



SSC # 77 – CPP & OAS OPTIMIZATION: ADVANCED STRATEGIES FOR MAXIMIZING GOVERNMENT BENEFITS

This course is eligible for:

3.0 Life & A&S CE Credits for BC, SK, MB & ON.

3.0 Life ONLY CE Credits for AB.

Target Audience

This course is designed for the following professionals working within the Canadian financial services industry:

- All Life & A&S licensed financial advisors and mutual fund representatives
- Bank branch advisors, insurance advisors, and wealth planners who regularly encounter clients transitioning into or through retirement;
- Retirement income specialists and pension consultants providing advice on retirement income structuring;
- Associate advisors and financial planning associates supporting senior advisors in the preparation of retirement income plans.
- Registered investment advisors and dealing representatives regulated by the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization (CIRO) who work with pre-retirement and retirement-stage clients.

Participants are expected to have a foundational understanding of Canadian income tax, basic retirement savings vehicles (RRSP, TFSA, RRIF), and the general structure of the Canadian retirement income system.

This is an intermediate-to-advanced level course that will help the advisor in their financial, estate and retirement planning procedures.

Purpose

The purpose of this course is to equip Canadian financial advisors, retirement planners, and investment representatives with a comprehensive, technically rigorous, and practically applicable body of knowledge pertaining to the optimization of Canada Pension Plan (CPP) and Old Age Security (OAS) benefits.

This course is designed to enable advisors to move beyond rudimentary familiarity with government benefit programs and achieve advanced proficiency in the analysis, modelling, and strategic integration of CPP and OAS benefits within the context of a holistic retirement income plan. Upon successful completion of this course, advisors will be capable of conducting defensible, client-specific CPP and OAS optimization analyses, documenting recommendations in accordance with applicable regulatory standards, and communicating benefit strategies clearly and effectively to clients at all levels of financial literacy.

This course further aims to support advisors in fulfilling their professional obligations under the standards of CIRO, FP Canada, and the Chambre de la sécurité financière (CSF), by deepening their understanding of the compliance, documentation, and suitability considerations that attend retirement income planning advice in Canada.

Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

1. **Explain the architecture of the Canada Pension Plan**, including the calculation methodology for CPP retirement benefits, the operation of dropout provisions (child-rearing and disability), the CPP enhancement phases (2019–2023 Phase 1 and 2024 and beyond CPP2), and the post-retirement benefit (PRB) available to individuals who continue contributing while receiving CPP.
2. **Assess OAS eligibility, deferral benefits, and clawback exposure** for individual clients, including the application of the OAS recovery tax formula, the identification of clients at risk of clawback, and the design of strategies to reduce or eliminate clawback through income management and benefit timing.
3. **Conduct a CPP timing analysis** — including break-even calculations for early, standard, and deferred commencement scenarios — that integrates health status, longevity expectations, investment return assumptions, tax marginal rates, and risk tolerance into a documented, client-specific recommendation.
4. **Design an integrated retirement income plan** that sequences income from CPP, OAS, RRSP/RRIF, TFSA, and defined benefit pension sources in a manner that optimises after-tax income, minimises clawback risk, and utilises available tax credits and pension income splitting provisions.
5. **Apply CPP and OAS planning strategies to special client situations**, including separated and divorced clients (CPP credit splitting), self-employed individuals, clients with partial OAS entitlement due to non-residency, clients with defined benefit pensions, and those transitioning from CPP disability benefits to retirement benefits.
6. **Document CPP and OAS optimization recommendations** in compliance with Provincial insurance licencing bodies, CIRO, FP Canada, and CSF regulatory requirements, including appropriate file note standards, disclosure of assumptions, and the suitability considerations applicable to income-tested government benefit advice.