The general provisions that apply to your Quebec Simplified Pension Plan (QSPP) are outlined in this document. You will also receive a Summary of main provisions of your group retirement program that describes the specific rules of the QSPP, including the rules determined by your plan sponsor. These General provisions, together with the Summary of main provisions specific to your QSPP, constitute your plan summary and should be kept in a safe place for future reference.

In this document, when reference is made to the “plan sponsor” it generally means your employer but it can also mean the union or trade association to which you belong by nature of your employment. Your employer is a participating employer in the QSPP and makes contributions to the plan either as a direct result of your membership under the registered pension plan that it sponsors or as a result of an agreement with the union or trade association who might share certain powers with your employer under the plan.

What you should know

- The QSPP is governed by the Québec Supplemental Pension Plans Act, the Civil Code of Québec and the Income Tax Act (Canada).
- The QSPP is a multi-employer pension plan registered under the Québec Supplemental Pension Plans Act. Your employer participates in the QSPP as a means to help ensure your financial security when you retire. The benefits provided to you under the plan are in addition to those that are provided through public retirement programs such as the Canada/Quebec Pension Plan (CPP/QPP) and the Old Age Security (OAS) programs.
- The QSPP is a defined contribution registered pension plan. Your contributions (if any) are made through payroll deduction and are subject to tax exemption.
- The Standard Life Assurance Company of Canada (Standard Life) is the administrator of the QSPP that your employer has subscribed to. Standard Life will be responsible for the overall operation and administration of the plan and will provide the investment services associated with the plan.
- You are allowed to invest contributions in one or more of the investment options that your plan sponsor has selected for the plan. This selection has been made with your best financial interest in mind.
- Your spouse may be entitled to benefits under the plan. For the purposes of the plan, your spouse is the person who, prior to your death, is related to you by marriage or civil union (subject to the Income Tax Act (Canada)).
- If you are not married or in a civil union, your spouse will be deemed to be the person of the opposite sex or same sex with whom you had been living in a conjugal relationship for at least three years on the day before your death.
- One year of living together in a conjugal relationship is sufficient in the following situations:
  - a child was born or will be born of your union;
  - together, you adopted a child during the time you lived together;
  - one spouse adopted a child of the other during the time you lived together;
  - a child was born or adopted during a time you lived together or during a time you were married or living in a civil union;
- Under the plan, spousal status is terminated by separation from bed and board, divorce, annulment of marriage, dissolution or annulment of your civil union or, in the case of de facto spouses, the cessation of living together in a conjugal relationship. However, you can designate your former spouse as your beneficiary or heir.
- If you have any questions about your QSPP, consult your enrolment material or give us a call at our toll free number at 1-800-242-1704.
General provisions of an QSPP

**When do you become eligible?**

To participate, you must be in an eligible employment class under the plan. To enroll in the QSPP, you must meet the eligibility criteria of your plan and complete the electronic enrolment process and/or submit an enrolment form.

If you report to work in an establishment of your employer in a province other than Québec, or you work for a federally regulated business such as a bank, a telecommunication company or an inter-provincial transportation company, in accordance with applicable legislation, you are not permitted to join the QSPP.

The eligibility conditions specific to your plan are outlined in the Summary of main provisions.

If participation is mandatory, your employer will automatically remit contributions to Standard Life for investment. If you have not completed the electronic enrolment process and/or submitted a duly completed enrolment form, contributions will be invested in the default investment fund selected for the plan.

**Who pays for a QSPP?**

Your employer is required to contribute to the QSPP on behalf of all active members. You are permitted to make voluntary contributions to the plan. You may also be required to contribute as outlined in the Summary of main provisions. Your employer must remit the contributions to the plan on a regular basis, at least monthly. The total amount of employee and employer contributions made to the plan in the year cannot exceed the maximum contribution limits established in accordance with the Income Tax Act (Canada) for that year.

Fees and expenses related to the general administration of your plan are paid from the pension fund - which may include your own account(s) - unless they are paid by the employer.

**Can you transfer amounts to the plan from other registered plans?**

In accordance with the provisions of the Income Tax Act (Canada), you are permitted to transfer amounts from other registered plans to the QSPP on a tax-free basis. Other registered plans include the pension plan of a former employer, a Registered Retirement Savings Plan or prescribed Retirement Savings Plan arrangement and a Deferred Profit Sharing Plan. Contributions transferred to the plan are allocated to a “Locked-in” or “Not locked-in” account under the plan, as applicable. If the contributions transferred were locked-in, they will continue to be administered on a locked-in basis in accordance with applicable legislation. Details on how to arrange a transfer are available through your plan sponsor or by contacting Standard Life.

**Where are contributions invested?**

The QSPP allows you to allocate contributions to the various investment funds available under the plan. If Standard Life does not have your investment instructions on record, contributions will be invested on your behalf in the default investment fund selected for the plan. Your plan sponsor will inform you of the applicable default fund, which may appear on your enrolment form.

You are responsible for your investment decisions. To help you with those decisions, the plan sponsor may provide you with information and tools to help you determine the investment profile that is best suited to your needs. Your investment decisions will directly affect the amount of money you will accumulate under the plan.

Contributions are credited with interest and/or investment earnings or losses attributed to the investment funds under which the contributions are held.

