

# Planning

for Retirement

The Seventh-day Adventist Retirement  
Plans of the North American Division



AdventistRetirement



## SOME IMPORTANT

# Terms

The terms below are used throughout this booklet. Here is a helpful glossary.

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### **Beneficiary**

The person you designate to receive death benefits payable in the event of your death (typically your spouse).

### **Benefit Rate Factor**

The average of your 10 highest Yearly Rate Factors.

### **Break in Service**

A break in service occurs during a calendar year in which you are either not employed by a participating Church Plan organization, or are denominationally employed by a Church Plan organization but are not paid for more than 500 hours or more than three months on a full time salary basis.

### **Defined Benefit (DB) Plan**

The retirement plan in the form of a pension that applies to denominational service up through the year 1999.

### **Defined Contribution (DC) Plan**

The retirement plan that applies to denominational service after the year 1999.

### **Empower Retirement**

The retirement brand name of Great West, the company currently contracted to provide DC Plan administration for Adventist Retirement Plan.

### **Health Reimbursement Account (HRA)**

A tax-free account opened for eligible retirees and/or spouses. The account receives annual contributions from SHARP to reimburse the retiree for qualifying healthcare expenses.

### **International Service Employee (ISE)**

An employee who is formally assigned by the General Conference to serve in a division other than his or her home division under the General Conference ISE policies. Previously known as interdivision employees, these employees retain a link to their home division.

### **Joint & Survivor Benefit**

A benefit option for a married retiree. A reduction from the Single Life Benefit nominally pays for survivor benefits and healthcare provisions for the spouse.

### **Participant**

An employee of a participating employer who is eligible to earn service credit in the plan, or a former employee who is receiving benefits from the plan.

### **Pension Factor**

A dollar amount voted each year by the North American Division (NAD) to calculate the retirement benefit for the Defined Benefit Plan. This provides for the annual Cost of Living Adjustment.

### **Service Credit**

A measure of time, expressed in years and percentage of years up to a maximum of 40, used in determining the amount of a participant's retirement benefit.

### **SHARP**

A healthcare plan provided by Adventist Retirement for retirees, J&S spouse, and children. SHARP-Ex is the specific portion of SHARP dealing with retirees and spouses age 65 and over.

### **Vesting**

Employee has reached a service requirement which grants unconditional entitlement to future retirement benefits.

### **Yearly Rate Factor**

The Yearly Rate Factor is a percentage of your remuneration factor assigned at the end of each calendar year prior to January 1, 2000 in which you earned service credit.

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## RETIREMENT OVERVIEW

Revised 2025

This booklet is intended to provide a brief overview of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists (NAD) various retirement provisions. Full details are located in the official plan documents and policies. No example shown should be construed as a promise to provide specific benefits. If there is a discrepancy between this booklet and the official plan documents, the official plan document will prevail.

### Main Contact

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North American Division  
9705 Patuxent Woods Drive  
Columbia, MD 21046

### General Information:

1-443-391-7300 | 9-5 M-Th

**Email:** [NADRetirement@nadadventist.org](mailto:NADRetirement@nadadventist.org)

**Fax:** 1-443-259-4880

**Website:** [adventistretirement.org](http://adventistretirement.org)

### Empower Contact

**Website:** [empowermyarp.com](http://empowermyarp.com)

**Phone:** 1-866-467-7756

### Healthcare Contact

**SHARP Line:** 1-443-391-7338

**e-mail:** [SHARP@nadadventist.org](mailto:SHARP@nadadventist.org)



# Planning

## FOR RETIREMENT

It's never too early to start saving for your retirement. Planning now means that when the time comes to retire, you'll be much more likely to have enough retirement income to maintain your quality of life.

If you are/were employed by a participating employer in the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists, you are likely a participant in the Defined Benefit Plan or the Defined Contribution Plan, or both. If you are/were employed outside of the United States, in Guam, in a healthcare institution, or by regional conferences, you are covered by the plans they provide which are not described here.

**The Defined Contribution (DC) Plan** is the retirement plan that became effective January 1, 2000. The contributions an employee and employer make to the plan, and the earnings on those contributions, are designed to provide a significant portion of financial security in retirement.

**The Defined Benefit Plan (DB)** is the "legacy" pension plan that applies to a retiree's service for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America through the year 1999.

Let's take a look at both plans. For in-depth information, see plan documents and resources online at [AdventistRetirement.org](http://AdventistRetirement.org).

Interested in resources or want more details about the plans? Visit [AdventistRetirement.org](http://AdventistRetirement.org).

