Will I pay tax on my super when I retire?

By Perpetual

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Tax is often the last thing on our minds when we're planning for retirement. But it's important to understand how your retirement income will be taxed, so you can make the most of your savings.

The good news is that super is a tax-effective way of building wealth for your retirement, and the tax benefits become even more pronounced when you retire.

The tax treatment of payments from superannuation depends on factors such as your age and circumstances at the time they are received.

On or after age 60

No tax is payable on either lump sum payments or account-based pension payments received on or after age 60.

By converting your super account to an account-based pension account, investment earnings – including realised net capital gains – are generally tax-free within your pension account.

Before reaching 60

There are limited circumstances in which you can access your super before reaching 60 including financial hardship and compassionate grounds.

The tax treatment of payments made from super before reaching your preservation age are:

Income payments from your account-based pension

Tax-free component	Tax-free
Taxable component	Taxable at your marginal tax rate (plus Medicare levy)

Tax on lump sum payments

Tax-free component	Tax-free
Taxable component	Taxed at 20% (plus Medicare levy)

Tax on disability super benefit

A tax offset of 15% is generally available on disability super benefits paid as a pension to members under age 60.

Tax on terminal illness benefits

Generally no tax is payable on benefits that are paid to you under the 'terminal medical condition' condition of release.

Further information

For further information please speak to your financial adviser or call us on 1800 011 022 during business hours (Sydney time).

However, as a general starting point, you can use the Money Smart calculator to estimate:

- Your super balance at retirement
- How fees affect your final super balance

Read more retirement articles here.

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