DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN

Supplemental Benefit

FALL 2025

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DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN NEWS

Secure your future by protecting your account

October marks National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, a timely reminder to take action and keep your deferred comp plan account secure. In just a few minutes, you can strengthen your account security and gain access to personalized insights, notifications, and planning resources that help put you in control of your retirement journey.

To get started:

- **Register your account:** If you haven't already done so, register your deferred comp plan account online to ensure that Empower — the third-party administrator for the deferred comp plan — recognizes you as the authentic account owner. This can help limit unauthorized access. To register, visit **sers.empower-retirement.com**, click *Register*, select *I do not have a PIN*, enter the required information, and follow the prompts to create your username and a strong password.
- **Keep your contact information up-to-date:** Make sure that your address, email, and phone numbers are current and correct so Empower can notify you of security alerts or suspected unauthorized activity.
- **Regularly review your account:** Make it a habit to monitor account activity, such as transactions, address changes, and changes to bank information, so you can track any suspicious or unauthorized activity.

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How much can you afford to spend in retirement?

When it comes to retirement planning, one question looms large: How much can I safely withdraw from my savings without running out of money? For decades, the answer has often pointed to a simple formula: the 4% rule. But does it still hold up in today's economy, and is it right for you?

What is the 4% rule?

The 4% rule is a retirement withdrawal guideline developed in the 1990s by financial planner William Bengen. It suggests that if you withdraw 4% of your retirement savings in your first year of retirement, and then adjust that amount annually for inflation, your money should last at least 30 years. The rule was based on historical market data, assuming:

- A 50/50 or 60/40 stock-bond portfolio.
- A 30-year retirement horizon.
- U.S. market performance between 1926 and the 1990s.

It was designed to weather worst-case scenarios, including the Great Depression and high-inflation years, to give retirees peace of mind that their funds would last through ups and downs.

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Secure your future by protecting your account (continued)

- **Use sign-in protection:** Create a unique and strong password and enable multifactor authentication to make unauthorized access even more difficult.
- **Protect your devices:** Keep your computer, phone, and other devices up-to-date, as well as your operating systems, antivirus and anti-malware software, firewall software, and web browsers.
- **Notify Empower of suspicious activity:** If you notice any suspicious activity on your account, notify Empower immediately at **844-773-6797**.

You have an added layer of protection for your deferred comp plan through the Empower Security Guarantee. This guarantee states that Empower will restore losses to your account that occur as a result of unauthorized transactions made through no fault of your own.[1]

Maintaining cybersecurity is a good habit to adopt at any age and is a simple but powerful way to protect your retirement savings while unlocking tools to support your long-term financial goals. Make it a practice to stay informed on evolving threats and the best way to counter them — so you can spend more time enjoying the retirement you deserve.

How much can you afford to spend in retirement? (continued)

How to use the 4% rule wisely

The world has changed a lot since the 1990s, and so have economic conditions. Think of the 4% rule as a starting point, not a hard rule. Here's how you can adapt it to fit your unique financial situation:

- **Use it as a baseline:** It can give you a ballpark idea of how much income your nest egg can generate.
- **Stay flexible:** Your spending may vary from year to year. Some years (e.g., travel, healthcare), you may withdraw more; other years, you can cut back.
- **Adjust for your portfolio:** A well-diversified portfolio and access to other income sources (Social Security, pensions, part-time work) can support more sustainable withdrawals.
- **Plan for longevity:** If you retire early or have a family history of long life, you may want to reduce your withdrawal rate or plan for income sources later in life (e.g., annuities).

The 4% rule isn't obsolete — it's a helpful rule of thumb. But like any financial rule, it should be personalized. Your retirement success depends on your goals, spending habits, market conditions, and lifestyle needs.

Don't forget, you also have access to local plan specialists who can help you stay on track through retirement. **Schedule a meeting** to review your investment strategy, sources of retirement income, and withdrawal options, and get guidance on a spend-down strategy that works best for your budget.[2]

1 For more information regarding account security, including the Empower Security Guarantee, visit **sers.empower-retirement.com** and, from the list of additional links at the bottom of the page, click *Security center*.

2 Point-in-time advice provided by an Empower representative may include savings, investment allocation, distribution, and rollover advice, including advice on consolidating outside retirement accounts.

Point-in-time advice is provided by an Empower representative registered with Empower Financial Services, Inc. at no additional cost to account owners. There is no guarantee provided by any party that use of the advice will result in a profit.

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