# Adventist RETIREMENT PLAN



The Adventist Retirement Plan (a defined contribution plan) is the retirement plan that became effective January 1, 2000. Empower Retirement/Great West Trust Company is currently the custodian of the plan. The contributions that an employee and employer make to the plan, and the earnings on those contributions, are designed to provide a significant portion of financial security in retirement.

The investments offered by Adventist Retirement Plan include more than 20 funds. Several are quite aggressive (involving more risk) and several are quite conservative. The core funds are socially screened to avoid investments in objectionable products. You may opt for the default target date fund model allowing the plan to select an investment strategy based on your age, or you may take a more active role and use the tools and resources available through Empower Retirement to manage your investments yourself. Or, for a fee, your investments can be customized just for you using Empower's managed accounts advisory service. Another option allows knowledgeable investors to use an available brokerage window (also called a self-directed brokerage option) and select from a broad range of funds.

Participants in the DC Plan currently pay an annual administrative fee (reflected on your Empower quarterly statement) of \$74 which covers transaction processing, recordkeeping, website management, call center staffing and other services provided by Empower Retirement.

The administrative fee may change from year to year. You want to be sure you are contributing enough toward your retirement plan to realize gains beyond the fees.

Empower Retirement's website, [empowermyarp.com](http://empowermyarp.com), has a tool where you as a participant can view your retirement assets and activity, adjust your contribution levels, and add your other assets and projected Social Security distributions into a model. This helpful tool can give you an accurate picture of whether you will have enough income to support your desired standard of living in retirement, and it allows you to make adjustments to better position you to reach your goals. Log in to your Empower account frequently to monitor your progress.

The Adventist Retirement Plan partners with Empower Retirement to provide Comprehensive Financial Planning to all eligible employees at no cost. Whether you are nearing retirement or just starting out, a Certified Financial Planner® (CFP) can help you develop a personalized plan to help you reach your financial goals. To learn more, call 1-833-301-9355.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PLAN?

Employees who are at least 20 years of age and not otherwise excluded (see your employer for details) may participate in this plan according to the option selected in their participating em-

Empower website: [empowermyarp.com](http://empowermyarp.com).

employer's NAD policy resolution. Any employee working for a participating employer can make salary reduction and after-tax contributions, even if the employee is not eligible for employer contributions. There are different eligibility requirements for employer contributions depending on which of the two retirement benefit options the employer has elected.

There may be employees who will be eligible for both DB and DC benefits. This will require that the employees meet the eligibility requirements for each.

## HOW DO I ENROLL IN THE DC PLAN?

Employees eligible to make employee contributions to the plan are automatically enrolled by their employer with a three (3) percent voluntary contribution. The plan annually increases the contribution by one (1) percent to reach fifteen (15) percent. An employee can decline to make voluntary contributions, but if you do, you will miss out on the employer match contribution.

## IS THERE A VESTING REQUIREMENT FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ADVENTIST RETIREMENT PLAN?

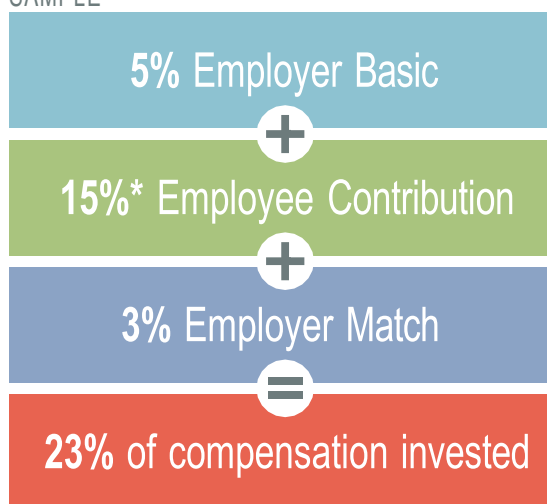
Effective July 1, 2011, no contributions are subject to vesting requirements.

## WHO CONTRIBUTES TO THE PLAN?

The employer's initial basic contribution to an eligible employee's DC retirement account is five (5) percent of includable compensation. Additionally, the employer will match your voluntary employee contribution up to three (3) percent.

Research shows that long-term retirement financial goals are better met when an employee contributes at least fifteen (15) percent of their compensation in addition to employer contributions. Beginning January 1, 2026, you can contribute up to \$24,500 per year to your retirement savings account. If you are 50 years and older, you can contribute an additional \$8,000 per year.

### SAMPLE



\*15 percent is the minimum recommended contribution.

