Publication 721

Tax Guide to U.S. Civil Service Retirement Benefits

For use in preparing

2023 Returns

Volume 2 of 2

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Table 1. **Comparison of Payment to You Versus Direct Rollover**

Affected Item	**Result of a Payment to You**	**Result of a Direct Rollover**
Withholding	The payer must withhold 20% of the taxable part.	There is no withholding. However, you may want to choose withholding on a rollover from your traditional contributions and earnings to a Roth IRA.
Additional tax	If you are under age $59^1/2$, a 10% additional tax	There is no 10% additional tax. See *Tax on early*

	may apply to the taxable part (including an amount equal to the tax withheld) that isn't rolled over.	*distributions*, earlier.
When to report as income	Any taxable part (including the taxable part of any amount withheld) not rolled over is income to you in the year paid.	Any taxable part isn't income to you until later distributed to you from the new plan or IRA. However, see *Rollovers to Roth IRAs*, earlier, for an exception.

Distributions Used To Pay Insurance Premiums for Public Safety Officers

If you are an eligible retired public safety officer (law enforcement officer, firefighter, chaplain, or member of a rescue squad or ambulance crew), you can elect to exclude from income distributions made from an eligible retirement plan that are used to pay the premiums for accident or health insurance or long-term care insurance. You can do this only if you retired because of disability or because you reached normal retirement age. The premiums can be for coverage for you, your spouse, or dependents. The distribution must be from a plan maintained by the employer from which you retired as a public safety officer. The distribution can be made directly from the plan to the insurance provider of the accident or health plan or long-term care insurance contract or the distribution can be made to you to pay to the provider of the accident or health plan or long-term care insurance. You can exclude from income the lesser of the amount of the insurance premiums or $3,000. You can only make this election for amounts that would otherwise be included in your income. The amount excluded from your income can't be used to claim a medical expense deduction.

For this purpose, an eligible retirement plan is a governmental plan that is:

- A qualified trust,
- A section 403(a) plan,
- A section 403(b) annuity, or
- A section 457(b) plan.

The CSRS and FERS are considered eligible retirement plans.

You can exclude from income only the lesser of the amount of the premiums paid or $3,000. This is true if the distribution was made to the provider of the accident or health plan or long-term care *insurance contract or if the distribution was made to you and then paid to the provider of the accident or health plan or long-term care insurance. If you received a distribution from your eligible retirement plan, and you used part of that distribution to pay premiums for an accident or health plan or long-term care insurance contract, you can still exclude from income only the lesser of the amount of the premiums or $3,000. The rest of the distribution is taxable to you and should be reported as described next.*

How to report. If you make this election, reduce the otherwise taxable amount of your annuity by the amount excluded. The taxable annuity shown on Form CSA 1099-R doesn't reflect this exclusion. Report your total distributions on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5a. Report the taxable amount on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5b. Enter “PSO” next to the appropriate line on which you report the taxable amount.

If you are retired on disability and reporting your disability pension on line 1h of Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, include only the taxable amount on that line and enter “PSO” and the amount excluded on the dotted line next to the applicable line.

How To Report Benefits

If you received annuity benefits that aren't fully taxable, report the total received for the year on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5a. Also, include on that line the total of any other pension plan payments (even if fully taxable, such as those from the TSP) that you received during the year in addition to the annuity. Report the taxable amount of these total benefits on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5b. However, if you use Form 4972, Tax on Lump-Sum Distributions, to report the tax on any amount, don't include that amount on line 5a or 5b. Instead, follow the Form 4972 instructions.

If you received only fully taxable payments from your retirement, the TSP, or other pension plan, report on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5b, the total received for the year (except for any amount reported on Form 4972). No entry is required on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5a.

Part III Rules for Disability Retirement and

Credit for the Elderly or the Disabled

This part of the publication is for federal employees and retirees who receive disability benefits under the CSRS, the FERS, or other federal programs. It also explains the tax credit available to certain taxpayers because of age or disability.

Disability Annuity

If you retired on disability, the disability annuity you receive from the CSRS or FERS is taxable as wages until you reach minimum retirement age, as explained in this section. However, beginning on the day after you reach minimum retirement age, your payments are treated as a retirement annuity and you can begin to recover the cost of your annuity under the rules discussed earlier in *Part II, Rules for Retirees*.

If you find that you could have started your recovery in an earlier year for which you have already filed a return, you can still start your recovery of contributions in that earlier year. To do so, file an amended return for that year and each succeeding year for which you have already filed a return. Generally, an amended return for any year must be filed within 3 years after the due date for filing your original return for that year.

Minimum retirement age. This is the age at which you could first receive an annuity were you not disabled. This is generally based on your age and length of service.

Retirement under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). In most cases, under the CSRS, the minimum combinations of age and service for retirement are:

- Age 55 with 30 years of service;
- Age 60 with 20 years of service;
- Age 62 with 5 years of service; or
- For service as a law enforcement officer, firefighter, nuclear materials courier, or air traffic controller, age 50 with 20 years of covered service.

Retirement under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). In most cases, the minimum age for retirement under the FERS is between ages 55 and 57 with at least 10 years of service. With at least 5 years of service, your minimum retirement age is age 62. Your minimum retirement age with at least 10 years of service is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. **FERS Minimum Retirement Age (MRA) With 10 Years of Service**

IF you were born in.	THEN your MRA is.
1947 or earlier	55 years.
1948	55 years, 2 months.
1949	55 years, 4 months.
1950	55 years, 6 months.
1951	55 years, 8 months.
1952	55 years, 10 months.
1953 to 1964	56 years.
1965	56 years, 2 months.
1966	56 years, 4 months.

1967	56 years, 6 months.
1968	56 years, 8 months.
1969	56 years, 10 months.
1970 or later	57 years.

For service as a law enforcement officer, member of the Capitol or Supreme Court Police, firefighter, nuclear materials courier, or air traffic controller, the minimum retirement age is age 50 with 20 years of covered service or any age with 25 years of covered service.

How to report. You must report all your disability annuity payments received before minimum retirement age on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or Form 1040-NR, line 1h. Disability annuity payments received after you reach that age are reported as discussed under *How To Report Benefits*, earlier in Part II.

Withholding. For income tax withholding purposes, a disability annuity is treated the same as a nondisability annuity. This treatment also applies to disability payments received before minimum retirement age even though these payments are shown as wages on your return. See *Tax Withholding and Estimated Tax* in Part I.

Other Benefits

The tax treatment of certain other benefits is explained in this section.

Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA). FECA payments you receive for personal injuries or sickness resulting from the performance of your duties are like workers' compensation. They are tax exempt and aren't treated as disability income or annuities. However, payments you receive while your claim is being processed, including pay while on sick leave and continuation of pay for up to 45 days, are taxable.

Sick pay or disability payments repaid. If you repay sick leave or disability annuity payments you received and included in income in an earlier year to be eligible for nontaxable FECA benefits for that period, you can’t deduct the amount you repay.

If you repay sick leave or disability annuity payments in the same year you receive them, the repayment reduces your taxable sick leave pay or disability annuity.

Terrorist attack. Disability payments for injuries incurred as a direct result of a terrorist attack directed against the United States (or its allies) aren't included in income. For more information about payments to survivors of terrorist attacks, see Pub. 3920, Tax Relief for Victims of Terrorist Attacks.

Military actions. Disability payments for injuries incurred as a direct result of a military action involving the Armed Forces of the United States and resulting from actual or threatened violence or aggression against the

United States or any of its allies aren't included in income.

