

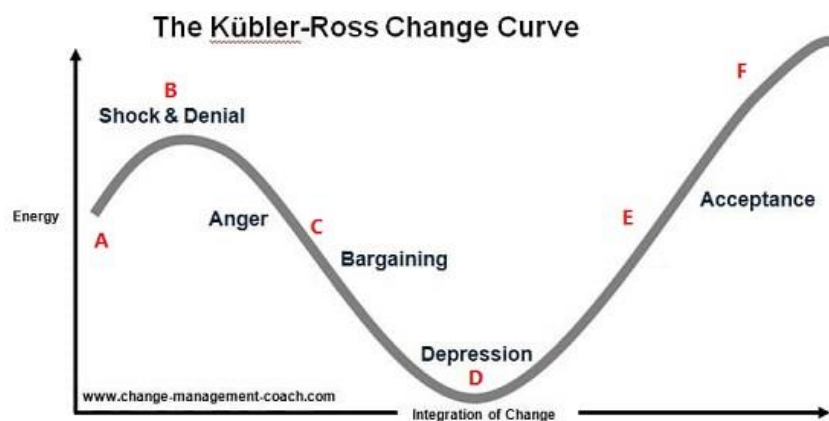
Redundancy causes disruption to your life and can be very stressful. It can help to acknowledge that the decision isn't personal – there's a logical, commercially driven rationale. But there will be times in the process when it feels very personal indeed.

I'm sorry to have to tell you...

There is no good way to learn that your job is no longer there for you. There may have been rumours for months before anything happened, but nothing can prepare you for the announcement: it is a huge shock. Everyone deals with redundancy in a different way, experiencing a range of emotions at different times. You may feel elated at the prospect of a change of career, but at the other end of the scale you may experience shock, fear, denial, or anger. For some, the timing is perfect – for others, it just couldn't be worse.

Dealing with your emotions

There will be so many emotions over the coming weeks/months, we will try to explain a few to you, with this change cycle. It's important to recognise that you can jump back and forth from day to day, or even several times a day. Try to recognise when you're at a particular high- or low- point, and don't make important decisions at those points if you can help it.



A = The pattern of life before the changes.

B = The loss and shock due to the temporary numbness or disbelief. Some may react with relentless activity, others with a depression that stops them doing anything at all. There may be a feeling of unity with others at the sense of loss or there may be feelings of alienation.

C = Emotional reaction such as anger, used positively, will help you be assertive, set limits and get things off your chest.

D = There is then a time you will grieve for your job, status, loss of colleagues, lifestyles.

E = This is when you begin to accept the changes are about to happen and the idea of re-employment becomes a reality.

F = Rebuilding your new working life now begins.

Your reaction when under stress can often be to withdraw from those who might offer the most support, or even worse, stressful times can put a strain on the relationships you most depend on. Friends, family members, and work colleagues can be there as part of your support network. Other support tools are available from the Employee Assistance Programme on 0800 316 9337, Coping with Redundancy with mind.org.uk, or the Samaritans (samaritans.org). Talking openly about how you're really feeling can be like opening a door, and puts you back in control and reveals the choices you have.

Timeline of Events

After the announcement, here's what happens next – not every step will occur in every case (e.g., those successful in obtaining a new role straightaway obviously won't have a dismissal meeting):

- Individual Consultation Meetings
- Preference / Voluntary Redundancy Form submitted *
- Preferencing / Voluntary Redundancy Review *
- Assessment and calibration *
- Communication of Outcome of Selection Process
- Redeployment Activity (if applicable)
- Dismissal Meeting Date (with NGSU support available for members)
- Outplacement support and Career counselling
- Date to Leave AFP

* Not all of these will occur in every change programme

Knowing Your Rights

Employers must try to avoid redundancies; the Consultation process in Aegon Financial Planning is set out in the Redundancy Policy. If redundancies are inevitable, many employers ask for volunteers. In some change programmes, people may be asked to express an interest in voluntary redundancy (VR). If that's the case, and you express a preference for redundancy, your manager will need to approve your preference, and will have to consider the needs of the business, too. However, if you do not indicate an interest in VR, there may still have to be a selection process if the business believes the number of people selected through this route is not sufficient (or, indeed, too high). The selection process could be a desk-top (paper based) selection exercise or (generally for more senior roles) some form of competitive interview or assessment (such as ability testing or selection assessment centres).