There are always reasons employees find to NOT contribute. Case studies demonstrate that those who contribute throughout their career will be rewarded, but just as importantly, early years are more important than later years (due to compound interest). Delay is costly.

*Note: A parsonage allowance reduces an employee's taxable gross income, which may severely limit or prevent a pastor from contributing to the plan. Pastors who exclude the majority or all of their compensation as non-taxable parsonage allowance should contact their tax advisor for assistance in order to maximize participation in the plan. More information on the parsonage allowance is available online at <https://www.adventistretirement.org/retiree/payroll/#parsonage>.*

# THE DEFINED **Benefit** PLAN

## HOW DOES THE DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN WORK?

The North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists Retirement office, located in Columbia, Maryland, administers the Defined Benefit (DB) Plan.

If you are an eligible retiree, this pension plan provides you with a portion of your retirement income through monthly payments beginning when you retire. This is based on a set formula that takes into account both your qualifying service credit and your Benefit Rate Factor. Retirees who vest by December 31, 2014, and who have less than five years of qualifying service credit in the DB Plan, will receive a lump sum payout rather than monthly payments.

## WHO CONTRIBUTES TO THE PLAN?

Participating denominational employers contribute to the pension plan based on contribution requirements established by the North American Division Committee. Adventist Retirement is responsible for the investment and management of the pension fund, so each plan member will receive pension benefits from the plan.

You do not make any contributions to the Defined Benefit Plan.

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS FROM THE DEFINED BENEFIT PLAN?

You're eligible if you meet the following requirements:

- 1 you have pre-2000 service credit, and
- 2 you are vested—have at least 10 years of qualifying service credit (Note: If you have less than 10 years of service credit AND have a break in service that exceeds your previous accrued service credit, your previous service may be lost.), and
- 3 you are/were employed by a participating organization such as the General Conference headquarters, the North American Division (or International Service Employees—ISEs sent from the North American Division), union conferences, local conferences and their participating institutions in the United States and Bermuda. There are exceptions for employees of healthcare institutions and regional conferences.

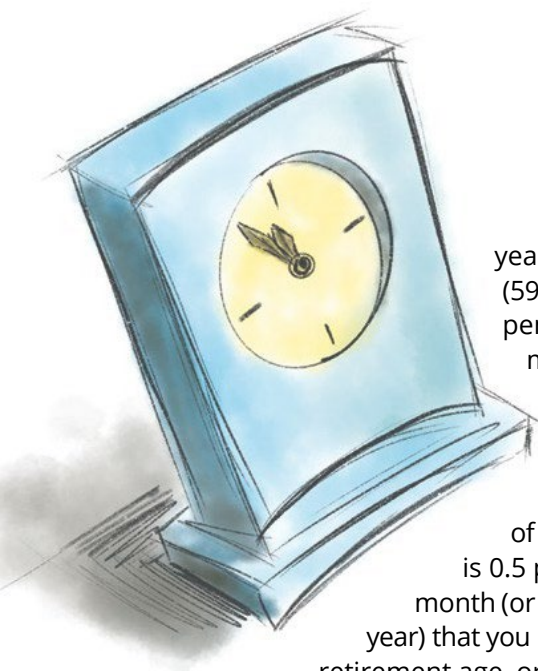
## WHEN SHOULD I APPLY TO RETIRE?

**At least six months before the actual date you'd like to retire, contact your current or most recent denominational employer to initiate the retirement process and obtain the necessary forms. Use the checklist at the back of this booklet to get started.**

Full retirement age (also called "normal retirement age") was 65 for many years. However, beginning with persons born in 1938 or later, that age gradually increases until it reaches 67 for individuals born after 1959. You may choose to take an early or postponed retirement, though the value of your pension may be affected by these choices.

### **If you choose to retire early. . .**

As long as you meet vesting requirements, you are eligible to retire at any time after age 59



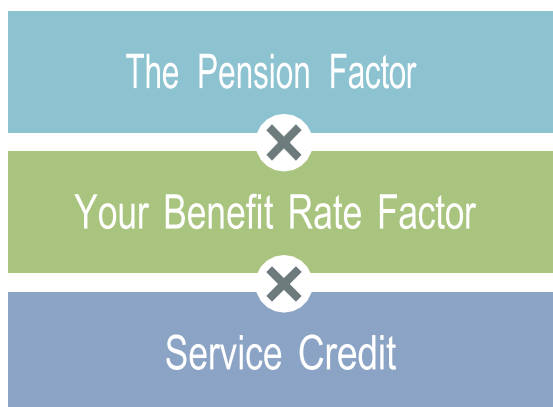
years and six months (59 ½). In this case, your pension will be permanently reduced to reflect the fact that you will likely be receiving benefits for a longer period of time. The reduction is 0.5 percent for each month (or six percent for each year) that you retire before normal retirement age, or for each month service credit is less than 40 years, whichever gives you the greatest monthly benefit.

