

CENTURYLINK COMBINED PENSION PLAN

Annual Funding Notice

April 2018

Introduction

You are receiving this Annual Funding Notice (“Notice”) because you are earning, receiving or entitled to receive a pension benefit from the CenturyLink Combined Pension Plan (“the Plan”). Plan assets used to pay pension benefits are held in a trust. This Notice provides information on how well the Plan is funded to meet its payment obligations. Under pension law we are required to provide this information to participants annually.

This Notice includes important information about the funding status of the Plan and general information about the benefit payments guaranteed by the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (“PBGC”), a federal insurance agency. All traditional pension plans (called “defined benefit pension plans”) must provide this Notice every year regardless of their funding status. This Notice does not mean that the Plan is terminating. It is provided for informational purposes and you are not required to respond in any way. This Notice is for the plan year beginning January 1, 2017 and ending December 31, 2017 (“Plan Year”).

This Notice contains “Supplemental Information,” beginning on page three. This section is required by Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (“MAP-21”), the Highway and Transportation Funding Act of 2014 (“HATFA”) and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015, federal laws that changed how the Plan calculates its liabilities. This section shows you the effect of these changes.

How Well Funded is Your Plan

Under federal law, the Plan must report how well it is funded by using a measure called the “funding target attainment percentage.” This percentage is obtained by dividing the Plan’s Net Plan Assets by Plan Liabilities on the Valuation Date for the Plan Year. In general, the higher the percentage, the better funded the Plan. The Plan’s funding target attainment percentage for the Plan Year and each of the two preceding plan years is shown in the chart below, along with a statement of the value of the Plan’s assets and liabilities for the same period.

| CenturyLink Combined Pension Plan | | | |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Plan Year 2017 | Plan Year 2016 | Plan Year 2015 |
| 1. Valuation Date | 1/1/2017 | 1/1/2016 | 1/1/2015 |
| 2. Plan Assets | | | |
| a. Total Plan Assets | 11,222,755,879 | 11,590,499,038 | 12,293,439,404 |
| b. Funding Standard Carryover Balance* | 11,469,196 | 10,639,328 | 10,701,396 |
| c. Prefunding Balance* | 546,924,426 | 418,288,353 | 324,292,603 |
| d. Net Plan Assets (a) – (b) – (c) = (d) | 10,664,362,257 | 11,161,571,357 | 11,958,445,405 |
| 3. Plan Liabilities | 10,839,355,601 | 10,868,279,360 | 11,268,568,640 |
| 4. Funding Target Attainment Percentage (2d)/(3) | 98.38% | 102.69% | 106.12% |

* Considered Credit Balances

Note: The values shown above as of January 1, 2017 are preliminary and will be finalized no later than October 15, 2018.

Plan Assets and Credit Balances

Total Plan Assets represent the value of the Plan’s assets (see line 2a in the charts above) on the Valuation Date (see line 1 in the charts above). Credit balances were subtracted from Total Plan Assets to determine Net Plan Assets (line 2d) used in the calculation of the funding target attainment percentage shown in the charts above. While pension plans are permitted to maintain credit balances (also called “funding standard carryover balances” or “prefunding balances,” see 2b and 2c in the charts above) for funding purposes, they may not be taken into account when calculating a plan’s funding target attainment percentage. A plan might have a credit balance, for example, if in a prior year an employer made contributions to the plan above the minimum level required by law. Generally, the excess contributions are counted as “credits” and may be applied in future years toward the minimum level of contributions a plan sponsor is required to make by law.

Plan Liabilities

Plan Liabilities (line 3 of the charts above) are the liabilities used to determine the Plan’s funding target attainment percentages. This figure is an estimate of the amount of assets a plan needs on the Valuation Date to pay for promised benefits under a plan.

Supplemental Information

This section is a temporary supplement to this Notice. It is required by federal laws named Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (“MAP-21”), HATFA, and the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015. These federal laws changed how pension plans calculate their liabilities. The purpose of this supplement is to show you the effect of these changes. Prior to 2012, pension plans determined their liabilities using a two-year average of interest rates. Now pension plans also must take into account a 25-year average of interest rates. This means that interest rates likely will be higher and plan liabilities likely will be lower than they were under prior law. As a result, CenturyLink, Inc. (the “Company”), may contribute less money to the Plan at a time when market interest rates are at or near historical lows.