However, if another role is found for you within Aegon, and Aegon considers it to be a reasonable substitute, any offer made to you will be with the expectation of acceptance. Employers must be fair and reasonable when completing the selection for redundancy; if you think you've been selected unfairly, please contact the Union on 01295 710 767. There's more information on "suitable alternative roles" later in this Guide.

Consultation Process

Individual consultation is the process by which Aegon engages with you directly. There are several steps in a consultation process, which may differ depending what the various potential outcomes are. There is a template that your Manager will read from and complete during the consultation process at each meeting, to make sure that any points you make are recorded and considered before final decisions are made and to ensure you have an understanding of the change proposal and business rationale.

There will be an initial announcement to everyone who is potentially impacted, which will be followed by individual consultation meetings. The first meeting is always an opportunity to be given more detailed information about how the change will affect you, for you to ask any questions you may have, and for you to share any thoughts / concerns you have at this stage. If there is to be a selection process of some sort, this should be explained to you now; if there's anything you're not clear about, make sure to get all the information about it you need. You should never be asked to make any firm decisions in this initial meeting.

The Redundancy Policy sets out the purpose and process of Consultation.

Counter Proposals

Counter proposals are a key part of any consultation process providing those impacted with a way to respond to, and counter, the suggested changes. In principle, a counter proposal should recommend improvements to the business requirements that the proposed change aims to meet. Counter proposals can be submitted by an individual or a group; if submitted by a group you will need to agree an individual to act as your main point of contact.

Though counter proposals are ideally received as soon as possible - allowing time to review and respond to them within the consultation period - you can submit them at any time throughout your consultation. When submitting you will need to provide as much detail as possible which should include an outline of the benefits that will result from accepting your approach.

Counter proposals generally cover at least one of the following (although they can cover other points):

- offer a more beneficial alternative to the proposal that has already been made
- highlight and resolve service concerns or business risks that might have been overlooked
- provide additional content, or corrections, to the information that has been used to date

Assessment of your particular skills.

Assessments should be carried out in the fairest way possible and should include a number of relevant competencies along with scoring criteria. Consultation Managers and Line Managers carrying out assessments should be briefed on this and a robust calibration process to ensure the integrity and consistency of the scoring should follow.

Outcomes

If the outcome is that another role is found for you (whether through the change or by you applying), it's important to know whether that role is a "Suitable Alternative", as this can affect the terms on which the role is offered, and what happens if you decide not to accept it. Although there isn't a straightforward definition of "Suitable", some of the factors that might make a role not suitable include a significant change in working hours, a change in location involving long travelling time, loss of pay, change in level, skills and experience. Each case will be different, and what is suitable for one person may not be suitable for a colleague, because of those factors.

If you consider the job offered to you is unsuitable, you may say no, but be aware that if none of the reasons above apply, it could be considered unreasonable to refuse the offer. The Union can seek clarity on decisions made on suitability, so if in any doubt please contact 01295 710 767.

If you are unhappy with the outcome of the change process, please raise your concerns with your manager in the first instance, who will always seek to resolve any issues. If this does not resolve matters, you have the right to appeal.

You will have the right to be accompanied to an appeal hearing by a representative of the NGSU.

The appeal decision is final.

If you decide to accept an alternative job (that is not deemed "suitable alternative"), you are entitled to a trial period of 4 weeks. If during this time it is considered that the role is not suitable, further alternative work will be sought. Ultimately if no appropriate work can be found redundancy will be considered.

Time off to find a new job

All employees under notice of redundancy are entitled to reasonable time off to look for a new job, attend interviews or arrange training for future employment. You should agree any time off in advance with your Manager.

Notice Periods

The length of notice depends on your contract. If you resign before Aegon has formally confirmed your redundancy, you cannot claim severance pay. Under the Redundancy policy all employees selected for redundancy will be entitled to their contractual notice, but the business may not require you to report to work (garden leave). You can request this option if it suits your circumstances, but the decision rests with Aegon.

