



Retirement Tips for Individuals

The Service offers you the following tips to help you take responsibility for your retirement.

Set a Goal - "I think I can save \$25 a paycheck." It's easy to procrastinate so set up a "painless" payroll deduction for saving. It doesn't matter if the money goes into a 401(k) plan, an IRA or into a plain, old-fashioned savings account, just start saving. You can start with a small amount and increase it whenever your circumstances allow - like when you get a raise, your car payments end or you get a bonus. Pay yourself now, you'll thank yourself later.

Open an IRA - IRAs are easy to get, easy to contribute to and easy to save with. Most Americans can set up an IRA - whether it's a traditional IRA or a Roth IRA - and save on taxes. Find out more about IRAs from your bank or financial institution or the resources below.

Learn About Your Employer's Retirement Plan - If you are covered under your employer's retirement plan, your employer is required to give you a plain language explanation of the plan called a "summary plan description." It describes your rights under the retirement plan. To get a summary plan description, ask the plan administrator or your employer.

Review Your Individual Benefit Statement - Your individual benefit statement shows your total plan benefits and the amount that is vested, or fully owned by you. To get an individual benefit statement, ask your plan administrator or employer.

Sign Up for 2009 401(k) Contributions - If you are covered under a 401(k) plan, you may have to designate the amount of money you want taken out of your salary and contributed to your 401(k) account by the end of 2009. The 401(k) limit is \$16,500 for 2009 (\$22,000 if you are 50 or older in 2009).

Take Your Required Minimum Distributions - If you are 70-1/2, you are generally required to receive a required minimum amount from your qualified retirement plan or IRA by year-end.

Review Your Social Security Statement - The Social Security Administration likely sends you a Social Security Statement each year about three months before your birthday. This statement is your personal record of earnings on which you have paid Social Security taxes and a summary of estimated benefits you and your family may receive as result of those earnings. These benefits include retirement benefits and protection in case you become disabled or die before retirement age. For more information and to request a Social Security Statement, go to www.ssa.gov.

Learn About Your Spouse's Retirement Plan - Many retirement plans provide benefits for spouses. For example, your spouse's plan may provide that you will receive an annuity unless you consent to distribution in another form. Before signing, read and understand any waiver or consent forms for your spouse's retirement plan distributions.

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