



Fast Facts

2019 Risks and Process of Retirement Survey: Report of Findings

SUMMARY

Do Americans expect to retire at age 65? What financial risks do they foresee? What is or will be their major retirement income source? How well do they adjust to retirement?

The Society of Actuaries (SOA) *2019 Risks and Process of Retirement* report illuminates these and many other retirement trends. The study examines how Americans understand and deal with financial risks, workforce disruption and emotional realities in retirement. Four companion reports overview and highlight key focal points of the survey. All of the studies feature extensive data and analysis.

Published in 2020, the reports are based on findings from SOA's 10th biennial retirement risks survey. Conducted online in 2019 by Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc., the survey probed Americans ages 45-80 on newer as well older trends, making for timely, data-based and highly relevant findings.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Fifty-three percent of pre-retirees said they expect to retire at age 65 or older but 54% of the already-retired said they did so at age 61 or younger. The median actual retirement age for retirees has remained at 60 since the 2013 survey.
- Pre-retirees (28%) and retirees (31%) who experienced loss of work said they withdrew money from retirement savings at these times.
- Although 64% of retirees said Social Security benefits are a major source of income in retirement, 50% of pre-retirees said they expect it to be.
- Less than 5% of pre-retirees and retirees said they expect to rely on a payout annuity, rental property, or reverse annuity mortgage as a major source of retirement income. Just 11% of pre-retirees and 20% of retirees reported having a long-term care policy.
- Pre-retirees indicated that their top three concerns about retirement risks were: savings and investments won't keep up with inflation (65%); inability to afford a nursing home (65%); and inability to afford adequate health care (63%). These concerns have been the top three in several iterations of this survey, although the order has changed.
- 77% of retirees said working again in the future is not at all or not too likely but pre-retirees (59%) said it is very or somewhat likely.
- Approximately one-third of retirees found it emotionally challenging to adjust to retirement, but 53% of them said they adjusted within two years.

LINK TO FULL REPORT

2019 Retirement Risks and Process of Retirement Survey

<https://www.soa.org/globalassets/assets/files/resources/research-report/2020/2019-risks-process-retirement-survey.pdf>

METHODOLOGY

- Published: May 2020, the 10th SOA study on this topic since 2001
- Requirements: The researchers conducted 20-minute interviews with 1,061 pre-retirees and 1,255 retirees (including oversamples), using Research Now's online consumer panel, from June 10-June 30, 2019. Respondents were born between 1938 and 1973. The data are weighted by age, sex, education and household income to match targets obtained from the March 2018 Current Population Survey (CPS).
- The study includes pre-retirees and retirees at all income levels.
- The report's appendix includes the posted survey questionnaire, complete with response tallies for both pre-retirees and retirees.

REPORT SPECS

- Published: May 2020
- Pages: 143
- Access: Downloadable pdf
- Research Sponsor: The Society of Actuaries' Committee on Post - Retirement Needs and Risks
- Author(s): Mathew Greenwald & Associates, Inc.
- Contents: Executive summary; detailed survey findings; retirement risks and planning; retirement income and spending; the process of retiring; employment concerns; reality of retirement; family support/aging alone; and Appendices A and B.
- Four breakout reports expand on topics meriting additional attention. (Find links to those reports in the column at right.)



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2019 Financial Expectations of Pre-Retirees Versus Realities of Retirees Brief
<https://www.soa.org/globalassets/assets/files/resources/research-report/2020/financial-expectations-realities.pdf>

2019 Work and Lifetime Financial Security Brief
<https://www.soa.org/globalassets/assets/files/resources/research-report/2020/work-lifetime-financial-security.pdf>

2019 Risks and Process of Retirement Survey: Key Findings and Issues - The Realities of Retirement
<https://www.soa.org/globalassets/assets/files/resources/research-report/2020/2020-realities-of-retirement.pdf>

2019 Risks and Process of Retirement Survey: Key Findings and Issues - Overview Report
<https://www.soa.org/globalassets/assets/files/resources/research-report/2020/2020-overview-2019-research-results.pdf>



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