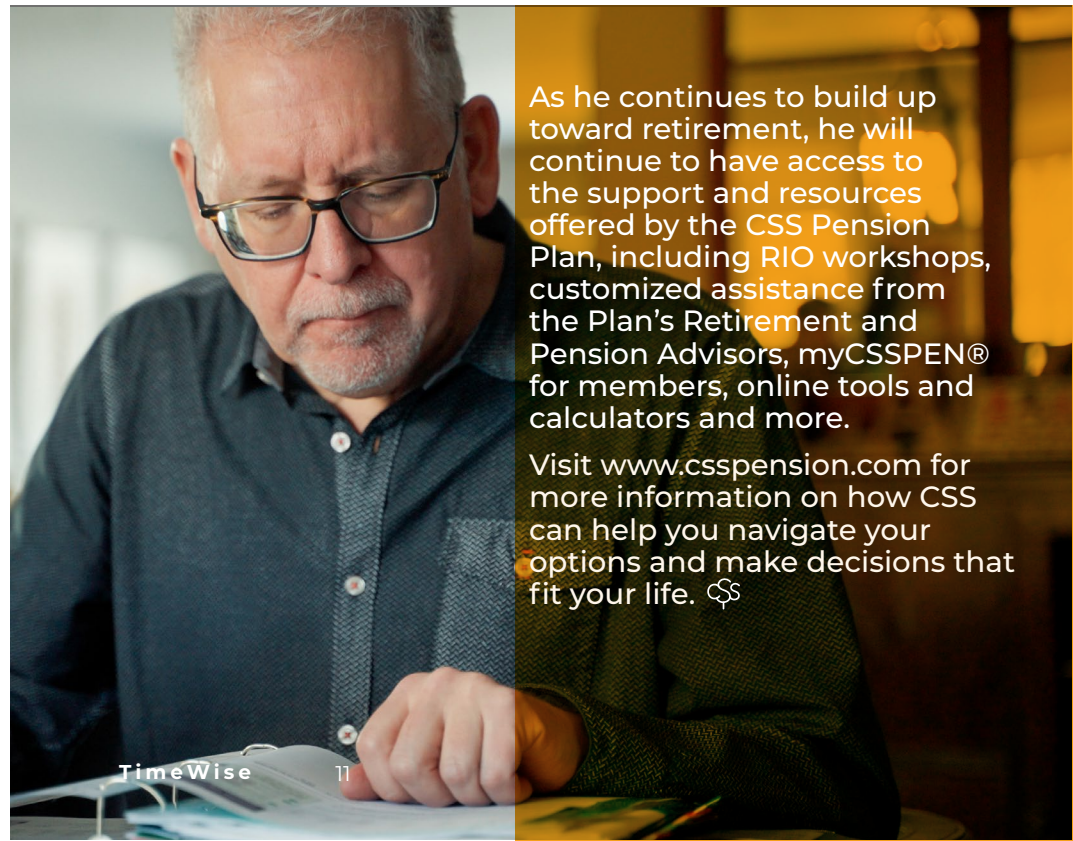
"If I had to choose my retirement option, I am leaning towards the monthly pension option. As I am a very routine person, I like knowing exactly what I am getting each month. Yet, the Variable Benefit payment benefit is a great option too. I am open to it as well," he said.

But he knows that when that time comes, it will be important for him to stay busy. He plans to stay active with his volunteer work, helping his children and future grandchildren and travel.

"You got to look at the whole picture, the whole pot, everyone's different and we all have different needs and wants."

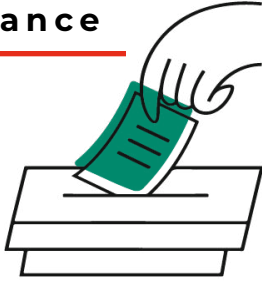
If he could give any advice to someone in a similar stage of life or younger, he strongly encourages CSS members to attend a RIO workshop.

"Go to a RIO workshop. Look at your pension account online and see what you have. Talk to a CSS Retirement and Pension Advisor. They know what they are talking about. Ask yourself, what do I need to retire comfortably? And, that's a different number for everybody," Jeff concludes.



As he continues to build up toward retirement, he will continue to have access to the support and resources offered by the CSS Pension Plan, including RIO workshops, customized assistance from the Plan's Retirement and Pension Advisors, myCSSPEN® for members, online tools and calculators and more.

