

Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association

Backstretch Pension Plan



Questions and Answers

Guidebook for Participants

The MTHA Board of Directors, with approval from the Maryland Racing Commission, established the MTHA Retirement Plan for Thoroughbred backstretch employees and trainers working at Maryland's mile tracks.

The Plan's primary purpose is to provide retirement income to supplement Social Security and help strengthen long-term financial security for those who dedicate their careers to Maryland racing.

When Did The Plan Begin?

The Plan was established in 1988 and has evolved over time to provide participants with greater flexibility and transparency.

Participants now have the ability, within Plan limits, to:

- Access their account online
- Self-direct investments
- Monitor balances and performance
- Use retirement planning tools

All through John Hancock's secure retirement platform.

How Do I Access My Account Through John Hancock?

If you wish to register to access your account visit myplan.johnhancock.com or download John Hancock's retirement app.

Enter your information, including:

- Your Contract number: 167724

Then follow these steps:

- Create a username and password,
- Choose your challenge questions.
- Confirm your information

Once registered, you can:

- View your account balance
- Monitor investment performance
- Change investment allocations
- Update contribution elections

If you need enrollment assistance, call: 855-JHENROLL (855-543-6765)

For general account questions: 800-395-1113

What Are The Benefits Of Participating?

Through the MTHA Retirement Plan and John Hancock platform, participants benefit from:

- Tax-deferred savings
- Compound growth over time
- Secure online account access
- Investment flexibility
- Educational tools and retirement planning resources

The earlier you participate and accumulate service years, the more powerful compounding can become over time.

Who Is Eligible To Participate In The Plan?

You are eligible to participate if:

- You are licensed by the Maryland Racing Commission as either:

- A Trainer licensed by the Maryland Racing Commission in good standing who makes a minimum of 10 starts or more per year at Laurel Park, Pimlico Race Course and/or Timonium Race Course, or

- A Backstretch Employee employed in the care of horses and licensed by the Maryland Racing Commission in good standing as determined by your Employer (including grooms, exercise riders, hot walkers, pony persons, and stable foremen)

- You have completed one (1) Year of Service

- You are at least 18 years of age

The following categories of licensees are not eligible to participate: owners (as opposed to owner/trainers); security; maintenance; valets; parking; mutual clerks; vendors; track employees; jockeys, etc.

What Is A Year Of Service?

A Year of Service is any calendar year in which you worked or trained at a Maryland mile track for at least 1,000 hours.

What Are Earnings?

Earnings are your taxable income from backstretch employment or training at Maryland mile tracks.

Each year, you must provide proof of earnings by submitting:

- W-2
- 1099
- Filed federal tax return

For trainers, a statement from the Horsemen's bookkeeper is sufficient documentation.

Only the first \$22,000 of annual earnings is used in calculating benefits.

How Is My Benefit Calculated?

Your Retirement Benefit equals the total balance in your individual account when you qualify for Early or Normal Retirement and elect to retire.

Each year, the MTHA Board determines the total contribution to the Plan. That amount is allocated among participants using the following formula:

- 1 unit for each Year of Service
- 0.1 unit for each \$100 of earnings (up to \$22,000 maximum)

Your total units are divided by the total units of all participants. That percentage determines your share of that year's contribution.

Years of Service include all years in which you met the eligibility requirements as stated above and were licensed and worked at least 1,000 hours at a Maryland mile track.

How Can I Invest My Account?

Through John Hancock, participants can:

- Choose and manage their own investments that are curated by professionals.
- Select from diversified options across asset classes
- Choose professionally managed portfolios (such as target-date or target-risk funds)
- Update investment allocations at any time

What Happens If I Leave Before Retirement Age?

If you terminate employment and do not intend to return, you may roll your vested account balance into an external IRA.

Vesting Schedule

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>% Vested</u>
1	0
2	0
3	100

You must complete three (3) Years of Service to become fully vested.

What Are Retirement Ages?

Normal Retirement Age - Age 65 or the third anniversary of joining the Plan, whichever is later.

Early Retirement Age - Age 54 ½ with at least 25 Years of Service.

Can I Withdraw Funds While Still Employed?

Yes, if you meet one of the following criteria:

- Early or Normal Retirement Age requirements,
- You are over age 55 with 25 years licensed in good standing and actively employed in Maryland racing, or
- You meet the requirements for a Hardship Withdrawal under the IRS rules for financial hardship.

Can I Cash Out If I Am Vested And Still Employed But Have Reached Retirement Age?

Yes. You may request a full or partial withdrawal of your Account once you meet the requirements for either Early or Normal Retirement.

When Can I Take A Disbursement?

You can request a withdrawal at any time throughout the year.

How Do I Check My Account Balance?

You may:

- Log in anytime at myplan.johnhancock.com
- Use the John Hancock Retirement App
- Call John Hancock at 800-395-1113
- Call the MTHA office at 410-902-6842
- Each year, participants also receive an individual benefit certificate once earnings and service data are finalized.

Who Can I Call If I Have Specific Questions?

For account-specific questions or to request a distribution:

Allison Bach, Pollard & Associates, 443-689-2549, abach@pollardpensions.com

For online access, technical help, or platform questions: John Hancock at 800-395-1113.

Why This Plan Matters

The MTHA Retirement Plan was created to attract and retain quality professionals at Maryland's mile tracks.

Through tax-deferred growth, compounding returns, and professional recordkeeping by John Hancock, participants build meaningful retirement security over time.

The longer you participate, the more powerful the impact of compounded growth can become.

Your work strengthens Maryland racing. This Plan helps strengthen your future.

How Do I Get A Copy Of The Actual Plan Language?

The MTHA office can provide you a copy of the Summary Plan Description or a copy of the entire Plan document if needed.

Register online at:
backstretchpension.com



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Brittany T. Russell

Michael J. Trombetta

David H. Wade

DAVID G. RICHARDSON, Executive Director

500 Redland Court, Suite 105
Owings Mills, Maryland 21117 • Phone: 410.902.6842 • www.mdhorsemen.com