Disability resulting from military service injuries. If you received tax-exempt benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs for personal injuries resulting from active service in the U.S. Armed Forces and later receive a CSRS or FERS disability annuity for disability arising from the same injuries, you can't treat the disability annuity payments as tax-exempt income. They are subject to the rules described earlier under *Disability Annuity*.

Payment for unused annual leave. If you retire on disability, any payment for your unused annual leave is taxed as wages in the tax year you receive the payment.

Credit for the Elderly or the Disabled

You can take the credit for the elderly or the disabled if:

- You are a qualified individual, and

- Your income isn't more than certain limits.

You are a qualified individual for this credit if you are a U.S. citizen or resident alien and, at the end of the tax year, you are:

1. Age 65 or older; or
2. Under age 65, retired on permanent and total disability, and:
    a. Received taxable disability income, and
    b. Didn't reach mandatory retirement age (defined later) before the tax year.

You are retired on permanent and total disability if:

- You were permanently and totally disabled when you retired, and
- You retired on disability before the close of the tax year.

Even if you don't retire formally, you may be considered retired on disability when you have stopped working because of your disability.

Permanently and totally disabled. You are permanently and totally disabled if you can't engage in any substantial gainful activity because of your physical or mental condition. A physician must certify that the condition has lasted or can be expected to last continuously for 12 months or more, or that the condition can be expected to result in death. See *Physician's statement*, next. Substantial gainful activity is the performance of significant duties over a reasonable period of time while working for pay or profit, or in work generally done for pay or profit.

Physician's statement. If you are under age 65, you must have your physician complete a statement certifying that you were permanently and totally disabled on the date you retired. You must keep this statement for your tax records. For this purpose, you can use the Physician's Statement in the Instructions for Schedule R (Form 1040).

Mandatory retirement age. This is the age set by your employer at which you would have had to retire if you hadn't become disabled. There is no mandatory retirement age for most federal employees. However, there is a mandatory retirement age for the following federal employees.

- Air traffic controllers appointed after May 15, 1972, by the Department of Transportation or the Department of Defense must generally retire by the last day of the month when they reach age 56.
- Federal firefighters, law enforcement officers, nuclear materials couriers, or members of the Capitol or Supreme Court Police who are otherwise eligible for immediate retirement must generally retire by the last day of the month they

reach age 57 or, if later, complete 20 years of service.

Figuring the credit. If you figure the credit yourself, first fill out the front of Schedule R (Form 1040). Next, fill out Part III of the schedule.

If you want the IRS to figure your tax and credits, including the credit for the elderly or the disabled, see the Instructions for Schedule R (Form 1040).

More information. For detailed information about this credit, see Pub. 524, Credit for the Elderly or the Disabled.

Part IV Rules for Survivors of Federal Employees

This part of the publication is for survivors of federal employees. It explains how to treat amounts you receive because of the employee's death. If you are the survivor of a federal retiree, see *Part V*.

Employee earnings. Salary or wages earned by a federal employee but paid to the employee's survivor or beneficiary after the employee's death are income in respect of the decedent. This income is taxable to the survivor or beneficiary. This treatment also applies to payments for accrued annual leave.

Dependents of public safety officers. The Public Safety Officers' Benefits program, administered through the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), provides a tax-free death benefit to eligible survivors of public safety officers whose death is the direct and proximate result of a traumatic injury sustained in the line of duty. The death benefit isn't includible in the decedent's gross estate for federal estate tax purposes or the survivor's gross income for federal income tax purposes.

A public safety officer is a law enforcement officer, firefighter, or member of a public rescue squad or ambulance crew. In certain circumstances, a chaplain killed in the line of duty is also a public safety officer. The chaplain must have been responding to a fire, rescue, or police emergency as a member or employee of a fire or police department.

This program can pay survivors an emergency interim benefit of up to $3,000 if it finds that the death of the public safety officer is one for which a final benefit will probably be paid. If there is no final payment, the recipient of the interim benefit is liable for repayment. However, the BJA may not require all or part of the repayment if it will cause a hardship. If that happens, that amount is tax free.

Additional information about this program is available on the BJA website at [BJA.gov](BJA.gov).

For more information on this program, you may also contact the BJA by calling 1-888-744-6513.

FERS Death Benefit

You may be entitled to a special FERS death benefit if you were the spouse of an active FERS employee who died after at least 18 months of federal service. At your option, you can take the benefit in the form of a single payment or in the form of a special annuity payable over a 3-year period.

The tax treatment of the special death benefit depends on the option you choose and whether a FERS survivor annuity is also paid.

If you choose the single payment option, use the following rules.

- If a FERS survivor annuity isn't paid, at least part of the special death benefit is tax free. The tax-free part is an amount equal to the employee's FERS contributions.
- If a FERS survivor annuity is also paid, all of the special death benefit is taxable. You can't allocate any of the employee's FERS contributions to the special death benefit.

If you choose the 3-year annuity option, at least part of each monthly payment is tax free. Use the following rules.

- If a FERS survivor annuity isn't paid, the tax-free part of each monthly payment is an amount equal to the employee's FERS contributions divided by 36.
- If a FERS survivor annuity is also paid, allocate the employee's FERS contributions between the 3-year annuity

and the survivor annuity. Make the allocation in the same proportion that the expected return from each annuity bears to the total expected return from both annuities. Divide the amount allocated to the 3-year annuity by 36. The result is the tax-free part of each monthly payment of the 3-year annuity.

CSRS or FERS Survivor Annuity

If you receive a CSRS or FERS survivor annuity, you can recover the employee's cost tax free. The employee's cost is the total of the retirement plan contributions that were taken out of their pay.

How you figure the tax-free recovery of the cost depends on your annuity starting date. This is the day after the date of the employee's death. The methods to use are the same as those described near the beginning of Part II under *Recovering your cost tax free*.

The following discussions cover only the Simplified Method. You can use this method if your annuity starting date is after July 1, 1986. You must use this method if your annuity starting date is after November 18, 1996. Under the Simplified Method, each of your monthly annuity payments is made up of two parts: the tax-free part that is a return of the employee's cost and the taxable part that is the amount of each payment that is more than the part that represents the employee's cost. The tax-free part remains the same, even if your annuity is increased. However, see *Exclusion limit*, later.

Surviving spouse with no children receiving annuities. Under the Simplified Method, you figure the tax-free part of each full monthly annuity payment by dividing the employee's cost by a number of months based on your age. This number will differ depending on whether your annuity starting date is before November 19, 1996, or after

November 18, 1996. To use the Simplified Method, complete Worksheet A. Specific instructions for Worksheet A are given in Part II under *Simplified Method*.

Example. Diane Green, age 48, began receiving a $1,500 monthly CSRS annuity in March 2023 upon the death of her husband. Her husband was a federal employee when he died. She received 10 payments in 2023. Her husband had contributed $36,000 to the retirement plan.

Diane must use the Simplified Method. Her completed Worksheet A is shown later. To complete line 3, she used Table 1 at the bottom of the worksheet and found that 360 is the number in the last column opposite the age range that includes her age. Diane keeps a copy of the completed worksheet for her records. It will help her figure her taxable annuity in later years.

Diane's tax-free monthly amount is $100 (line 4 of her worksheet). If she lives to collect more than 360 payments, the payments after the 360th will be fully taxable. If she dies before 360 payments have been made, an “Other Itemized Deduction” will be allowed for the unrecovered cost on her final income tax return.

Surviving spouse with child. If the survivor benefits include both a life annuity for the surviving spouse and one or more temporary annuities for the employee's children, an additional step is needed under the Simplified Method to allocate the monthly exclusion among the beneficiaries correctly.

