DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN
Supplemental Benefit

DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN — SUPPLEMENTAL BENEFIT

DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN NEWS

Summer 2026

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Staying focused when prices rise

A trip to the grocery store probably looks a little different these days. Maybe you've noticed higher prices at the gas pump, rising utility bills, or the cost of everyday essentials stretching your budget further than it used to.

During times like these, it can help to remember that retirement saving is a long-term journey. Inflation has always been part of the economy, and planning for the future means preparing for changes over time rather than reacting to every short-term shift. One of the most important things you can do is continue contributing to your deferred comp plan consistently, even if you're unable to save more right now.

Steady contributions combined with potential investment growth may have a meaningful impact on your retirement savings over time. For example, saving $25 per paycheck could grow to $23,151 over 20 years, and saving $50 per paycheck could grow to $50,361 over the same time period.[1] Continuing to save, even during periods when everyday costs feel higher, is one way to continue investing in your future goals.

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Mid-year review: Are you on track for retirement?

Mid-year is a good time for a quick retirement check-in. A few small updates now can help keep your plan on track without waiting until year-end. Here are a few things to focus on based on your career stage:

- **Early career:** Time is one of your biggest advantages. You can build momentum by contributing regularly. Start building the habit of saving consistently. Even small contributions can add up over time, and you can look for opportunities to increase your rate as your income or budget changes. Review your contribution rate and consider increasing it by 1% each year.
- **Mid-career:** This is a good time to check whether your savings are keeping pace with your income and to use your deferred comp plan's tools to see if you're on track. Run a projection and review your savings rate.

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Building blocks of long-term investing

Usually, investing progress doesn't come from predicting what markets will do next. It often comes from having a clear approach you can stick with through changing market conditions. Four core building blocks can help you stay on track in your retirement plan: asset allocation, diversification, understanding risk, and rebalancing.[2]

Asset allocation: Asset allocation is the mix of investment types in your account, such as stocks, bonds, cash, or stable value options. It's one of the main factors that can influence your account's potential growth and how much your balance may rise or fall over time. Your asset allocation should reflect your expected retirement timeline, financial situation, goals, and comfort with risk.

Diversification: Diversification means spreading your money across different types of investments, such as stocks and bonds, and across different areas of the market. The goal isn't to eliminate ups and downs, but to help reduce the impact any single investment can have on your overall results.

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Staying focused when prices rise (continued)

It's also important to keep in mind that inflation may affect how much income you may need in retirement. Rising prices can reduce purchasing power over time, meaning future expenses may cost more than they do today. Reviewing your retirement goals periodically and making adjustments when your budget allows may help you stay aligned with your long-term plans.

It can also help to focus on the things within your control:

- Continuing regular contributions
- Reviewing your retirement goals and progress
- Using the planning tools and resources available through your online account
- Increasing your savings rate gradually over time, if possible
- Revisiting your household budget to identify small opportunities to save

Retirement planning isn't only about saving. It's also about turning your savings into income that can support the lifestyle you want. Staying focused on your long-term goals today can help support the future you're working toward tomorrow.

Mid-year review: Are you on track for retirement? (continued)

- **Near retirement:** At this stage in your career, your focus may begin to shift from how much you're saving to how you'll create income in retirement. Estimate your monthly expenses, review your Social Security timing, and consider whether your investments still align with your time horizon and goals.
- **Retired or preparing for withdrawals:** At this point, your focus may shift to making your savings last. Review your withdrawal strategy, potential tax considerations, and expenses.
- **Everyone:** Confirm your beneficiaries, contact information, and investment diversification. Then use your deferred comp plan's tools to connect your savings to estimated retirement income.

For a clearer picture of where you stand, consider **scheduling a Retirement Readiness Review**[3] with your local plan specialist. This one-on-one conversation is focused on your personal situation and can help you review your current savings, investments, estimated retirement income, and next steps to support your long-term retirement goals.

Building blocks of long-term investing (continued)

Risk: Risk refers to how much your account value may rise or fall over time. The right level of risk depends on your time horizon, financial situation, goals, and comfort with market changes. A common challenge is choosing investments that feel comfortable in steady markets but become difficult to stick with during downturns.

Rebalancing: Over time, some investments may increase or decrease in value faster than others, which can shift your overall asset allocation. Rebalancing helps bring your portfolio back to your intended mix and keep your level of risk consistent. Target-date funds automatically maintain and adjust the fund's asset allocation over time. If you're using a target-date fund, check that it aligns with your expected retirement timeline and risk tolerance. If you've built your own portfolio, review your portfolio to see if it has drifted from your intended mix.

Sign in to your account to review your investment portfolio, explore the investment options available in the deferred comp plan, and put these building blocks into practice.

For additional support, consider **meeting with your local plan specialist**. They can help you review your current investment strategy, understand your deferred comp plan's available options and services, and determine whether your approach aligns with your retirement timeline, risk tolerance, and long-term goals.

1 FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY. This hypothetical illustration is not intended as a projection or prediction of future investment results, nor is it intended as financial planning or investment advice. It assumes semi-monthly contributions at a 6% annual rate of return and reinvestment of earnings with no withdrawals. Rates of return may vary. The illustration does not reflect any associated charges, expenses, or fees. The tax-deferred accumulation shown would be reduced if these fees were deducted.

2 Asset allocation, diversification, and rebalancing do not ensure a profit or protect against loss.

3 The Retirement Readiness Review is provided by an Empower representative registered with Empower Financial Services, Inc. and may provide tailored retirement education and guidance at no additional cost to participants.

Point-in-time advice is provided by an Empower representative registered with Empower Financial Services, Inc. at no additional cost to account owners and may include savings, investment allocation, distribution, and rollover advice, including advice on consolidating outside retirement accounts. There is no guarantee provided by any party that use of the advice will result in a profit.

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