The “Information Table” shows how the interest rates affect the Plan’s: (1) funding target attainment Percentage, (2) funding shortfall, and (3) minimum required contribution. The funding target attainment percentage is a measure of how well a plan is funded on a particular date. The funding shortfall is the amount by which a plan’s liabilities exceed net assets. The minimum required contribution is the amount of money a company is required by law to contribute to a plan in a given Plan Year. The following tables show this information determined with and without the adjusted rates to illustrate the effect of the higher rates. The information is provided for the Plan Year and for each of the two preceding plan years.

| Information Table | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | 2017 | | 2016 | | 2015 | |
| | With Adjusted Interest Rates | Without Adjusted Interest Rates | With Adjusted Interest Rates | Without Adjusted Interest Rates | With Adjusted Interest Rates | Without Adjusted Interest Rates |
| Funding Target Attainment Percentage | 98.38% | 82.83% | 102.69% | 86.30% | 106.12% | 87.43% |
| Funding Shortfall | \$174,993,344 | \$2,210,430,981 | \$0 | \$1,783,723,342 | \$0 | \$1,719,034,380 |
| Minimum Required Contribution | \$142,429,898 | \$470,000,928 | \$0 | \$404,670,807 | \$0 | \$384,677,357 |

Year-End Assets and Liabilities

The asset values in the charts above are measured as of the first day of the Plan Year and are actuarial values. Because market values can fluctuate daily based on factors in the marketplace, such as changes in the stock market, pension law allows plans to use actuarial values that are designed to smooth out those fluctuations for funding purposes. Market values tend to show a clearer picture of a plan's funded status as of a given point in time. The estimated fair market value of the Plan's assets measured as of the last day of the Plan Year, December 31, 2017, was \$11,060,000,000. On this same date, the estimated Plan's liabilities were \$12,690,000,000. The Plan's estimated liability reflects all Plan provisions including all Plan amendments through the end of the Plan Year.

Participant Information

The total number of participants in the Plan as of the Plan's January 1, 2017 valuation date was 107,428. Of this number, 25,582 were active participants, 67,227 were retired or separated from service and receiving benefits, and 14,619 were retired or separated from service and entitled to future benefits.

Funding Policy and Investment Objectives

Every pension plan must have a procedure for establishing a funding policy to carry out plan objectives. A funding policy relates to the level of assets needed to pay for promised benefits. The funding policy of the Plan is to make contributions with the objective of accumulating sufficient assets to pay all qualified pension benefits when due under the terms of the Plan.

Plan assets are invested by plan officials, called fiduciaries, who are responsible for plan investment management decisions in accordance with guidelines or general instructions concerning various types or categories of investment assets. The investment objective of the Plan is to achieve an attractive risk adjusted return that will provide for the payment of benefits and minimize the risk of large losses. Investment risk is monitored and is managed by broadly diversifying Plan assets across numerous investment strategies with different expected returns, volatilities and correlations.

The Plan's assets were allocated among the following categories of investments as of the end of the 2017 Plan Year. These allocations are percentages of estimated total assets:

| Asset Allocations | Percentage |
|-----------------------|------------|
| Stock | 29% |
| Investment-Grade Debt | 31% |
| High-Yield Debt | 10% |
| Real Estate | 8% |
| Other* | 22% |
| Total | 100% |

*Other assets include private market investments, hedge funds and broadly diversified multi-asset class strategies.

The Plan's assets are invested in the CenturyLink Defined Benefit Master Trust and are reported on the Plan's Schedule H of the Form 5500 as invested primarily in master trust investment accounts. The Form 5500 for Plan Year 2017 will be filed no later than October 15, 2018.

For more information about the Plan's investments as shown in the chart above, contact the Pension Service Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Central time, at 1-800-729-7526 and select the pension option. Refer also to the "Where to Get More Information" section below.

Right to Request a Copy of the Annual Report

A pension plan is required to file with the U.S. Department of Labor an annual report called the Form 5500 that contains financial and other information about the Plan. Copies of the annual report are available from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration's Public Disclosure Room at 200 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room N-1515, Washington, DC 20210, or by calling 1-202-693-8673. For 2009 and subsequent plan years, you may obtain an electronic copy of the Plan's annual report by going to www.efast.dol.gov and using the Form 5500 search function.

Or you may obtain a copy of the Plan's most recent annual report by making a written request to the Plan Administrator. Copying charges may apply. Individual information, such as the amount of your accrued benefit under the Plan, is not contained in the annual report. If you are seeking information regarding your benefits under the Plan, contact the Plan Administrator identified below under "Where To Get More Information."

Summary of Rules Governing Termination of Single-Employer Plans

The following information is required by law to be reported to you. CenturyLink currently intends to continue the Plan but reserves the right to terminate the Plan at any time. Each Participating Company as defined by the Plan has reserved the right to terminate participation in this Plan at any time.

If a plan is terminated, there are specific termination rules that must be followed under federal law. A summary of these rules follows:

There are two ways an employer can terminate its pension plan. First, the employer can end the plan in a "standard termination" but only after showing the PBGC that the plan has enough money to pay all benefits owed to participants. Under a standard termination, the plan must either purchase an annuity from an insurance company (which will provide you with periodic retirement benefits, such as monthly, for life or for a set period of time when you retire) or, if the plan allows, issue one lump-sum payment that covers your entire benefit. The plan administrator must give you advance notice that identifies the insurance company (or companies) that the employer may select to provide the annuity. The PBGC's guarantee ends when the employer purchases your annuity or gives you the one-time lump-sum payment. If the plan purchases an annuity for you from an insurance company and that company becomes unable to pay, the applicable state guaranty association guarantees the annuity to the extent authorized by that state's law.