Visit www.csspension.com for more information on how CSS can help you navigate your options and make decisions that fit your life. ☘



2024

Employee Delegate Election

Article IV (3) and (4) of the CSS bylaws require the Board to review the distribution of employee delegates to ensure proportionate representation of the membership is maintained as contemplated in the bylaws. A similar requirement exists for employer delegates under Article III (7) and (8).

The review was completed as at the end of year 2022 and the Board made recommendations to the Society's delegates at the 2023 annual meeting. No changes were recommended for employer delegates. For employee delegates, the following changes were recommended and subsequently approved by the Society's delegates.

- Delegates approved a transition of delegates as follows:
 - ~ Reduction of 1 delegate in Saskatchewan
 - ~ Reduction of 1 delegate in Manitoba / Eastern Canada
 - ~ Increase of 2 retiree delegates
- As each affected jurisdiction's delegates come up for election, the above changes will be implemented (i.e., -1 Saskatchewan and +1 retiree at the 2024 Annual Meeting and -1 Manitoba / Eastern Canada and +1 retiree at 2025 Annual Meeting)

Election of employee delegates

January 31, 2024

For details on Co-operative Superannuation Society delegate elections, please refer to the CSS bylaws (available on www.csspension.com).

This is the official notice of the calling of elections for January 31, 2024 to elect:

1. Six Employee Delegates for three-year terms, representing the Saskatchewan region; and,
2. One Retiree Delegate for a two-year term, representing CSS' retired members.

All delegates are expected to attend the Co-operative Superannuation Society annual meeting to be held in Saskatoon on March 28, 2024 .

Nomination forms for each of the above noted elections are provided on the following page, as well as on our website at www.csspension.com/elections. In addition to completing the nomination form and questionnaire, nominees are requested to forward a recent .jpeg (digital image of themselves) for inclusion in the information

sheet that CSS will forward to members as part of the election ballot package.

Nominations are to be forwarded to and received by the Returning Officer, no later than 4:30 p.m., Friday, December 1, 2023.

Upon close of nominations, the Returning Officer will prepare the necessary ballots containing the names of the qualified nominees. For election #1, ballots will be distributed to employee members of the Saskatchewan region for whom contributions and a completed application for membership has been received by CSS prior to November 1, 2023. For election #2, ballots will be distributed to retired members who have started receiving a periodic retirement income (monthly pension and/or variable benefit payments) from CSS prior to the end of October 2023.

Five things you wanted to know about being a delegate

- 1 Delegates are required to attend the annual meeting of CSS (one day), and any special delegate meeting necessary during their term. The need for special meetings has been all but non-existent in recent years.
- 2 Delegates, as representatives of the members, are the only ones able to effect a change in the bylaws or rules of the Plan as such bylaws and rules affect benefit provisions.
- 3 Delegates elect the Board of Directors. While each delegate has the right to be nominated for such elections, each delegate also has the right to refuse such nomination.
- 4 Delegates receive a per diem of \$265 for attending meetings, plus out-of-pocket expenses.
- 5 Being a delegate is a responsible position – however it does not require a significant time commitment.

Consider being a candidate for the election of delegates!



NOMINATION FOR DELEGATES

Must be received by December 1, 2023

Date: _____

We, the undersigned, nominate: _____
(Candidate's name)

of _____ in _____ for delegate.
(address)

Name of employee member

Signature of employee member

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

N.B. - To be valid, nominations must be signed by five voting employee members.

I hereby consent to allow my name to stand for election as an employee delegate to the Co-operative Superannuation Society.

Signature of candidate: _____ Occupation of candidate: _____

Questionnaire to be completed by each candidate

Note: The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide information to the voters and give them some knowledge of employee members who have been nominated.