Worksheet A. **Simplified Method for Diane Green**

Keep for Your Records

See the instructions in Part II of this publication under *Simplified Method*.

1. Enter the total pension or annuity payments received this year. Also, add this amount to the total for Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5a	**1.**	$ 15,000
2. Enter your cost in the plan at the annuity starting date, plus any death benefit exclusion.* See *Your cost* in Part II, *Rules for Retirees*, earlier	**2.**	36,000
Note. If your annuity starting date was **before this year** and you completed this worksheet last year, skip line 3 and enter the amount from line 4 of last year's worksheet on line 4 below (even if the amount of your pension or annuity has changed). Otherwise, go to line 3.		
3. Enter the appropriate number from Table 1 below. But if your annuity starting date was after 1997 and the payments are for your life **and** that of your beneficiary, enter the appropriate number from Table 2 below	**3.**	360
4. Divide line 2 by the number on line 3	**4.**	100
5. Multiply line 4 by the number of months for which this year's payments were made. If your annuity starting date was **before** 1987, enter this amount on line 8 below and skip lines 6, 7, 10, and 11. Otherwise, go to line 6	**5.**	1,000
6. Enter any amounts previously recovered tax free in years after 1986. This is the amount shown on line 10 of your worksheet for last year	**6.**	0
7. Subtract line 6 from line 2	**7.**	36,000
8. Enter the **smaller** of line 5 or line 7	**8.**	1,000
9. Taxable amount for year. Subtract line 8 from line 1. Enter the result, but not less than zero. Also, add this amount to the total for Form 1040 or 1040-SR, line 5b. If you are a nonresident alien, enter this amount on line 1 of Worksheet C. If your Form CSA 1099-R or Form CSF 1099-R shows a larger amount, use the amount figured on this line instead. If you are a retired public safety officer, see *Distributions Used To Pay Insurance Premiums for Public Safety Officers* in Part II before entering an amount on your tax return or Worksheet C, line 1	**9.**	$ 14,000
10. Was your annuity starting date before 1987?		
☐ **Yes.** STOP Don't complete the rest of this worksheet.		
☑ **No.** Add lines 6 and 8. This is the amount you have recovered tax free through 2023. You will need this number if you need to fill out this worksheet next year	**10.**	1,000
11. Balance of cost to be recovered. Subtract line 10 from line 2. If zero, you will not have to complete this worksheet next year. The payments you receive next year will generally be fully taxable	**11.**	$ 35,000

Table 1 for Line 3 Above

	AND your annuity starting date was—	
IF your age on your annuity starting date was . . .	**before** November 19, 1996, **THEN enter on line 3 . . .**	**after** November 18, 1996, **THEN enter on line 3 . . .**
55 or under	300	360
56–60	260	310
61–65	240	260
66–70	170	210
71 or over	120	160

Table 2 for Line 3 Above

IF the annuitants' combined ages on your annuity starting date were . . .	THEN enter on line 3 . . .
110 or under	410
111–120	360
121–130	310
131–140	260
141 or over	210

* A death benefit exclusion of up to $5,000 applies to certain benefits received by survivors of employees who died before August 21, 1996.

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Figure the total monthly exclusion for all beneficiaries by completing lines 2 through 4 of Worksheet A as if only the surviving spouse received an annuity. Then, to figure the monthly exclusion for each beneficiary, multiply line 4 of the worksheet by a fraction. For any beneficiary, the numerator of the fraction is that beneficiary's monthly annuity, and the denominator is the total of the monthly annuity payments to all the beneficiaries.

The temporary annuity is payable to the child until the child reaches a specified age in the plan, which can't be older than 25. The ending of a child's temporary annuity doesn't affect the total monthly exclusion figured under the Simplified Method. The total exclusion merely needs to be reallocated at that time among the remaining beneficiaries. If only the surviving spouse is left drawing an annuity, the surviving spouse is entitled to the entire monthly exclusion as figured in the worksheet.

Example. The facts are the same as in the example for Diane Green in the preceding discussion, except that the Greens had a son, Robert, who was age 15 at the time of his father's death. Robert is entitled to a $500-per-month temporary annuity until he reaches age 18 (age 22, if he remains a full-time student and doesn't marry), as specified by the plan.

In completing Worksheet A (not shown), Diane fills out the entries through line 4 exactly as shown in the filled-in worksheet for the earlier example. That is, she includes on line 1 only the amount of the annuity she herself received and she uses on line 3 the 360 factor for her age. After arriving at the $100 monthly exclusion on line 4, however, Diane allocates it between her own annuity and that of her son.

To find how much of the monthly exclusion to allocate to her own annuity, Diane multiplies the $100 monthly exclusion by the fraction $1,500 (her monthly annuity) over $2,000 (the total of her $1,500 and Robert's $500 annuities). She enters the result, $75, just below the entry space for line 4. She completes the worksheet by entering $750 on lines 5 and 8, and $14,250 on line 9.

A second Worksheet A (not shown) is completed for Robert's annuity. On line 1, he enters $5,000 as the total annuity received. Lines 2, 3, and 4 are the same as those on his mother's worksheet. In allocating the $100 monthly exclusion on line 4 to his annuity, Robert multiplies it by the fraction $500 over $2,000. His resulting monthly exclusion is $25. His exclusion for the year (line 8) is $250, and his taxable annuity for the year (line 9) is $4,750.

Diane and Robert only need to complete lines 10 and 11 on a single worksheet to keep track of their unrecovered cost for next year. These lines are exactly as shown in the filled-in Worksheet A for the earlier example.

When Robert's temporary annuity ends, the computation of the total monthly exclusion will not change. The only difference will be that Diane will then claim the full exclusion against her annuity alone.

Surviving child only. A method similar to the Simplified Method can also be used to figure the taxable and nontaxable parts of a temporary annuity for a surviving child when there is no surviving spouse annuity. To use this method, divide the deceased employee's cost by the number of months from the child's annuity starting date until the date the child will reach age 22. The result is the monthly exclusion. (However, the monthly exclusion can't be more than the monthly annuity payment. You can carry over unused exclusion amounts to apply against future annuity payments.)

More than one child. If there is more than one child entitled to a temporary annuity (and no surviving spouse annuity), divide the cost by the number of months of payments until the date the youngest child will reach age 22. This monthly exclusion must then be allocated among the children in proportion to their monthly annuity payments, like the exclusion shown in the previous example.

Disabled child. If a child otherwise entitled to a temporary annuity was permanently disabled at the annuity starting date (and there is no surviving spouse annuity), that child is treated for tax purposes as receiving a lifetime annuity, like a surviving spouse. The child must complete line 3 of Worksheet A using a number in Table 1 at the bottom of the worksheet corresponding to the child's age at the annuity starting date. If more than one child is entitled to a temporary annuity, an allocation like the one shown under *Surviving spouse with child*, earlier, must be made to determine each child's share of the exclusion.

Exclusion limit. If your annuity starting date is after 1986, the most that can be recovered tax free is the cost of the annuity. Once the total of your exclusions equals the cost, your entire annuity is taxable. If your annuity starting date is before 1987, the tax-free part of each whole monthly payment remains the same each year you receive payments—even if you outlive the number of months used on line 3 of the Simplified Method Worksheet. The total exclusion may be more than the cost of the annuity.

Deduction of unrecovered cost. If the annuity starting date is after July 1, 1986, and the annuitant's death occurs before all the cost is recovered tax free, the unrecovered cost can be claimed as an “Other

Itemized Deduction” for the annuitant's last tax year.

