

SERVICE

Pensions and Benefits

Osler's Pension and Benefits Group is consistently recognized as one of the leading pension law practices in Canada.



Related Expertise

- [Employment and Labour](#)
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- [Pensions and Benefits Litigation](#)

Osler's Pension and Benefits Group is consistently recognized as one of the leading pension law practices in Canada. We are the “go-to firm” for strategic advice relating to governance, the management of legal risk, and legal and regulatory compliance in connection with registered and non-registered pension plans.

Our Group is recognized by leading publications — including a Band 1 ranking in Chambers Canada for many years — for its market-leading expertise and is complemented by the specialized knowledge and skill contributed by Osler's Tax and Litigation departments. Through our integrated team, we can provide the right combination of experience, along with a solutions-driven approach to meet our clients' needs on both sides of the border — for all sizes of organizations.

Our pensions and benefits lawyers have expertise in the following areas:

- **Plan governance and administration** – Osler has advised many of Canada's largest plan sponsors, administrators and public sector pension funds, providing expertise on every aspect of plan administration and governance, including:
 - plan funding
 - multijurisdictional issues (including Québec civil law)
 - governance audits and compliance reviews
 - plan member communications, and
 - agreements with third-party service providers.

Our lawyers have extensive experience representing clients in dealings with the federal and provincial pension regulators and the tax authority.

- **Pension plan restructuring** – Our team advises plan sponsors on the complexities of plan asset transfers, mergers, conversions and wind-ups, including undertaking reviews of historical plan documents and preparing regulatory submissions.

- **Pension de-risking** – The de-risking of defined benefit (DB) pension funds has emerged in Canada and the United States, where many DB plans have solvency deficiencies. Our lawyers develop strategies for addressing the legal issues that arise with the various de-risking options available to pension plan sponsors.
- **Shared risk and target benefit plans** – We advise organizations with respect to legal issues associated with the establishment of shared risk and target benefit plans.
- **Transactional experience** – We work closely with other firm members on the pensions and benefits aspects of mergers, acquisitions, insolvencies and other corporate transactions and restructurings.
- **Plan funding issues** – Clients are advised on complex plan funding issues:
 - in relation to contribution holidays and plan expenses
 - letter of credit funding arrangements
 - temporary solvency funding relief measures, and
 - the establishment of solvency reserve accounts

We have drafted funding policies and advised on their application. As well, our team has represented plan sponsors in some of Canada's largest surplus withdrawals, including the largest withdrawal of plan surplus in Canadian history.

- **Pension investments** – Osler is one of the few law firms in Canada with a dedicated Pension Fund Investment Group. Members of this group are recognized leaders in the areas of Pension, Tax and Investment Funds and Asset Management. They advise on the structuring, formation, taxation and regulation of all types of investment funds investing across varying asset classes, both traditional and alternative investments, and investment strategies, while also managing risk. Osler also has advised clients on ESG aspects of pension investments.

Key Contacts



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Awards and Recognition

- **Chambers Canada: Canada's Leading Lawyers for Business:** Recognized in Pensions & Benefits (Band 1)
 - "They are technically strong, ensure excellent, timely service delivery, are extremely knowledgeable and maintain excellent communication throughout the job."
 - "They have extremely deep knowledge of the substantive law in this area which is complemented by an equally deep understanding of the taxation of pension plans."
- **The Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory:** Recognized in Pensions & Employee Benefits (Montréal, Québec; Toronto, Ontario)
 - *Lexpert Magazine*, the country's leading legal journal, calls Osler one of the market leaders in pension plan administration matters, where "the pure pension law expertise largely resides."
- **The Legal 500:** Recognized in Pensions (Tier 1)