### If you choose to postpone retirement...

You can postpone your retirement and work past your normal retirement age, however, those who are vested and no longer work for the denomination must begin receiving their pension benefits by April 1 of the calendar year following the year they reach age 72.

### HOW IS MY PENSION CALCULATED?

The plan uses a formula to determine the pension you will receive if you retire on your normal retirement date. It begins with a com-



mon Pension Factor as the starting point for the amount of pension each employee may receive. Then, it takes into account your individual remuneration factors with the participating employers through a Benefit Rate Factor, and your qualifying service credit.

The Pension Factor is reviewed annually and may increase from time to time, though increases are not guaranteed. Your pension is based on the Pension Factor in effect when you retire. You can find the current Pension Factor online at [adventistretirement.org/employee/defined-benefit-plan/](http://adventistretirement.org/employee/defined-benefit-plan/).

Your Benefit Rate Factor is the average of your 10 highest Yearly Rate Factors. Your Yearly Rate Factor is directly related to your remuneration factor and varies from 0.80 percent to 1.60 percent.

### DETERMINING YEARLY RATE FACTORS\*

Your remuneration factor depends on your Yearly Rate Factor, based on this table. If your remuneration factor is between those shown, your Yearly Rate Factor is calculated on a pro-rated basis.

If your remuneration factor is:	Your Yearly Rate Factor is:
75% or less	0.80%
114%	1.06%
150%	1.30%
165% or more	1.60%

\*This table applies only to service credit earned prior to January 1, 2000.

### North American Division Service Record

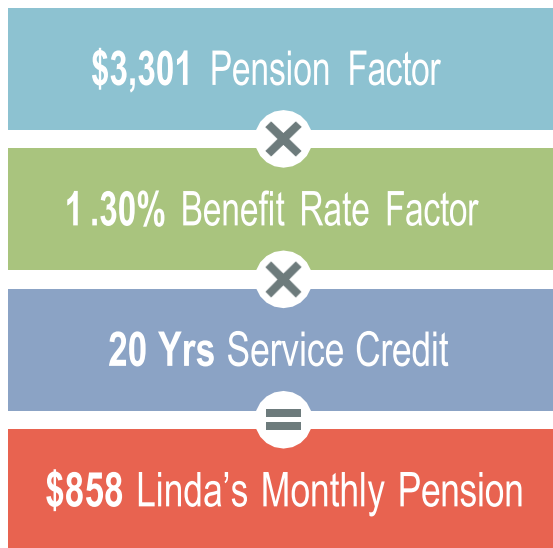
Employee	Employment	Service Summary	Canada Only
John Smith	Hired on: 07/01/1998 Terminated on: SSN: xxx-xx-7023 SIN: <b>Benefit Rate Factor: 1.06</b>	US DB < 2000: 1.50 Y Hospital DB < 1992: 0.00 N Canada DB: 0.00 N Canada Supplemental: 0.00 NAD Cert'd Foreign: 0.00 Total DB Service Cr: 1.50 US DC > 1999: 13.42 Hospital DC > 1991: 3.43 Berm & Kett > 1999: 0.00 Regional Confs: 0.00	DORE: Adjusted: Plan Entry: Comm Value Pay Date: Comm Value Yrs Paid: PreRetDeath Pay Date: PreRetDeath Yrs Paid: Eligible Credited Service: 0.00
Phone: Fax: Email: ID: 407388	Personal Marital Status: Married Gender: M Born on: 05/01/1950		

Begin date	Job Description	WorkType	Hours	Months	%FT	%Rem	AreaRem	Plan	Service Credit Accumulated						
End Date	Employer	Work Location	Hourly Pay		Work	Status			Rec	USA	Hsp	Can	Sup	Rgn	YRF
07/01/1998	Groundskeeper	I-Reg Salary with %remun	0	6.0	100	114	0	USDB	0.50	0.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.06
12/31/1998	Southern Adventist University	Southern Adventist University	0.00												
01/01/1999	Groundskeeper	I-Reg Salary with %remun	0	12.0	100	114	0	USDB	1.00	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.06
12/31/1999	Southern Adventist University	Southern Adventist University	0.00												