Survivors of Slain Public Safety Officers

Generally, if you receive survivor annuity payments as the spouse, former spouse, or child of a public safety officer killed in the line of duty, you can exclude the payments from your income. The annuity is excludable to the extent that it is due to the officer's service as a public safety officer. Public safety officers include law enforcement officers, firefighters, chaplains, ambulance crew members, and rescue squad members. The provision applies to a chaplain killed in the line of duty after September 10, 2001. The chaplain must have been responding to a fire, rescue, or police emergency as a member or employee of a fire or police department.

The exclusion doesn't apply if your actions were a substantial contributing factor to the death of the officer. It also doesn't apply if:

- The death was caused by the intentional misconduct of the officer or by the officer's intention to cause their
- own death,
- The officer was voluntarily intoxicated at the time of death, or
- The officer was performing their duties in a grossly negligent manner at the time of death.

The special death benefit paid to the spouse of a FERS employee (see FERS Death Benefit*, earlier) isn't eligible for this exclusion.*

Lump-Sum CSRS or FERS Payment

If a federal employee dies before retiring and leaves no one eligible for a survivor annuity, the estate or other beneficiary will receive a lump-sum payment from the CSRS or FERS. This single payment is made up of the regular contributions to the retirement fund plus accrued interest, if any, to the extent not already paid to the employee.

The beneficiary is taxed, in the year the lump sum is distributed or made available, only on the amount of any accrued interest. The taxable amount, if any, generally can't be rolled over into an IRA or other plan and is subject to federal income tax withholding at a 10% rate. However, a nonspousal beneficiary making a transfer described under *Rollovers by nonspouse beneficiary* under *Rollover Rules* in Part II can roll over any taxable amount. In addition, the payment may qualify as a lump-sum distribution eligible for capital gain treatment or the 10-year tax option if the plan participant was born before January 2, 1936. If the beneficiary also receives a lump-sum payment of unrecovered voluntary contributions plus interest, this treatment applies only if the payment is received within the same tax year. For more information, see *Lump-Sum Distributions* in Pub. 575.

Lump-sum payment at end of survivor annuity. If an annuity is paid to the federal employee's survivor and the survivor annuity ends before an amount equal to the deceased employee's contributions plus any interest has been paid out, the rest of the contributions plus any interest will be paid in a lump sum to the employee's estate or other beneficiary. Generally, this beneficiary will not have to include any of the lump sum in gross income because, when it is added to the amount of the annuity previously received that was excludable, it will still be less than the employee's total contributions.

Any unrecovered cost is allowed as an “Other Itemized Deduction” on the final return of the annuitant.

To figure the taxable amount, if any, use Worksheet D.

Worksheet D. **Lump-Sum Payment at End of Survivor Annuity**

Keep for Your Records

1.	Enter the lump-sum payment	**1.**	_______
2.	Enter the amount of annuity previously received tax free .	**2.**	_______
3.	Add lines 1 and 2	**3.**	_______
4.	Enter the employee's total cost	**4.**	_______
5.	**Taxable amount.** Subtract line 4 from line 3. Enter the result, but not less than zero	**5.**	_______

The taxable amount, if any, generally can't be rolled over into an IRA or other plan and is subject to federal income tax withholding at a 10% rate. However, a nonspousal beneficiary making a transfer described under *Rollovers by nonspouse beneficiary* under *Rollover Rules* in Part II can roll over any taxable amount. In addition, the payment may qualify as a lump-sum distribution eligible for capital gain treatment or the 10-year tax option if the plan participant was born before January 2, 1936. If the beneficiary also receives a lump-sum payment of unrecovered voluntary contributions plus interest, this treatment applies only if the payment is received within the same tax year. For more information, see *Lump-Sum Distributions* in Pub. 575.

Example. At the time of your brother's death in December 2022, he was employed by the federal government and had contributed $45,000 to the CSRS. His surviving spouse received $6,600 in survivor annuity payments before she died in 2023. She had used the Simplified Method for reporting her annuity and properly excluded $1,000 from gross income.

Only $6,600 of the guaranteed amount of $45,000 (your brother's contributions) was paid as an annuity, so the balance of $38,400 was paid to you in a lump sum as your brother's sole beneficiary. You figure the taxable amount of this payment as follows.

Worksheet D. **Lump-Sum Payment at End of Survivor Annuity-Example**

Keep for Your Records

1.	Enter the lump-sum payment	**1.**	$38,400
2.	Enter the amount of annuity previously received tax free .	**2.**	1,000
3.	Add lines 1 and 2	**3.**	39,400
4.	Enter the employee's total cost	**4.**	45,000

5. **Taxable amount.** Subtract line 4 from line 3. Enter the result, but not less than zero	**5.**	0

Voluntary contributions. If a CSRS employee dies before retiring from government service, voluntary contributions to the retirement fund can't be used to provide an additional annuity to the survivors. Instead, the voluntary contributions plus any accrued interest will be paid in a lump sum to the estate or other beneficiary. The beneficiary must generally include any interest received in income for the year distributed or made available. However, if the beneficiary is the employee's surviving spouse (or someone other than the employee's spouse making a transfer described under *Rollovers by nonspouse beneficiary* under *Rollover Rules* in Part II), the interest can be rolled over. See also *Rollovers by surviving spouse* under *Rollover Rules* in Part II.

The interest, if not rolled over, is generally subject to federal income tax withholding at a 20% rate (or 10% rate if the beneficiary isn't the employee's surviving spouse). It may qualify as a lump-sum distribution eligible for capital gain treatment or the 10-year tax option if:

- The plan participant was born before January 2, 1936;
- Regular annuity benefits can't be paid under the retirement system; and
- The beneficiary also receives a lump-sum payment of the regular contributions plus interest within the same tax year as the voluntary contributions.

For more information, see *Lump-Sum Distributions* in Pub. 575.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

The payment you receive as the beneficiary of a decedent's TSP account is fully taxable except for the portion that is from Roth contributions and earnings if certain conditions are met. See *Roth TSP balance*, earlier. However, if you are the decedent's surviving spouse (or someone other than the employee's spouse making a transfer described under *Rollovers by nonspouse beneficiary* under *Rollover Rules* in Part II), you can generally roll over the payment tax free. If you don't choose a direct rollover of the decedent's TSP account, mandatory 20% income tax withholding will apply unless it is from Roth contributions. See *Roth TSP balance*, earlier. For more information, see *Rollover Rules* in Part II. If you are neither the surviving spouse nor someone other than the employee's spouse making a transfer described above, the payment isn't eligible for rollover treatment. The TSP will withhold 10% of the payment for federal income tax, unless you gave the TSP a Form W-4R to choose not to have tax withheld.

If the entire TSP account balance is paid to the beneficiaries in the same calendar year, it may qualify as a lump-sum distribution eligible for the 10-year tax option if the plan participant was born before January 2, 1936. See *Lump-Sum Distributions* in Pub. 575 for details. Also, see the TSP publication Tax Rules about TSP payments, available on the TSP website at *TSP.gov/forms*.

Beneficiary participant account. A beneficiary participant account will be established for a spouse beneficiary. The money in the account isn't subject to federal income tax until it is withdrawn. However, the portion that is from Roth contributions and earnings, if certain conditions are met, will not be subject to tax. See *Roth TSP balance*, earlier, for a discussion of the conditions. For more information on beneficiary participant accounts, see the TSP publication Your TSP Account: A Guide for Beneficiary Participants, available on the TSP website at [*TSP.gov/forms*](TSP.gov/forms).