Name of candidate: _____ Member ID number: _____

Present employer: _____

Position now held: _____

Co-op or credit union experience: _____

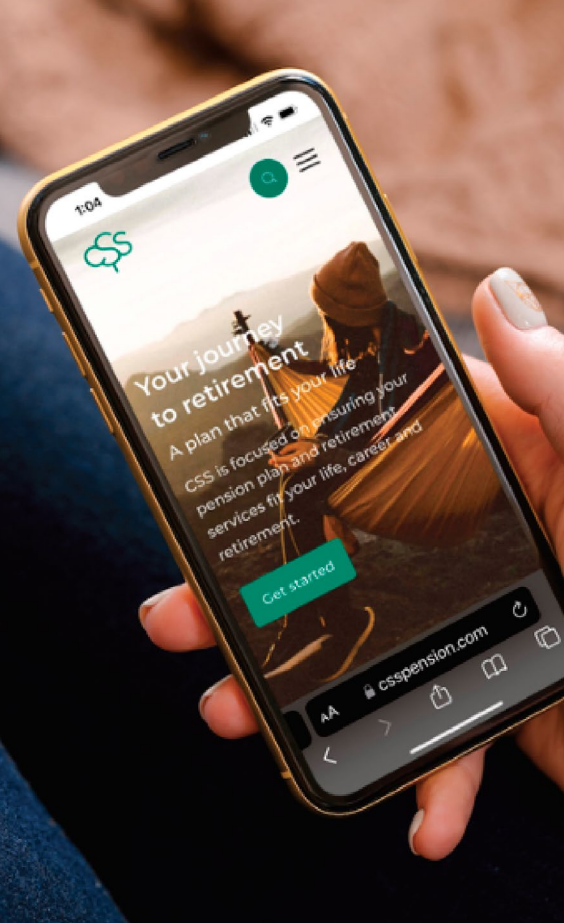
Educational achievements: _____

Please provide any comments you may have about the future direction of CSS in areas such as provisions, investments, member services, etc

My photo will be sent electronically to: elections@cspension.com

Date: _____

Signature: _____



Your new CSS website (and a new version of TimeWise)

You may have noticed our website looks a little different. That's because we launched a new website to better serve you!

Whether you're a regular visitor to the CSS website or a first-time user, the website is packed full of content to help guide you on your retirement journey – whether you just started working for the first time, have already retired, or are somewhere in between.

The new site offers a fresh new look and mobile-first design. Our new brand colours also offer a more accessible palette for members with visual impairments and users who prefer dark-mode settings.

Providing pension services to our Canadian employers and their employees is what we do, and our new website address reflects this vision.

You can visit us at www.csspension.com

Of course, at the heart of any website is the content it provides. Here's some of the information and resources you'll find on the site to help you with planning, investing, retiring and living in retirement.

Planning

TimeWise blog

Discover the new TimeWise blog, offering articles to help you navigate the ups and downs as you travel the path to retirement. The blog offers a mobile-friendly format so you can access TimeWise content anytime, anywhere and from any device. Prefer the PDF version of the magazine? You can still access current and past issues in our new [resources centre](#).

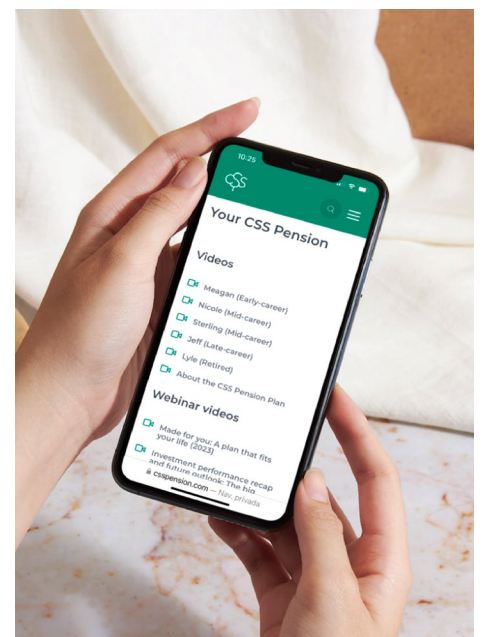
Member video series

On our new homepage, you'll meet members of the CSS Pension Plan – Meagan, Nicole, Sterling, Jeff and Lyle – who share their own unique financial wellness stories as they navigate different stages of their lives and careers.

In this issue of TimeWise, you can read more about Jeff's journey (on page 10) as he nears retirement and considers his options.

Resources

You'll find a series of helpful resources in a variety of formats to assist with your retirement planning needs. Access forms, videos, publications, information sheets, planning tools and more. Our Retirement and Pension Advisors are also here to help should you need guidance.