Leaving before your notice period ends

If you leave Aegon before you have been issued with your Notice of Dismissal telling you the date on which notice will start and finish, you will lose all rights of Redundancy.

If you want to leave before the end of your notice period, for example where you have found another job external to Aegon, you should put your request in writing for consideration. If Aegon does not agree to this and you leave to start your new job, you may be treated as if you have resigned, and you could lose your entitlement to your redundancy pay. If you make a request for a shorter notice period, you will only be paid for that shorter period, check this carefully before you agree to leave. Please also be aware that if you leave before the end of your notice period, you will be liable to pay tax and National Insurance on the pay that you would have received in relation to the unworked part of your notice. This is a legal requirement known as post-employment notice pay (PENP), and the tax and NI payable on this sum will mean a reduction in your redundancy payment.

Your Finances

You may well be anxious about losing your job, how you will pay your bills, or not getting another job. But being prepared puts you in a better position if you start planning now. You will have been given an approximate figure of your severance pay, either via the redundancy reckoner or a quote from HR (don't forget that the TAX and NI has to be taken off the figure).

There are some excellent Budget planners available to help you with this, such as

<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/banking/budget-planning/>, or

<https://www.nationwide.co.uk/help/managing-your-money/>. [NGSU Extras](#) also has useful information on Budgeting, etc., in its Financial Wellbeing section.

Here is a list of suggestions that other people in a similar situation have found useful:

- **Do a debt audit.** Whilst you are working, your credit score will usually be much better than if you lose your job, as the loss of income means lenders will be less keen to give you credit. Therefore, if your existing debts aren't at cheap rates, it's best to apply sooner to try to cut their costs. So, check out the best options for credit cards, bank accounts, personal loans and mortgages to reduce your outgoings.
- **Boost your income.** There are a host of things you can do to bring in cash in the short term, from mystery shopping to selling your CD collection. There are websites that can give you ideas.
- **Do a budget & money makeover.** There's nothing more important than running through all your finances to see what bills you can cut and doing a full budget to ensure you're spending within your means, but remember to be honest and have your bank statements and bills with when completing it. There are also tips on lots of little ways to cut back
- **Pay off debts.** If you've any spare savings, use them to clear outstanding credit cards or loans. Having debts hanging over you during redundancy is a nightmare. The cost of most debts vastly exceeds the interest earned on savings.

Yet, don't use all your money paying off debts. It's important you keep access to emergency funds if you need them. If you decide to repay debts, but it takes longer than planned to find a new job, you may need money later on for day-to-day living.

- **Check out mortgage help schemes.** If you have a mortgage, work out what level of protection you have if you were to lose your job. Both private, work-based and government schemes may help. Please check

with your lender to see what help is available for example if you can take a payment holiday? Though do be aware that this can have an impact on your credit score in the future.

Claiming benefits via www.gov.uk

Use a [benefits calculator](#) to find out what benefits you could get.

Universal Credit is a payment to help with living costs. Find out if you're [eligible and how to apply for Universal Credit](#).

If you have worked and paid enough National Insurance contributions, usually within the last 2 tax years, you may be able to claim a benefit based on your contributions. Find out about:

- [new style Jobseeker's Allowance](#) if you're looking for and available for work
- [new style Employment and Support Allowance](#) if you're ill and unable to work

Get help finding a new job

- write CVs and find jobs
- find information on benefits
- find the right training and learn new skills
- organise [work trials](#) (if you're eligible)
- get any extra help at work if you're disabled, for example [Access to Work](#).

On the Government website there are links to lots of websites where you can upload your CV. There are also lots of sites that have free learning courses, for example <https://www.reed.co.uk/courses/>, and <https://www.gov.uk/career-skills-and-training>.

Death in Service / life assurance

Life cover provided by Aegon will end on your last day of employment and you may want to make alternative arrangements.