If you receive a payment from a uniformed services TSP account that includes contributions from combat pay, see Uniformed services Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) accounts *under* Reminders *near the beginning of this publication.*

Federal Estate Tax

Form 706, United States Estate (and Generation-Skipping Transfer) Tax Return, must be filed for the estate of a citizen or resident alien of the United States who died in 2023 if the gross estate is more than $12,920,000. Included in this $12,920,000 are any adjusted taxable gifts made by the decedent after 1976 and the specific exemption allowed for gifts by the decedent after September 8, 1976, and before 1977.

The gross estate generally includes the value of all property beneficially owned by the decedent at the time of death. Examples of property included in the gross estate are salary or annuity payments that had accrued to an employee or retiree, but which weren't paid before death, and the balance in the decedent's TSP account.

The gross estate also usually includes the value of the death and survivor benefits payable under the CSRS or the FERS. If the federal employee died leaving no one eligible to receive a survivor annuity, the lump sum (representing the employee's contribution to the retirement system plus any accrued interest) payable to the estate or other beneficiary is included in the employee's gross estate.

Marital deduction. The estate tax marital deduction is a deduction from the gross estate of the value of property that is included in the gross estate but that passes, or has passed, to the surviving spouse. Generally, there is no limit on the amount of the marital deduction. Community property passing to the surviving spouse qualifies for the marital deduction.

More information. For more information, see Pub. 559, Survivors, Executors, and Administrators.

Part V Rules for Survivors of Federal Retirees

This part of the publication is for survivors of federal retirees. It explains how to treat amounts you receive because of the retiree's death. If you are the survivor of a federal employee, see *Part IV*.

Decedent's retirement benefits. Retirement benefits accrued and payable to a CSRS or FERS retiree before death, but paid to you as a survivor, are taxable in the same manner and to the same extent these benefits would have been taxable had the retiree lived to receive them.

CSRS or FERS Survivor Annuity

CSRS or FERS annuity payments you receive as the survivor of a federal retiree are fully or partly taxable under either the General Rule or the Simplified Method.

Cost recovered. If the retiree reported the annuity under the 3-Year Rule and recovered all of the cost tax free, your survivor annuity payments are fully taxable. This is also true if the retiree had an annuity starting date after 1986, reported the annuity under the General Rule or the Simplified Method, and had fully recovered the cost tax free.

General Rule. If the retiree was reporting the annuity under the General Rule, figure the tax-free part of the annuity using the same exclusion percentage that the retiree used. Apply the exclusion percentage to the amount specified as your survivor annuity at the retiree's annuity starting date. Don't apply the exclusion percentage to any cost-of-living increases made after that date. Those increases are fully taxable. For more information about the General Rule, see Pub. 939.

Simplified Method. If the retiree was reporting the annuity under the Simplified Method, your tax-free monthly amount is the same as the retiree's monthly exclusion (Worksheet A, line 4). This amount remains fixed even if the monthly payment is increased or decreased. A cost-of-living increase in your survivor annuity payments doesn't change the amount you can exclude from gross income.

Exclusion limit. If the retiree's annuity starting date was before 1987, you can exclude the tax-free amount from all the annuity payments you receive. This includes any payments received after you recover the cost tax free.

If the retiree's annuity starting date is after 1986, you can exclude the tax-free amount only until you recover the cost tax free. The annuity payments you receive after you recover the annuity cost tax free are fully taxable.

Deduction of unrecovered cost. If the annuity starting date is after July 1, 1986, and the survivor annuitant's death occurs before all the cost is recovered tax free, the unrecovered cost can be claimed as an “Other Itemized Deduction” for the annuitant's last tax year.

Surviving spouse with child. If the survivor benefits include both a life annuity for the surviving spouse and one or more temporary annuities for the retiree's children, the tax-free monthly amount that would otherwise apply to the life annuity must be allocated among the beneficiaries. To figure the tax-free monthly amount for each beneficiary, multiply it by a fraction. The numerator of the fraction is the beneficiary's monthly annuity, and the denominator of the fraction is the total of the monthly annuity payments to all the beneficiaries.

Example. John retired in 2021 and began receiving a $1,147 per month CSRS retirement annuity with a survivor annuity payable to his wife, Kate, upon his death. He reported his annuity using the Simplified Method. Under that method, $150 of each payment he received was a tax-free recovery of his $45,000 cost. John received a total of 22 monthly payments and recovered $3,300 of his cost tax free before his death in 2023. At John's death, Kate began receiving an annuity of $840 per month and their children, Sam and Lou, began receiving temporary annuities of $330 each per month. Kate must allocate the $150 tax-free monthly amount among the three annuities.

To find how much of the monthly exclusion to allocate to her own annuity, Kate multiplies the $150 tax-free monthly amount by the fraction $840 (her monthly annuity) over $1,500 (the total of her $840, Sam's $330, and Lou's $330 monthly annuities). Her resulting monthly exclusion is $84. In allocating the $150 monthly exclusion to each child's annuity, the $150 is multiplied by the fraction $330 (each child's monthly annuity) over $1,500. Each child's resulting monthly exclusion is $33.

Beginning with the month in which either child is no longer eligible for an annuity, as specified in the plan, Kate will reallocate the $150 monthly exclusion to her own annuity by multiplying the $150 by the fraction $840 over $1,170 (the total of her $840 and her other child's $330 monthly annuities). Her resulting monthly exclusion is $108. In reallocating the $150 monthly exclusion to the other child's annuity, the $150 is multiplied by the fraction $330 over $1,170. The other child's resulting monthly exclusion is $42.

Surviving child only. If the survivor benefits include only a temporary annuity for the retiree's child, allocate the unrecovered cost over the number of months from the date the annuity started until the child reaches age 22. If more than one temporary annuity is paid, allocate the cost over the number of months until the youngest child reaches age 22, and allocate the tax-free monthly amount among the annuities in proportion to the monthly annuity payments.

Lump-Sum CSRS or FERS Payment

If a deceased retiree has no beneficiary eligible to receive a survivor annuity, and the deceased retiree's annuity ends before an amount equal to the deceased retiree's contributions plus any interest has been paid out, the rest of the contributions plus any interest will be paid in a lump sum to the estate or other beneficiary. The estate or other beneficiary will rarely have to include any part of the lump sum in gross income. The taxable amount is figured by using Worksheet E.

Worksheet E. **Lump-Sum Payment at End of Retiree's Annuity (With No Survivor Annuity**

Keep for Your Records

1.	Enter the lump-sum payment	**1.**	_______
2.	Enter the amount of annuity previously received tax free by the retiree.	**2.**	_______
3.	Add lines 1 and 2	**3.**	_______
4.	Enter the total cost	**4.**	_______

5. Taxable amount. Subtract line 4 from line 3. Enter the result, but not less than zero	**5.** ______

The taxable amount, if any, generally can't be rolled over into an IRA or other plan and is subject to federal income tax withholding at a 10% rate. However, a nonspousal beneficiary making a transfer described under <u>*Rollovers by nonspouse beneficiary*</u> under *Rollover Rules* in Part II can roll over any taxable amount. In addition, the payment may qualify as a lump-sum distribution eligible for capital gain treatment or the 10-year tax option if the plan participant was born before January 2, 1936. If the beneficiary also receives a lump-sum payment of unrecovered voluntary contributions plus interest, this treatment applies only if the payment is received within the same tax year. For more information, see *Lump-Sum Distributions* in Pub. 575.

Voluntary Contributions

If you receive an additional survivor annuity benefit from voluntary contributions to the CSRS, treat it separately from the annuity that comes from regular contributions. Each year, you will receive a Form CSF 1099-R that will show how much of your total annuity received in the past year was from each type of benefit.