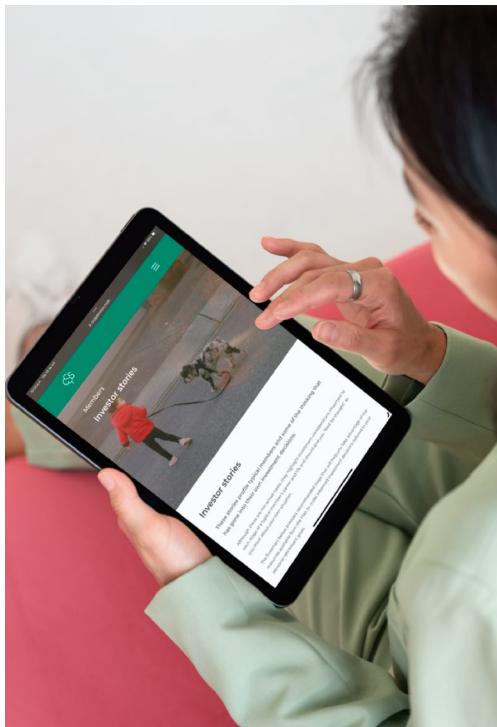
Investing

Investor stories

Our reimagined investor stories unpack the investment considerations important to each stage of a typical member's career and life. They provide insight on how to mix and match the Plan's four investment funds to fit different investor profiles and should give you "food for thought" as you think about your own situation.

Our funds

Access information about the Balanced, Bond, Money Market and Equity Funds, including year-to-date rates of return and daily unit prices. Annuity rates are also posted for our Pensions Fund – the fund that CSS monthly pensions are paid from.



Retiring

Life events

When you're going through a life event – whether it be a career change, a move, relationship change or retirement – it's important to check-in with the CSS Pension Plan to make sure your account still reflects your circumstances.

This section of our website provides a one-stop-shop so you can access information about the potential effects of common life events on your CSS account and determine if you need to make changes.

We're excited to also launch a new "Living in retirement" page that offers helpful information for retired CSS members who have chosen a monthly pension or Variable Benefit payments. Access information about income tax rules for retirement income, the importance of keeping a retirement plan even after you retire, and more.



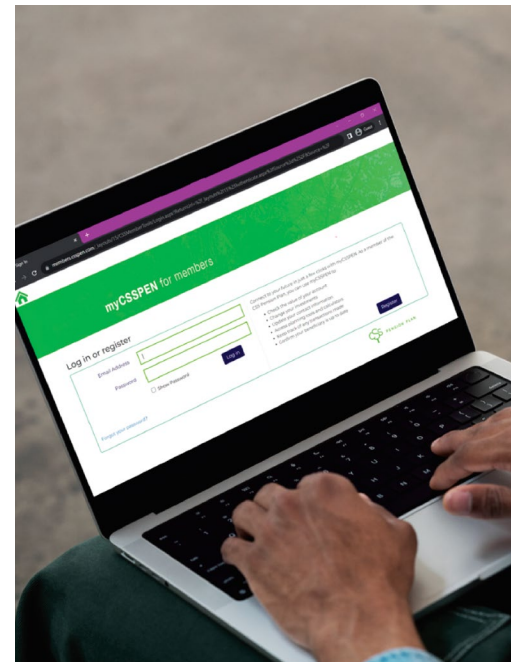
Future of myCSSPEN

While the website now showcases the new brand, you'll notice that your pension portal (myCSSPEN) still shows our previous brand. We are in the process of redesigning myCSSPEN to reflect our new look too, and you can expect to see those changes come to life in 2024.

In the meantime, you can still use myCSSPEN for members to:

- Check the value of your account
- Change your investments
- Update your contact information
- Access planning tools and calculators
- Keep track of any transactions made
- Confirm your beneficiary is up to date

Employers are still able to use myCSSPEN for employers to remit contributions and upload documents just like before.



Let us know what you think!

We hope you enjoy our new website and find it to be a helpful resource for you. We're always looking to improve communication with CSS members and employers, and we welcome your feedback on the new website by emailing communications@csspension.com.



We have a new look

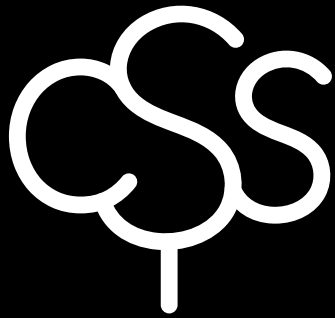
We're excited to start rolling out a fresh new look for the CSS brand this fall and into 2024.

The new brand highlights long-term growth and financial wellness through nature-inspired imagery. It emphasizes the climb toward retirement, the ups and downs along the way, and the many ways CSS can help guide you throughout your journey.

To help tell the story of CSS and our membership, the new brand also spotlights our own members' unique experiences with CSS as they navigate different stages of their careers and lives. We're also excited to launch a refreshed logo and colour palette that are well-suited for digital communications.

The last time CSS refreshed its brand was in 2020. However, our unique value has changed over the years because of shifts in technology, member expectations and new CSS service offerings, including advisory services and online self-serve account management. In response to these changes, a comprehensive brand audit revealed opportunities to evolve the look of the CSS brand so that it remains modern and relevant.