### Let's look at some examples:

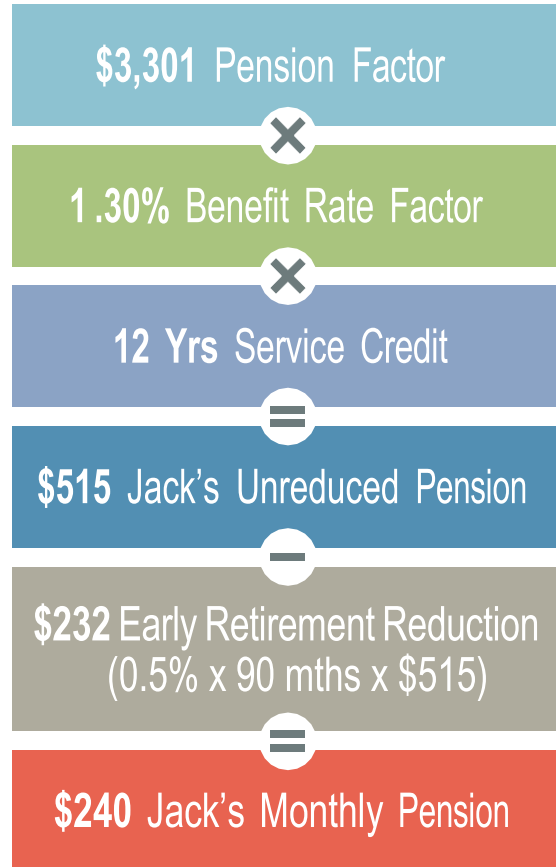
Linda is 66 years old when she retires. She has been employed full time for 39 years with 20 years of service credit in the DB Plan (pre-2000) and 19 years in the DC Plan (post-1999). If her Benefit Rate Factor is 1.30 percent and the Pension Factor is \$3,301, her monthly pension will be calculated as:



The previous example is the Single Life Benefit. If Linda is married and chooses the Joint & Survivor Benefit (J&S), the above monthly pension is permanently reduced by 10 percent (percentage may vary depending on spouse's age) to provide healthcare benefits to her spouse and surviving spouse benefits should

she die before her husband.

Jack is 59 ½ years old and wants to retire early. He has been employed full time in the NAD in the United States for 32 years (12 years in the DB Plan and 20 years in the DC Plan). His Benefit Rate Factor is 1.30 percent, and the Pension Factor is \$3,301. Jack will retire 90 months (or 7 ½ years) before his normal retirement age of 67. Jack's monthly pension is calculated as follows.



Jack takes a 45 percent reduction by retiring at age 59 ½. If Jack retires at his normal retirement age of 67, his monthly pension will be calculated as above but no reduction will be applied. In this case, his monthly pension will be \$515.

**Do your own calculations using the worksheets on the following page.**

### IF YOU ARE SINGLE WHEN YOU RETIRE...

Your pension is paid for your lifetime only.

### IF YOU HAVE A SPOUSE WHEN YOU RETIRE...

If you are married (and have been for at least one year prior to retirement), you may elect to keep the Single Life Benefit. Most will opt for the Joint & Survivor (J&S) Benefit to provide spousal benefits including healthcare assistance and survivor benefits. In most cases, this will cost you 10 percent off of the Single Life Benefit in order to cover the cost of continuing your pension at the survivor rate following your death. The reduction may be greater or lesser if your spouse is not within five years of your age.

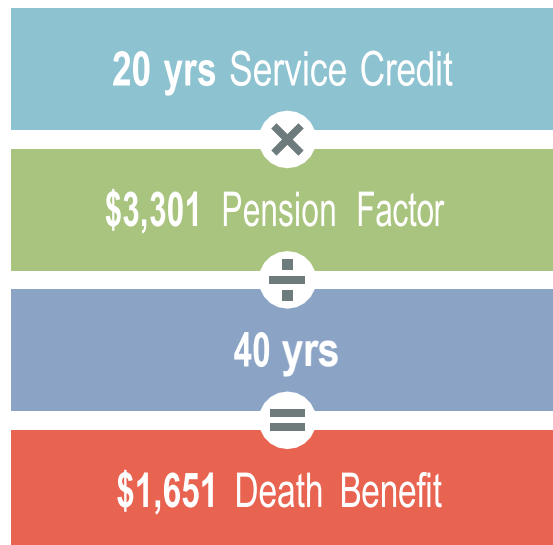
### HOW IS MY PENSION PAID?