Figure the taxable and tax-free parts of your additional survivor annuity benefit from voluntary contributions using the same rules that apply to regular CSRS and FERS survivor annuities, as explained earlier under *CSRS or FERS Survivor Annuity*.

Lump-sum payment. Figure the taxable amount, if any, of a lump-sum payment of the retiree's unrecovered voluntary contributions plus any interest using the rules that apply to regular lump-sum CSRS or FERS payments, as explained earlier under *Lump-Sum CSRS or FERS Payment*.

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

If you receive a payment from the TSP account of a deceased federal retiree, the payment is fully taxable except for the portion that is from Roth contributions and earnings if certain conditions are met. See *Roth TSP balance*, earlier. However, if you are the retiree's surviving spouse (or someone other than the retiree's spouse making a transfer described under *Rollovers by nonspouse beneficiary* under *Rollover Rules* in Part II), you can generally roll over the otherwise taxable payment tax free. If you don't choose a direct rollover of the TSP account, mandatory 20% federal income tax withholding will apply unless it is from Roth contributions. See *Roth TSP balance*, earlier. For more information, see *Rollover Rules* in Part II. If you are neither the surviving spouse nor someone other than the retiree's spouse making a transfer described above, the payment isn't eligible for rollover treatment. The TSP will withhold 10% of the payment for federal income tax, unless you gave the TSP a Form W-4R to choose not to have tax withheld.

If the retiree chose to receive their account balance as an annuity, the payments you receive as the retiree's survivor are fully taxable when you receive them, whether they are received as annuity payments or as a cash refund of the remaining value of the amount used to purchase the annuity. However, the portion that is from Roth contributions and earnings, if certain conditions are met, will not be subject to tax. See *Roth TSP balance*, earlier.

Beneficiary participant account. A beneficiary participant account will be established for a spouse beneficiary. The money in the account isn't subject to federal income tax until it is withdrawn. The portion withdrawn that is from Roth contributions and earnings, if certain conditions are met, will not be subject to tax. See *Roth TSP balance*, earlier, for a discussion of the conditions. For more information on beneficiary participant accounts, see the TSP publication Your TSP Account: A guide for Beneficiary Participants, available on the TSP website at *TSP.gov/forms*.

If you receive a payment from a uniformed services TSP account that includes contributions from combat pay, see Uniformed services Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) accounts *under* Reminders *near the beginning of this publication.*

Federal Estate Tax

A federal estate tax return may have to be filed for the estate of the retired employee. See *Federal Estate Tax* in Part IV.

Income Tax Deduction for Estate Tax Paid

Any income that a decedent had a right to receive and could have received had death not occurred and that wasn't properly includible in the decedent's final income tax return is treated as income in respect of a decedent. This includes retirement benefits accrued and payable to a retiree before death, but paid to you as a survivor.

If the federal estate tax was paid on the decedent's estate and you are required to include income in respect of a decedent in your gross income for any tax year, you can deduct the portion of the federal estate tax that is from the inclusion in the estate of the right to receive that amount. For this purpose, if the decedent died after the annuity starting date, the taxable portion of a survivor annuity you receive (other than a temporary annuity for a child) is considered income in respect of a decedent.

For more information, see *Income in Respect of a Decedent* in Pub. 559.

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Worksheets A and B

This section contains blank Worksheets A and B for you to use for your own calculations.

Worksheet A. **Simplified Method**

Keep for Your Records

See the instructions in Part II of this publication under *Simplified Method*.

1. Enter the total pension or annuity payments received this year. Also, add this amount to the total for Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5a	**1.** ______
2. Enter your cost in the plan at the annuity starting date, plus any death benefit exclusion.* See *Your cost* in Part II, *Rules for Retirees*, earlier	**2.** ______
Note. If your annuity starting date was **before this year** and you completed this worksheet last year, skip line 3 and enter the amount from line 4 of last year's worksheet on line 4 below (even if the amount of your pension or annuity has changed). Otherwise, go to line 3.	
3. Enter the appropriate number from Table 1 below. But if your annuity starting date was after 1997 and the payments are for your life **and** that of your beneficiary, enter the appropriate number from Table 2 below	**3.** ______
4. Divide line 2 by the number on line 3	**4.** ______
5. Multiply line 4 by the number of months for which this year's payments were made. If your annuity starting date was **before** 1987, enter this amount on line 8 below and skip lines 6, 7, 10, and 11. Otherwise, go to line 6	**5.** ______
6. Enter any amounts previously recovered tax free in years after 1986. This is the amount shown on line 10 of your worksheet for last year	**6.** ______
7. Subtract line 6 from line 2	**7.** ______
8. Enter the **smaller** of line 5 or line 7	**8.** ______
9. Taxable amount for year. Subtract line 8 from line 1. Enter the result, but not less than zero. Also, add this amount to the total for Form 1040 or 1040-SR, line 5b. If you are a nonresident alien, enter this amount on line 1 of Worksheet C. If your Form CSA 1099-R or Form CSF 1099-R shows a larger amount, use the amount figured on this line instead. If you are a retired public safety officer, see *Distributions Used To Pay Insurance Premiums for Public Safety Officers* in Part II before entering an amount on your tax return or Worksheet C, line 1	**9.** ______
10. Was your annuity starting date before 1987?	
☐ **Yes.** STOP Don't complete the rest of this worksheet.	
☐ **No.** Add lines 6 and 8. This is the amount you have recovered tax free through 2023. You will need this number if you need to fill out this worksheet next year	**10.** ______
11. Balance of cost to be recovered. Subtract line 10 from line 2. If zero, you will not have to complete this worksheet next year. The payments you receive next year will generally be fully taxable	**11.** ______

Table 1 for Line 3 Above

IF your age on your annuity starting date was . . .	AND your annuity starting date was— **before** November 19, 1996, **THEN enter on line 3 . . .**	**after** November 18, 1996, **THEN enter on line 3 . . .**
55 or under	300	360
56–60	260	310
61–65	240	260
66–70	170	210
71 or over	120	160

Table 2 for Line 3 Above

IF the annuitants' combined ages on your annuity starting date were . . .	**THEN enter on line 3 . . .**
110 or under	410
111–120	360
121–130	310
131–140	260
141 or over	210

* A death benefit exclusion of up to $5,000 applies to certain benefits received by survivors of employees who died before August 21, 1996.

Worksheet B. **Lump-Sum Payment**
See the instructions in Part II of this publication under *Alternative Annuity Option*.

Keep for Your Records

1.	Enter your lump-sum credit (your cost in the plan at the annuity starting date)	**1.**	
2.	Enter the present value of your annuity contract	**2.**	
3.	Divide line 1 by line 2	**3.**	
4.	**Tax-free amount.** Multiply line 1 by line 3. (**Caution:** Don't include this amount on line 6 of Worksheet A in this publication.)	**4.**	
5.	**Taxable amount (net cost in the plan).** Subtract line 4 from line 1. Include this amount in the total on Form 1040, 1040-SR, or 1040-NR, line 5b. Also, enter this amount on line 2 of Worksheet A in this publication	**5.**	

How To Get Tax Help

If you have questions about a tax issue; need help preparing your tax return; or want to download free publications, forms, or instructions, go to *IRS.gov* to find resources that can help you right away.