You can see the new brand come to life on our new website at www.csspension.com.



PENSION PLAN

New logo

We worked with Ascent Strategy to make subtle changes to our logo so that it is simpler and looks great on mobile devices. Mobile traffic to the CSS website has doubled in the last four years, increasing from about 20% of all website traffic in 2018 to nearly 40% in 2022.

Recent surveys of 4,204 CSS Pension Plan members and 86 participating employers also revealed an uptick in the use and interest in digital channels:

- 86% of members would like a CSS mobile app if one were available
- 61% of members said it is “very important” that they have 24/7 online access to their accounts
- 79% of employers said they prefer receiving information about the CSS Pension Plan from the CSS website/myCSSPEN and email communications

Over 80% of members and 90% of employers rated the Plan’s reputation as either “very good” or “good”. Given the CSS still has a strong reputation through the eyes of members and employers, a full logo redesign was not necessary.

New colour palette


CSS also worked with Ascent to curate a new colour palette that is more accessible for members with visual impairments.

Further, the old brand colour palette did not perform well in dark-mode view when tested for online colour accessibility. The new palette is designed to work well for light-mode users and a growing base of dark-mode users. According to Earthweb, over 80% of smartphone users opt for dark-mode settings.



Kristine Kiesman
CSS member

Overall, the new look and feel of the CSS brand is reflective of our purpose – to empower our members to achieve financial security and wellness in retirement.


You will start to experience the new brand as it is rolled out throughout the rest of 2023 and into 2024. 

Evolution of the Society/CCRL DB plan

CSS, in co-operation with Federated Co-operatives Limited (FCL) and the Co-op Refinery Complex (CRC; formerly known as Consumers' Co-operative Refineries Limited, or CCRL), is very pleased to report that CSS has been entrusted with administering, and managing the investments for, the CCRL Petroleum Employees' Pension Plan (the CCRL Pension Plan).

This co-operation amongst co-operatives has led to a significant win-win for CSS and its members, FCL/CRC, and the members currently earning service in and receiving retirement income from the CCRL Pension Plan.

The increase in assets being managed has led to a reduction in asset management fees for CSS' defined contribution pension plan benefiting all CSS members while the outsourcing of the administration and investment management for the CCRL Pension Plan allows FCL/CRC to focus on their core business. The members of the CCRL Pension Plan gain access to CSS' retirement income planning and other member services.

This collaboration is a great example of the innovation and member benefits that can be achieved when co-operatives work together with the members' best interests in focus. 



From left: Brent Godson, Director, Investments and Financial Management at CSS Pension Plan; Kelly Thompson, former Associate Vice-President Finance and Risk Management at FCL; Martin McInnis, Executive Director at CSS Pension Plan; Heather Ryan, CEO at FCL; Ron Healey, Vice President, Energy and Ag at FCL; Tony Van Burgsteden, Vice-President of Finance at FCL; Tami Dove, Director, Member Experience at CSS Pension Plan.



Launching the *It's Your Plan* education webinar sessions in 2024

You have options when it comes to learning more about your CSS Pension Plan and how it fits into your overall financial wellness and security. One of those options is attending any of the sessions in the *It's Your Plan* series. Sessions are facilitated by our Retirement and Pension Advisors (Advisors) who are CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® professionals or hold a Personal Financial Planning® designation.

For 2024, the *It's Your Plan* sessions will include:

1. Retirement Income Options (RIO)

Nearing retirement and have questions about how you can create a retirement income using your CSS Pension Plan account? Your questions could be answered by attending this session.

Geared towards late-career members (but anyone is welcome), this session will help you understand the retirement income options that are available with your CSS Pension Plan. You will learn more about your CSS investment options and learn how your investing needs can change over time. The Advisors will help you understand which options may fit best into your plan, and how your plan will change over time.

Format: live webinar, in-person, recorded

2. Federal and Personal Retirement Incomes

Our late-career members who are thinking about retirement will find these sessions very valuable. In fact, all members just might. You will learn about the federal and personal sources of income that become part of your overall retirement income portfolio. Developed by the CSS Advisors, these sessions take a deeper dive into Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security, RRSPs and TFSA's (for example).

Format: recorded

3. Retiree Wellness

Your pension journey continues throughout your career and well into your retirement. This session is designed for our retirees who want to learn more about how their CSS Pension Plan retirement income and their overall financial security in retirement are so closely integrated. Topics include reviewing VB Payments, monthly pensions, and investing with CSS during retirement; and touches on how these are essential parts of your financial and emotional wellness during retirement.