Flexible Benefits

Your flexible benefits from the 'Selection' scheme end as soon as your employment ends. The date on which your benefits end is typically your leaving date (provided the reduction to salary has been made for the month in which this falls) or on the last day of the month in which the final reduction to salary is made (e.g., the previous month) whichever is earlier.

Severance Payments for former Nationwide Employees

Nationwide offered an enhanced redundancy package, which includes any entitlement to statutory redundancy pay, and these terms continue to apply to those employees who transferred to Aegon on 1 February 2024. The redundancy terms indicated in this section will be offered only where you have been formally served notice of dismissal by reason of redundancy and where:

Employees on Nationwide terms and conditions of employment who commenced employment on or before 31 March 2010 (excluding employees who took an employment break and re-joined on or after 1 April 2010)

Weekly Pay x Number of weeks x 4.6

Maximum severance payment is capped at two times annual notional salary, with annual notional salary being capped at £70,000 per annum. If the calculation above exceeds the cap of two times annual notional salary, then you will receive the capped payment.

Employees on Nationwide terms and conditions of employment who commenced employment on or after 1 April 2010

Weekly Pay x Number of weeks x 2.75

You must have at least one full year of continuous service at the date of redundancy to qualify for a severance payment.

Maximum severance payment is capped at one times annual notional salary, with annual notional salary being capped at £70,000 per annum. If the calculation above exceeds the cap of one times annual notional salary, then you will receive the capped payment.

The number of weeks referred to in the tables above is based on your age and number of complete years' service. If you would like to know how many weeks you are entitled to, you can find out by using the [Ready Reckoner](#) on the Union's website. Your length of service is capped at 20 years, counting backwards from the date you leave. This is based on the statutory calculation method.

Statutory redundancy payment: Weekly pay (subject to statutory cap) X Number of weeks

You must have two or more years' continuous service at the date of redundancy to qualify for a statutory severance payment. There is a calculator online at <https://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-redundancy-pay>

All redundancy payments will be paid on the next available payroll run following your dismissal.

Tax and income tax

Under current legislation, the first £30,000 of a redundancy severance payment is normally free of tax and National Insurance Contributions although this will depend on the constituent elements of which this is comprised (e.g., statutory and enhanced redundancy, payment in lieu of notice (PILON), compensation for loss of employment, holiday paid in lieu etc.) and the terms of your employment contract. If you have previously received a severance or settlement payment from Aegon, HMRC require the amount of that payment to be taken into account in calculating any tax-free amount on this occasion.

If your severance payment exceeds £30,000 then tax will always be payable on the excess (and sometimes at a higher rate of tax). National Insurance Contributions are currently not normally payable on severance payments (but this again depends on the constituent elements of the severance payment).

As the Pay As You Earn system is cumulative, tax in any given month is always calculated on the assumption that your average monthly income so far for the tax year will continue throughout the year. As a result, a large payment (e.g., severance), particularly one received early in the tax year, could be taxed at a higher rate than will eventually be necessary and the tax is then clawed back over the remainder of the tax year if you remain in employment. However, this is not possible if you do not take up another employment and it would be advisable to contact HMRC to ensure you receive a refund of overpaid tax.

Depending on the amount of your payment and when it is processed, you may find that a significant amount of tax is deducted.

Stay with Us

Being made redundant doesn't mean you have to leave NGSU:

- if you are planning to return to work you can stay as an Associate member, with access to full representation and all services, discounts and benefits. All you need to do is let us know you are leaving and we'll send you a direct debit form ready for when you leave
- if you are planning to retire then you can stay as a Pensioner membership, again with access to all services, discounts and benefits.

In either case please just let us know on **01295 710 767** or via ngsu@ngsu.org.uk

Checklist:

Do you understand the process?

Do you understand the proposal?

Would it help to talk to someone about how you are feeling?

Have a list of questions for the consultation process?

Do you have any alternative suggestions? (These are formally known as “counter-proposals”)

Do you know what you want to do – e.g., leave Nationwide/stay at Nationwide? Something very different?

Is managing people important to you?

Future Finances –

Do you know what will happen to your pension? Are you considering paying some of your severance into it?

Do you know what your debts are, and how much interest you’re paying?

Do you have any redundancy insurance?