Preparing and filing your tax return. After receiving all your wage and earnings statements (Forms W-2, W-2G, 1099-R, 1099-MISC, 1099-NEC, etc.); unemployment compensation statements (by mail or in a digital format) or other government payment statements (Form 1099-G); and interest, dividend, and retirement statements from banks and investment firms (Forms 1099), you have several options to choose from to prepare and file your tax return. You can prepare the tax return yourself, see if you qualify for free tax preparation, or hire a tax professional to prepare your return.

Free options for tax preparation. Your options for preparing and filing your return online or in your local community, if you qualify, include the following.

- **Free File.** This program lets you prepare and file your federal individual income tax return for free using software or Free File Fillable Forms. However, state tax preparation may not be available through Free File. Go to *IRS.gov/FreeFile* to see if you qualify for free online federal tax preparation, e-filing, and direct deposit or payment options.
- **VITA.** The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program offers free tax help to people with low-to-moderate incomes, persons with disabilities, and limited-English-speaking taxpayers who need help preparing their own tax returns. Go to *IRS.gov/ VITA*, download the free IRS2Go app, or call 800-906-9887 for

information on free tax return preparation.

- **TCE.** The Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) program offers free tax help for all taxpayers, particularly those who are 60 years of age and older. TCE volunteers specialize in answering questions about pensions and retirement-related issues unique to seniors. Go to *IRS.gov/TCE* or download the free IRS2Go app for information on free tax return preparation.
- **MilTax.** Members of the U.S. Armed Forces and qualified veterans may use MilTax, a free tax service offered by the Department of Defense through Military OneSource. For more information, go to *MilitaryOneSource* (*MilitaryOneSource.mil/MilTax*).

Also, the IRS offers Free Fillable Forms, which can be completed online and then e-filed regardless of income.

Using online tools to help prepare your return. Go to *IRS.gov/Tools* for the following.

- The *Earned Income Tax Credit Assistant* (*IRS.gov/ EITCAssistant*) determines if you're eligible for the earned income credit (EIC).
- The *Online EIN Application* (*IRS.gov/EIN*) helps you get an employer identification number (EIN) at no cost.
- The *Tax Withholding Estimator* (*IRS.gov/W4App*) makes it easier for you to estimate the federal income tax you want your employer to withhold from your paycheck. This is tax withholding. See how your withholding affects your refund, take-home pay, or tax due.
- The *First-Time Homebuyer Credit Account Look-up* (*IRS.gov/HomeBuyer*) tool provides information on your repayments and account balance.

- The *Sales Tax Deduction Calculator* (*IRS.gov/ SalesTax*) figures the amount you can claim if you itemize deductions on Schedule A (Form 1040).

Getting answers to your tax questions. On IRS.gov, you can get up-to-date information on current events and changes in tax law.

- *IRS.gov/Help*: A variety of tools to help you get answers to some of the most common tax questions.
- *IRS.gov/ITA*: The Interactive Tax Assistant, a tool that will ask you questions and, based on your input, provide answers on a number of tax topics.
- *IRS.gov/Forms*: Find forms, instructions, and publications. You will find details on the most recent tax changes and interactive links to help you find answers to your questions.

- You may also be able to access tax information in your e-filing software.

Need someone to prepare your tax return? There are various types of tax return preparers, including enrolled agents, certified public accountants (CPAs), accountants, and many others who don’t have professional credentials. If you choose to have someone prepare your tax return, choose that preparer wisely. A paid tax preparer is:

- Primarily responsible for the overall substantive accuracy of your return,
- Required to sign the return, and
- Required to include their preparer tax identification number (PTIN).

Although the tax preparer always signs the return, you're ultimately responsible for providing all the information required for the preparer to accurately prepare your return and for the accuracy of every item reported on the *return. Anyone paid to prepare tax returns for others should have a thorough understanding of tax matters. For more information on how to choose a tax preparer, go to Tips for Choosing a Tax Preparer on IRS.gov.*

Employers can register to use Business Services Online. The Social Security Administration (SSA) offers online service at *SSA.gov/employer* for fast, free, and secure W-2 filing options to CPAs, accountants, enrolled agents, and individuals who process Form W-2, Wage and Tax Statement, and Form W-2c, Corrected Wage and Tax Statement.

IRS social media. Go to *IRS.gov/SocialMedia* to see the various social media tools the IRS uses to share the latest information on tax changes, scam alerts, initiatives, products, and services. At the IRS, privacy and security are our highest priority. We use these tools to share public information with you. **Don't** post your social security number (SSN) or other confidential information on social media sites. Always protect your identity when using any social networking site.

The following IRS YouTube channels provide short, informative videos on various tax-related topics in English, Spanish, and ASL.

- *Youtube.com/irsvideos.*
- *Youtube.com/irsvideosmultilingua*.
- *Youtube.com/irsvideosASL.*

Watching IRS videos. The IRS Video portal *(IRSVideos.gov)* contains video and audio presentations for individuals, small businesses, and tax professionals.

Online tax information in other languages. You can find information on *IRS.gov/MyLanguage* if English isn’t your native language.

Free Over-the-Phone Interpreter (OPI) Service. The IRS is committed to serving taxpayers with limited-English proficiency (LEP) by offering OPI services. The OPI Service is a federally funded program and is available at Taxpayer Assistance Centers (TACs), most IRS offices, and every VITA/TCE tax return site. The OPI Service is accessible in more than 350 languages.

Accessibility Helpline available for taxpayers with disabilities. Taxpayers who need information about accessibility services can call 833-690-0598. The Accessibility Helpline can answer questions related to current and future accessibility products and services available in alternative media formats (for example, braille, large print, audio, etc.). The Accessibility Helpline does not have access to your IRS account. For help with tax law, refunds, or account-related issues, go to *IRS.gov/LetUsHelp*.

Note. Form 9000, Alternative Media Preference, or Form 9000(SP) allows you to elect to receive certain types of written correspondence in the following formats.

- Standard Print.
- Large Print.
- Braille.
- Audio (MP3).
- Plain Text File (TXT).
- Braille Ready File (BRF).

Disasters. Go to *IRS.gov/DisasterRelief* to review the available disaster tax relief.

Getting tax forms and publications. Go to *IRS.gov/ Forms* to view, download, or print all the forms, instructions, and publications you may need. Or, you can go to *IRS.gov/OrderForms* to place an order.

Getting tax publications and instructions in eBook format. Download and view most tax publications and instructions (including the Instructions for Form 1040) on mobile devices as eBooks at *IRS.gov/eBooks*.

IRS eBooks have been tested using Apple's iBooks for iPad. Our eBooks haven’t been tested on other dedicated eBook readers, and eBook functionality may not operate as intended.

Access your online account (individual taxpayers only). Go to *IRS.gov/Account* to securely access information about your federal tax account.

- View the amount you owe and a breakdown by tax year.
- See payment plan details or apply for a new payment plan.
- Make a payment or view 5 years of payment history and any pending or scheduled payments.

- Access your tax records, including key data from your most recent tax return, and transcripts.
- View digital copies of select notices from the IRS.
- Approve or reject authorization requests from tax professionals.
- View your address on file or manage your communication preferences.

Get a transcript of your return. With an online account, you can access a variety of information to help you during the filing season. You can get a transcript, review your most recently filed tax return, and get your adjusted gross income. Create or access your online account at *IRS.gov/ Account*.

Tax Pro Account. This tool lets your tax professional submit an authorization request to access your individual taxpayer IRS online account. For more information, go to *IRS.gov/TaxProAccount*.