No matter when you retire, your pension is paid to you in monthly installments, by direct deposit into your checking or savings account, except for those required to take a lump sum payout. Monthly benefits that are received from the Retirement Plan are taxable income, however, retirement benefits are not subject to Social Security tax. The

pension factor is reviewed annually, and a Cost of Living Adjustment may be voted by the North American Division.

### DEATH BENEFIT/FUNERAL ALLOWANCE

There is a modest death benefit to assist with end of life expenses for retirees with at least 10 years qualified service credit who die while receiving benefits under the Defined Benefit Plan. Note, the benefit is available only for those with pre-2000 service credit. It is provided to the retiree's spouse if living, or to those managing end of life financial matters. If you designated a spouse as a Joint & Survivor Spouse at retirement, your spouse is also eligible for the same death benefit. The amount of the death benefit for a participant with 40 or more years of service credit is the full pension factor in effect (\$3,301 in 2026). For those with less than 40 years, the allowance is the pension factor multiplied by years of service credit divided by 40. For example, Richard has 20 years of service credit:



# DO YOUR OWN **calculations**

## WORKSHEET 1: STANDARD RETIREMENT

YOUR Pension Factor		×
YOUR Benefit Rate Factor		×
YOUR Service Credit		=
YOUR Monthly Pension		

## WORKSHEET 2: EARLY RETIREMENT

YOUR Pension Factor		×
YOUR Benefit Rate Factor		×
YOUR Service Credit		=
YOUR Unreduced Pension		-
YOUR Early Retirement Reduction 0.5% X months until retirement age X unreduced pension (from blue box above)		=
YOUR Monthly Pension		

If you do not want the J&S form of payment, both you and your spouse must sign a waiver form at the time you choose your retirement options. You must choose a J&S pension if you wish to receive a Death Benefit/Funeral Allowance for your spouse, and the SHARP Healthcare Benefit for your spouse.

# SHARP

## (SUPPLEMENTAL HEALTHCARE ADVENTIST RETIREMENT PLAN)

The North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists (NAD) offers a healthcare assistance plan for certain eligible retirees and their eligible spouses and eligible dependent children through Adventist Retirement. Retirees share in SHARP costs.

The three basic components of SHARP are:

### 1. Dental/Vision/Hearing (DVH)

- Funding is shared by SHARP and you, the retiree.
- SHARP operates this plan through Adventist Risk Management, Inc.
- You must decide within 30 days of your retirement date whether to adopt this option at retirement. In most cases, this is a one-time, lifelong decision.
- DVH is modestly priced for the value it delivers.

### 2. Pre-Medicare Bridge

- This option gives the younger spouse of a retiree, or in some cases an early retiree, an option to bridge the time gap between retirement and age 65 with a healthcare plan which somewhat replicates the provisions of the employer's active healthcare plan. You can also add plan options of dental, vision, hearing, and/or prescription drugs. Costs are shared between SHARP and you, the retiree. However, if you are

less than age 65 and have fewer than 40 years of qualified service credit, the premium costs for the pre-Medicare option are born solely by you. The pre-Medicare bridge ceases at age 65.

### 3. SHARP Exchange (SHARP-Ex)

- The most common benefit is for retirees who are age 65 and older. The plan provides an annual tax-free contribution to an account for you called a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). This account can be used to reimburse you for premium costs and other qualifying expenses. The plan is operated by Alight Retiree Health Solutions - under contract to Adventist Retirement. It offers you many options to enroll in various levels of Medicare supplement, Medicare Advantage or Medicare D (drug plan) coverage.
- The tables on the following page offer a glimpse of how much the plan contributes to the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) and toward Dental/Vision/Hearing (DVH). These figures are reviewed annually by the Adventist Retirement Board and are subject to change. Plan contributions are based on qualifying years of service. Premiums for healthcare plans offered through Alight Retiree Health Solutions vary widely depending on the coverage you choose. As an eligible retiree, you can use the funds contributed by Adventist Retirement into your HRA to offset healthcare insurance premium costs.

*Medicare is the United States' health insurance program for people age 65 or older. For more information, visit Medicare's website at [medicare.gov](http://medicare.gov).*

## 2026 HRA ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION TABLE\*

Category	Years of qualifying church service	DVH Annual Contribution per member	HRA Annual Contribution per member	Total Annual Contribution per member
A	35+	\$780	\$1,668	\$2,448
B	30-34	\$696	\$1,507	\$2,203
C	25-29	\$612	\$1,346	\$1,958
D	20-24	\$528	\$1,186	\$1,714
E	15-19	\$444	\$1,025	\$1,469
F	8-14*	\$360	\$864	\$1,224
G	1-7*	\$276	\$642	\$918

\*divorce shared service

If you opt out of DVH, the DVH contribution will be added to the HRA contribution. This is a lifetime decision and you cannot enroll in SHARP DVH in the future unless there is an age-65 open enrollment.

