

RETIREMENT CHECKLIST



**Federal Benefits
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AN E.A. BUCK COMPANY

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Three Years Before Retirement:

- Request an estimate of your pension.¹ If you have received an estimate previously, this one should be more accurate, however, it is still an estimate.
- If you have unpaid deposits or re-deposits, review the topic of paying for service, including military service.
- Review your survivor benefit options, including the eligibility requirements for survivor benefits, their cost and the necessity for your spouse to consent if you want to provide less than full benefits.
- Obtain current information about expected income from other sources. Consider your Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) withdrawal options, estimate the advantages of different ways of withdrawing thrift plan funds and consider the effects of each.
- If you're divorced, consider the implications. Do you have a former spouse who has rights to a portion of your retirement, survivor benefits or TSP funds? If so, submit a copy of your divorce decree with your retirement application.
- If you are enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) program, verify that you are eligible to continue your coverage as a retiree by having been enrolled for the five-year period prior to retirement.
- If you do not have an emergency fund set up, you should consider putting aside funds now. Initially, your retirement check will come in interim payments equal to about 60% - 80% of your expected amount. These interim payments could last from 3-5 months, so you may want to have extra funds set aside. You may also plan to use funds from your lump sum annual leave payout if you will have one.²
- If you are enrolled in the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI), verify that you are eligible to continue your coverage as a retiree by having been enrolled for the five-year period prior to retirement.
- Make sure to download and review your Social Security statement by setting up an account at www.ssa.gov. You'll want to begin devising a strategy for when you (and a spouse, if applicable) will add Social Security benefits into your income plan.
- If you are enrolled in a flexible spending account (FSA), you'll want to determine how much to contribute for your final year of employment and make sure you'll spend all those FSA dollars by your retirement date. You'll make this election during Open Season (the enrollment period) for FEHB. If you are using the health savings account (HSA), you'll want to check your balance and make sure of your allowable contributions in your final year of working.

Sources:

¹ <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-center/fers-information/computation/>

² <https://www.opm.gov/retirement-center/quick-guide/>

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