Format: live webinar, recorded

4. Welcome to Your Plan (NEW)

This session provides an introduction and refresher to all new and ongoing members. You will learn how sticking to the plan can improve your current and future financial wellness, with the goal of ultimately leading to financial security in retirement. Topics will include how financial decisions impact your overall financial success, the CSS investment options, and the tools and resources available to you.

Format: live webinar, recorded

5. CSS Pension Plan Information Sessions

These sessions are scheduled by YOUR employer. In 2023, we facilitated over 20 of these sessions with employers from across the country. Designed for all members, you will learn about your CSS Pension Plan, your investment options, how various life events impact your pension, and where you can find additional tools and resources.

If this interests you, please have your employer reach out to CSS.

Format: live webinar scheduled by the employer

Self-directed learning

The recorded sessions are available online to anyone at any time. There are several recorded sessions available. Examples include:

- Federal Sources – provides you with information about your federal retirement income sources, including Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS)
- Personal Sources – provides you with basic information about your personal retirement incomes sources, including registered retirement income funds (RRIFs) and tax-free savings accounts (TFSA's)

Continued on next page..

To register for a live virtual or in-person RIO session, please visit www.csspension.com/events-workshops.

Month	Date and Time	Session topic
January	Tues. 9th 9:30 to 11:00 am Tues. 30th 1:30 to 3:00 pm	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO)
February	Tues. 13th 5:30 to 7:00 pm Tues. 27th 9:30 to 11:00 am	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO)
March	Tues. 12th 1:30 to 3:00 pm Tues. 26th 5:30 to 7:00 pm	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO)
April	Tues. 9th 9:30 to 11:00 am Tues. 30th 1:30 to 3:00 pm	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO)
May	Tues. 7th 5:30 to 7:00 pm Tues. 28th 9:30 to 11:00 am Thurs. 9th 9:30 to 10:30 am Thurs. 9th 1:30 to 2:30 pm Thurs. 30th 9:30 to 10:30 am Thurs. 30th 1:30 to 2:30 pm	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retiree Wellness Retiree Wellness It's Your Plan – Welcome! It's Your Plan – Welcome!
September	Tues. 10th 1:30 to 3:00 pm Tues. 24th 5:30 to 7:00 pm	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO)
October	Tues. 8th 9:30 to 11:00 am Tues. 29th 1:30 to 3:00 pm	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO)
November	Tues. 12th 5:30 to 7:00 pm Tues. 26th 9:30 to 11:00 am	Retirement Income Options (RIO) Retirement Income Options (RIO)
December	Tues. 10th 1:30 to 3:00 pm Wed. 11th 9:30 to 10:30 am Wed. 11th 1:30 to 2:30 pm Thurs. 12th 9:30 to 10:30 am Thurs. 12th 1:30 to 2:30 pm	Retirement Income Options (RIO) It's Your Plan – Welcome! It's Your Plan – Welcome! Retiree Wellness Retiree Wellness

** All Saskatchewan Time
** All live webinar

Can't make it to a live virtual or in-person session? Please don't fret! You can attend the recorded sessions at any time. The recorded sessions are available here: www.csspension.com/knowledge-centre-your-css-pension.



2024

Tentative 2024 employer-booked "CSS Pension Plan Information Session" schedule

Please connect with your employer if you would like to encourage them to book a session for you and your colleagues. Your employer would contact CSS to book these sessions. CSS hosts the session on our webinar platform, and we take care of the registration process. If your employer needs something outside of this schedule, they are welcome to contact CSS to discuss options.

Month	Available dates and times
June	Tuesdays at 11:00 to 12:00 (4th, 11th, 18th, 25th) Tuesdays at 3:00 to 4:00 (4th, 11th, 18th, 25th) Thursdays at 12:00 to 1:00 (6th, 13th, 20th, 27th)
October	Tuesdays at 11:00 to 12:00 (1st, 15th, 22nd) Tuesdays at 3:00 to 4:00 (1st, 15th, 22nd) Thursdays at 12:00 to 1:00 (3rd, 17th, 24th, 31st)
November	Tuesdays at 11:00 to 12:00 (5th, 19th) Tuesdays at 3:00 to 4:00 (5th, 19th) Thursdays at 12:00 to 1:00 (7th, 14th, 21st, 28th)

** All Saskatchewan Time
** First come, first serve



PENSION PLAN

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