## 2026 DVH Table

Years of qualifying church service	35+	30-34	25-29	20-24	15-19	8-14*	1-7*
Category	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
DVH Cost/Month	\$107	\$107	\$107	\$107	\$107	\$107	\$107
(less EC)	(\$65)	(\$58)	(\$51)	(\$44)	(\$37)	(\$30)	(\$23)
Total Cost	\$42	\$49	\$56	\$63	\$70	\$77	\$84

**\*Based on eligibility**

**\*\*Note:** The columns above showing less than 15 years of service credit are for special situations such as divorce and pre-retirement remarriage where a residual amount of healthcare is available to a new spouse. Eligibility for SHARP participation requires 15 years of qualifying service credit.

# COMMON RETIREMENT **questions**

## WHAT OTHER SOURCES OF RETIREMENT INCOME ARE AVAILABLE?

Along with your Defined Benefit Plan and/or Adventist Retirement Plan retirement benefits, certain government benefits—plus your own personal savings and investments—work together to provide you with additional retirement income.

### Social Security

For many, Social Security will be a vital and significant source of retirement income. Unlike most sources of retirement income, Social Security benefits are adjusted periodically for inflation. Perhaps the biggest decision you'll make about Social Security is when to apply for your benefits. The Social Security Administration offers many tools and resources (online at [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov)) to help you understand your Social Security benefits and how best to plan for the day when you will tap those benefits to help fund your retirement.

## WHEN CAN I RETIRE?

You can begin the distribution of your retirement investments as early as age 59½. The IRS requires you take minimum distributions (RMDs) upon reaching age 72. There are several distribution options including structured withdrawal, purchase of an annuity, lump sum and more.

To receive the full Social Security benefit, you will need to wait to retire until you are of normal retirement age.

Year of birth	full retirement age
1943–1954	66
1955	66 and 2 months
1956	66 and 4 months
1957	66 and 6 months
1958	66 and 8 months
1959	66 and 10 months
1960	67

Data source: Social Security Administration

## WHAT HAPPENS IF I . . .

### Transfer to Canada?

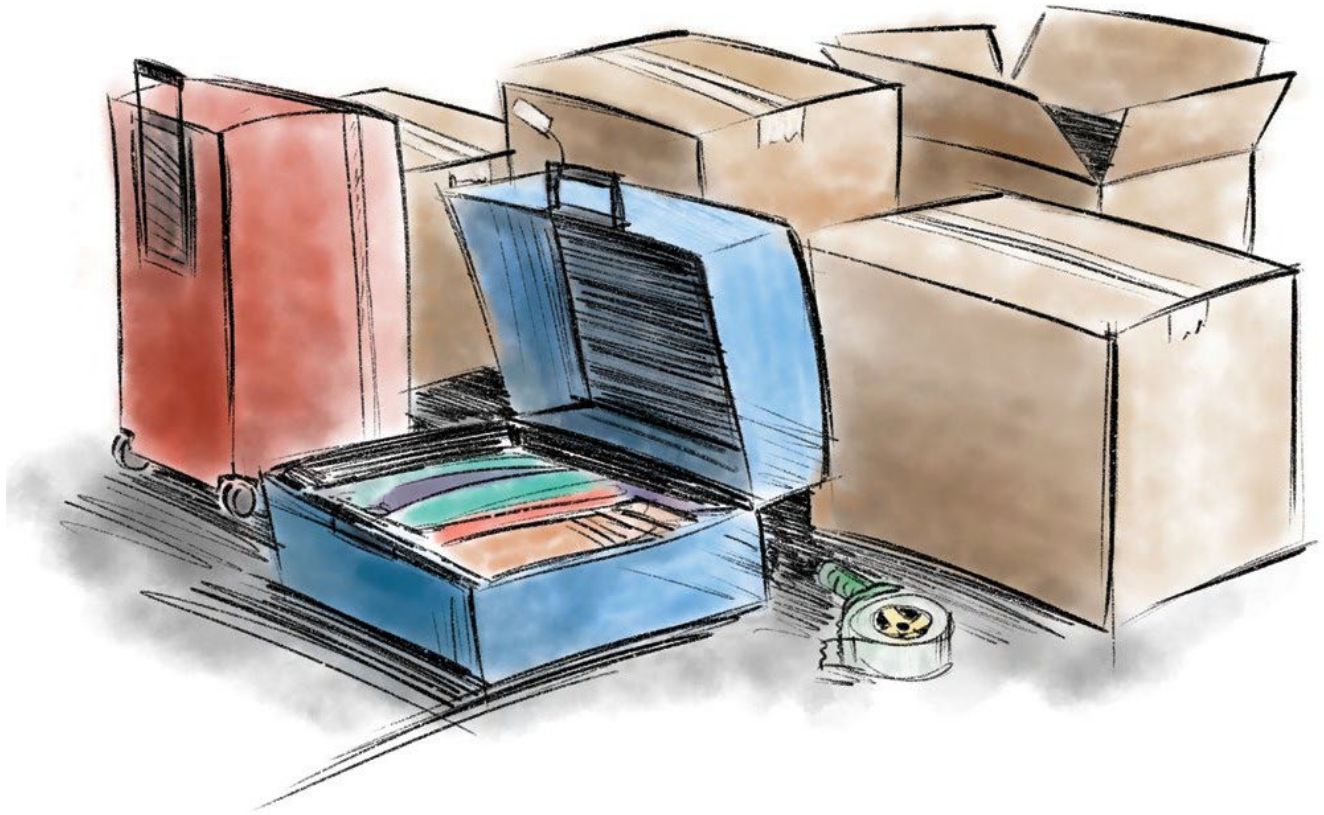
If you transfer to Canada, you stop earning U.S.-based service credit and begin earning credited service in the Canadian pension plan. You will have the option to leave your savings in the Adventist Retirement Plan or to invest the savings.