Using direct deposit. The safest and easiest way to receive a tax refund is to e-file and choose direct deposit, which securely and electronically transfers your refund directly into your financial account. Direct deposit also avoids the possibility that your check could be lost, stolen, destroyed, or returned undeliverable to the IRS. Eight in 10 taxpayers use direct deposit to receive their refunds. If you don’t have a bank account, go to *IRS.gov/DirectDeposit* for more information on where to find a bank or credit union that can open an account online.

Reporting and resolving your tax-related identity theft issues.

- Tax-related identity theft happens when someone steals your personal information to commit tax fraud. Your taxes can be affected if your SSN is used to file a fraudulent return or to claim a refund or credit.

- The IRS doesn’t initiate contact with taxpayers by email, text messages (including shortened links), telephone calls, or social media channels to request or verify personal or financial information. This includes requests for personal identification numbers (PINs), passwords, or similar information for credit cards, banks, or other financial accounts.
- Go to *IRS.gov/IdentityTheft*, the IRS Identity Theft Central webpage, for information on identity theft and data security protection for taxpayers, tax professionals, and businesses. If your SSN has been lost or stolen or you suspect you’re a victim of tax-related identity theft, you can learn what steps you should take.
- Get an Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN). IP PINs are six-digit numbers assigned to taxpayers to help prevent the misuse of their SSNs on fraudulent federal income

tax returns. When you have an IP PIN, it prevents someone else from filing a tax return with your SSN. To learn more, go to *IRS.gov/IPPIN*.

Ways to check on the status of your refund.

Go to *IRS.gov/Refunds*.

- Download the official IRS2Go app to your mobile device to check your refund status.
- Call the automated refund hotline at 800-829-1954.

The IRS can't issue refunds before mid-February for returns that claimed the EIC or the additional child tax credit (ACTC). This applies to the entire refund, not just the portion associated with these credits.

Making a tax payment. Payments of U.S. tax must be remitted to the IRS in U.S. dollars. *Digital assets* are **not** accepted. Go to

IRS.gov/Payments for information on how to make a payment using any of the following options.

- *IRS Direct Pay*: Pay your individual tax bill or estimated tax payment directly from your checking or savings account at no cost to you.
- *Debit Card, Credit Card, or Digital Wallet*: Choose an approved payment processor to pay online or by phone.
- *Electronic Funds Withdrawal*: Schedule a payment when filing your federal taxes using tax return preparation software or through a tax professional.
- *Electronic Federal Tax Payment System*: Best option for businesses. Enrollment is required.
- *Check or Money Order*: Mail your payment to the address listed on the notice or instructions.

- *Cash*: You may be able to pay your taxes with cash at a participating retail store.
- *Same-Day Wire*: You may be able to do same-day wire from your financial institution. Contact your financial institution for availability, cost, and time frames.

Note. The IRS uses the latest encryption technology to ensure that the electronic payments you make online, by phone, or from a mobile device using the IRS2Go app are safe and secure. Paying electronically is quick, easy, and faster than mailing in a check or money order.

What if I can’t pay now? Go to *IRS.gov/Payments* for more information about your options.

- Apply for an *online payment agreement* (*IRS.gov/ OPA*) to meet your tax obligation in monthly installments if you can’t pay your taxes in full today. Once you complete the online process, you will receive immediate notification of whether your agreement has been approved.

- Use the *Offer in Compromise Pre-Qualifier* to see if you can settle your tax debt for less than the full amount you owe. For more information on the Offer in Compromise program, go to *IRS.gov/OIC*.

Filing an amended return. Go to *IRS.gov/Form1040X* for information and updates.

Checking the status of your amended return. Go to *IRS.gov/WMAR* to track the status of Form 1040-X amended returns.

CAUTION *It can take up to 3 weeks from the date you filed your amended return for it to show up in our system, and processing it can take up to 16 weeks.*

Understanding an IRS notice or letter you've received. Go to *IRS.gov/Notices* to find additional information about responding to an IRS notice or letter.

Responding to an IRS notice or letter. You can now upload responses to all notices and letters using the Document Upload Tool. For notices that require additional action, taxpayers will be redirected appropriately on IRS.gov to take further action. To learn more about the tool, go to *IRS.gov/Upload*.

Note. You can use Schedule LEP (Form 1040), Request for Change in Language Preference, to state a preference to receive notices, letters, or other written communications from the IRS in an alternative language. You may not immediately receive written communications in the requested language. The IRS's commitment to LEP taxpayers is part of a multi-year timeline that began providing translations in 2023. You will continue to receive communications, including notices and letters, in English until they are translated to your preferred language.

Contacting your local TAC. Keep in mind, many questions can be answered on IRS.gov without visiting a TAC. Go to *IRS.gov/LetUsHelp* for the topics people ask about most. If you still need help, TACs provide tax help when a tax issue can’t be handled online or by phone. All TACs now provide service by appointment, so you’ll know in advance that you can get the service you need without long wait times. Before you visit, go to *IRS.gov/TACLocator* to find the nearest TAC and to check hours, available services, and appointment options. Or, on the IRS2Go app, under the Stay Connected tab, choose the Contact Us option and click on “Local Offices.”

The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) Is Here To Help You What Is TAS?

TAS is an ***independent*** organization within the IRS that helps taxpayers and protects taxpayer rights. TAS strives to ensure that every taxpayer is treated fairly and that you know and understand your rights under the *Taxpayer Bill of Rights*.

How Can You Learn About Your Taxpayer Rights?

The Taxpayer Bill of Rights describes 10 basic rights that all taxpayers have when dealing with the IRS. Go to *TaxpayerAdvocate.IRS.gov* to help you understand what these rights mean to you and how they apply. These are ***your*** rights. Know them. Use them.

What Can TAS Do for You?

TAS can help you resolve problems that you can't resolve with the IRS. And their service is free. If you qualify for their assistance, you will be assigned to one advocate who will work with you throughout the process and will do everything possible to resolve your issue. TAS can help you if:

- Your problem is causing financial difficulty for you, your family, or your business;
- You face (or your business is facing) an immediate threat of adverse action; or
- You've tried repeatedly to contact the IRS but no one has responded, or the IRS hasn't responded by the date promised.

How Can You Reach TAS?

TAS has offices *in every state, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico*. To find your advocate's number:

- Go to *TaxpayerAdvocate.IRS.gov/Contact-Us;*
- Download Pub. 1546, The Taxpayer Advocate Service Is Your Voice at the IRS,

available at
IRS.gov/pub/irspdf/p1546.pdf;

- Call the IRS toll free at 800-TAX-FORM (800-829-3676) to order a copy of Pub. 1546;
- Check your local directory; or

Call TAS toll free at 877-777-4778.

How Else Does TAS Help Taxpayers?

TAS works to resolve large-scale problems that affect many taxpayers. If you know of one of these broad issues, report it to TAS at *IRS.gov/SAMS*. Be sure to not include any personal taxpayer information.

Low Income Taxpayer Clinics (LITCs)

LITCs are independent from the IRS and TAS. LITCs represent individuals whose income is below a certain level and who need to resolve tax problems with the IRS. LITCs can represent taxpayers in audits, appeals, and tax collection disputes before the IRS and in court. In addition, LITCs can provide information about taxpayer rights and responsibilities in different languages for individuals who speak English as a second language. Services are offered for free or a small fee. For more information or to find an

LITC near you, go to the LITC page at *TaxpayerAdvocate.IRS.gov/LITC* or see IRS Pub. 4134, *Low Income Taxpayer Clinic List*, at *IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/ p4134.pdf*.

Index

To help us develop a more useful index, please let us know if you have ideas for index entries. See “Comments and Suggestions” in the “Introduction” for the ways you can reach us.

A

B

C

D

R

S