Second, if a plan is not fully-funded, the employer may apply for a distress termination. To do so, however, the employer must be in financial distress and prove to a bankruptcy court or to the PBGC that the employer cannot remain in business unless the plan is terminated. If the application is granted, the PBGC will take over the plan as trustee and pay plan benefits, up to the legal limits, using plan assets and PBGC guarantee funds. If a plan purchases an annuity for a participant from an insurance company and that company becomes unable to pay, the applicable state guaranty association guarantees the annuity to the extent authorized by that state's law.

Under certain circumstances, the PBGC may take action on its own to end a pension plan. Most terminations initiated by the PBGC occur when the PBGC determines that plan termination is needed to protect the interests of plan participants or of the PBGC insurance program. The PBGC can do so if, for example, a plan does not have enough money to pay benefits currently due.

Benefit Payments Guaranteed by the PBGC

When the PBGC takes over a plan, it pays pension benefits through its insurance program. Only benefits that you have earned a right to receive and that cannot be forfeited (called vested benefits) are guaranteed. Most participants and beneficiaries receive all of the pension benefits they would have received under their plan, but some people may lose certain benefits that are not guaranteed.

The amount of benefits that PBGC guarantees is determined as of a plan's termination date. However, if a

plan terminates during a plan sponsor's bankruptcy the amount guaranteed is determined as of the date the sponsor entered bankruptcy.

The PBGC maximum benefit guarantee is set by law and is updated each calendar year. For a plan with a termination date or sponsor bankruptcy date, as applicable in 2018 the maximum guarantee is \$5,420.45 per month or \$65,045 per year, for a benefit paid to a 65-year-old retiree with no survivor benefit. If a plan terminates during a plan sponsor's bankruptcy the maximum guarantee is fixed as of the calendar year in which the sponsor entered bankruptcy. The maximum guarantee is lower for an individual who begins receiving benefits from PBGC before age 65; the maximum guarantee by age can be found on PBGC's website, www.pbgc.gov. The guaranteed amount is also reduced if a benefit will be provided to a survivor of the plan participant.

The PBGC guarantees "basic benefits" earned before a plan is terminated, which includes:

- Pension benefits at normal retirement age;
- Most early retirement benefits;
- Annuity benefits for survivors of plan participants; and
- Disability benefits for a disability that occurred before the date the plan terminated or the date the sponsor entered bankruptcy, as applicable.

The PBGC does not guarantee certain types of benefits:

- Benefits for which you do not have a vested right, usually because you have not worked enough years for the company.
- Benefits for which you have not met all age, service, or other requirements.
- Benefit increases and new benefits that have been in place for less than one year are not guaranteed. Those that have been in place for less than five years are only partly guaranteed.
- Early retirement payments that are greater than payments at normal retirement age may not be guaranteed. For example, a supplemental benefit that stops when you become eligible for Social Security may not be guaranteed.
- Benefits other than pension benefits, such as health insurance, life insurance, death benefits, vacation pay, or severance pay, are not guaranteed.
- The PBGC generally does not pay lump sums exceeding \$5,000.

In some circumstances, participants and beneficiaries still may receive some benefits that are not guaranteed. This depends on how much money the terminated plan has and how much the PBGC recovers from employers for plan underfunding.

For additional general information about the PBGC and the pension insurance program guarantees, go to the "General FAQs about PBGC" on PBGC's website at <https://www.pbgc.gov/about/faq/pg/general-faqs-about-pbgc.html>. Please contact your employer or plan administrator for specific information about your pension plan or pension benefit. The PBGC does not have that information.

Where To Get More Information

For more information about this Notice, you may contact the Pension Service Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Central time, at 1-800-729-7526 and select the pension option. The Plan Administrator is the CenturyLink Employee Benefits Committee at 214 East 24th Street, Vancouver, WA 98663. For identification purposes, the official plan number is 001 and the plan sponsor's name and employer identification number or "EIN" is CenturyLink, Inc., EIN 72-0651161. For more information about the PBGC and benefit guarantees, go to PBGC's website, www.pbgc.gov.

Legal Notice

CenturyLink Plan Disclosure — No Action is Required

CenturyLink Investment Management Company (“CIM”) is the investment fiduciary for the assets held in various trusts for the following plans: CenturyLink Combined Pension Plan, the CenturyLink Retiree and Inactive Health Plan, CenturyLink Dollars and Sense 401(k) Plan and the CenturyLink Union 401(k) Plan, (collectively referred to as “the Plans”).

CIM is claiming an exemption from registration as a Commodity Pool Operator for the Plans. The Commodity Futures Trading Commission (“CFTC”) requires that we provide the following information to plan participants in order to meet the exemption requirements. This disclosure does not affect your benefit(s) in any way and does not require any action on your part.

As part of the investment strategies utilized by the Plans, CIM and/or their investment managers may engage in commodities futures trading for the above listed Plans. The Plans are not construed as commodity pools and CIM has not registered with the CFTC as a Commodity Pool Operator by claiming an exclusion in accordance with CFTC Rule 4.5 (a) (4).