**When do contributions cease?**

If your employment with the employer is terminated, or you are no longer part of the eligible employment class under the plan, your active participation in the plan will cease and no further contributions are permitted. If you are on a prescribed leave of absence, including maternity or parental leaves, contributions will continue to be made in accordance with the conditions outlined in the Summary of main provisions.

In any event, contributions will cease to be made upon reaching Maturity Age, as defined in the Summary of main provisions.
Can you withdraw money from the plan while employed?
Withdrawals are permitted from your “Not locked-in account” at any time, unless specified otherwise in the Summary of main provisions. Cash withdrawals will be fully taxable under the provisions of the Income Tax Act (Canada).
You are entitled to transfer all or part of the value of your funds held in your “Locked-in account” as of the first day of the month following your 55th birthday (or as of the date of your 55th birthday if it falls on the first day of the month), once during a 12-month period. Such transfer can, for example, be used to ensure a gradual retirement.
No amounts can be transferred between your “Locked-in account” and your “Not locked-in account”.

What happens if you terminate employment or cease active participation in the plan?
The value of the funds held in your “Not locked-in account” may be used to purchase a deferred or immediate life annuity (pension). In lieu of purchasing a life annuity, you may elect a taxable cash refund or a transfer to another registered plan or to a Registered Retirement Savings Plan.
The value of the funds held in your “Locked-in account” may be used to purchase a deferred or immediate life annuity (pension). In lieu of purchasing a life annuity, you may transfer the funds on a locked-in basis to another registered plan, a prescribed Retirement Savings Plan or to a prescribed Retirement Income arrangement. However, if the value of your locked-in funds is below 20% of the year’s maximum pensionable earnings for the current year, the value of such funds can be paid to you in the same manner as the funds held in your “Not locked-in account”.
Upon termination of employment or cessation of active participation in the plan, Standard Life will provide you with a statement that will describe the different options that are available to you and on which you can select your preferred settlement option(s). If you do not choose an option within 90 days after the sending of the statement, the value of your funds will automatically be transferred on a non locked-in basis and/or locked-in basis, as applicable, to a group Registered Retirement Savings Plan at Standard Life.

What happens when you retire?
The total value of the funds may be used to purchase an immediate annuity (pension). If you have a spouse when you retire, applicable legislation provides that your pension will be payable during your lifetime and if you predecease your spouse, pension payments will continue to your spouse during his/her lifetime at a reduced rate of 60%, unless your spouse had agreed, in a prescribed manner, to a lower percentage, or waived his or her rights to such pension.
In lieu of purchasing an annuity, you may choose to transfer the value of the funds to a prescribed retirement savings or income arrangement.
Upon retirement, Standard Life will provide you with a statement that will describe the different options that are available to you and on which you can select your preferred retirement option.
If you do not choose an option within 90 days after the sending of the statement, the value of your funds will automatically be transferred on a non locked-in basis and/or locked-in basis, as applicable, to a group Registered Retirement Savings Plan at Standard Life.

What happens in the event of a disability?
If a physician certifies that a physical or mental disability reduces your life expectancy, you may be entitled to withdraw the value of your funds held in your “Locked-in account”.

What happens if you are going through a divorce or you dissolve or annul your civil union?
Upon notification, your pension entitlement included in a decree, order or judgment of a competent tribunal or pursuant to a written agreement in settlement of rights out of a marriage or of a civil union will be divided and administered in accordance with applicable legislation.
What happens if you die?
If you die before retirement, the value of the funds will be paid as a taxable cash refund. Payment will be made to your designated beneficiary or estate or to your spouse, if any, according to their entitlement under the plan and applicable legislation. If your spouse is entitled to the death settlement, subject to the provisions of the Income Tax Act (Canada), in lieu of receiving a taxable cash refund, your spouse may elect to transfer the death settlement to another registered plan.

Can the plan be changed or terminated?
Standard Life intends to maintain the plan in force but reserves the right to amend or discontinue it at any time. In addition, your plan sponsor may decide to discontinue its participation in the QSPP or to amend those provisions that are specific to its members. If the plan is amended, the benefits you have accumulated in respect of your remuneration and service prior to the date of the amendment will not be adversely affected.

Can your assets be seized?
The contributions made to the plan and the investment earnings generated by them cannot be seized. This extends to transfers that will be made from your “Locked-in account”. However, contributions, investment income and other amounts in your plan are seizable up to 50% for carrying out the partition of family patrimony, the payment of alimony or a compensatory allowance.

Can you use your pension funds as collateral?
The pension and other benefits provided under your plan cannot be assigned, charged, anticipated, given as security, or surrendered (except as specifically provided under applicable legislation). Once pension benefits have commenced to be paid, they may only be commuted in the event of your death.

Your right to information
You will receive a statement at least once a year that will show your financial activities under the plan and that will contain all the information that is required to be provided to you in accordance with the disclosure requirements under applicable legislation.

You, your spouse, or a duly authorized representative, may request to consult any document and information in respect of the plan and pension fund that is prescribed under applicable legislation, so long as the request is made in writing to the plan sponsor. This right to information also extends to receiving information and details of your entitlements and options on termination, death and retirement, before settlement is made.

Your investment options, if any, along with the various tools and services available to you are described in your enrolment material. Please consult the brochure provided by Standard Life when you enrolled for additional information. If you need help, call us at 1-800-242-1704.