### Transfer from a foreign division?

If you are an eligible employee, you will start participation in the Adventist Retirement Plan when you begin NAD employment.

### Go on Mission Service?

If your home is in the United States and you accept a formal International Service Employee (ISE) invitation from the General Conference,



you are considered an NAD-based employee for purposes of retirement. Pre-2000 ISE years are counted towards receiving retirement benefits under the Defined Benefit Plan. Post-1999 ISE years are counted toward qualified service credit under the Adventist Retirement Plan. Individuals whose home is in a division other than NAD, who accept a formal ISE invitation, are considered employees of their home division for purposes of retirement.

### **Take a maternity or parental leave?**

You will need to consult your participating employer in this situation as the answer varies depending on how leave is taken, e.g., extended sick leave, FMLA, vacation, or a combination of these.

### **Become disabled?**

If an employee is disabled prior to reaching the age of 59 ½ and is eligible for disability pay under the employer's long-term disability insurance plan or under Social Security, the employer continues to make employer basic and/or

matching contributions during the elimination period (the time between becoming disabled and receiving disability benefits). You may continue to make contributions into your retirement savings only during the elimination period. Following the elimination period, the employer continues to make employer basic contributions, but not matching contributions. Employer basic contributions stop after 18 months.

### **Divorce from my spouse?**

If a participant in the Adventist Retirement Plan gets divorced, his or her account can only be divided according to the terms of a Qualified Domestic Relations Order (QDRO). You must use the template QDRO provided by Empower Retirement—a divorce decree, property settlement agreement or non-Empower QDRO will not be accepted.

If a participant in the Defined Benefit Plan (pension) divorces, the plan will follow the instructions of a court-issued QDRO regarding division of retirement benefits.

## Leave church employment before retirement?

As you start preparing for your new career adventure, make sure your retirement savings account keeps working for your financial future. You have several options related to what you can do with the money in the Adventist Retirement Plan. If your Empower balance is over \$5,000, you can choose to leave your investments in the Plan. Another way to make sure your retirement account keeps its tax-deferred status is to roll it over to your new workplace plan. You are encouraged to discuss rolling money from one account to another with your financial advisor/planner, considering

any potential fees and/or limitations of investment options. Note that there is a 45-day hold on distributions beginning on your last day of denominational employment.

If you withdraw from denominational employment prior to retirement and have service in the Defined Benefit Plan—and meet vesting requirements—you become eligible for retirement benefits as early as 59 1/2 (early-retirement penalty would apply). You must have 15 full years of service credit if service was terminated prior to January 1, 1981, or 10 years of service credit for those who discontinue employment after 1980.



### Leave church employment and am later re-hired?

You will contribute to the Adventist Retirement Plan if you are eligible. If you are retired and return to NAD-based employment, there are restrictions on how much you can work and still receive DB retirement benefits. See plan documents for more details.

### Die before retirement?

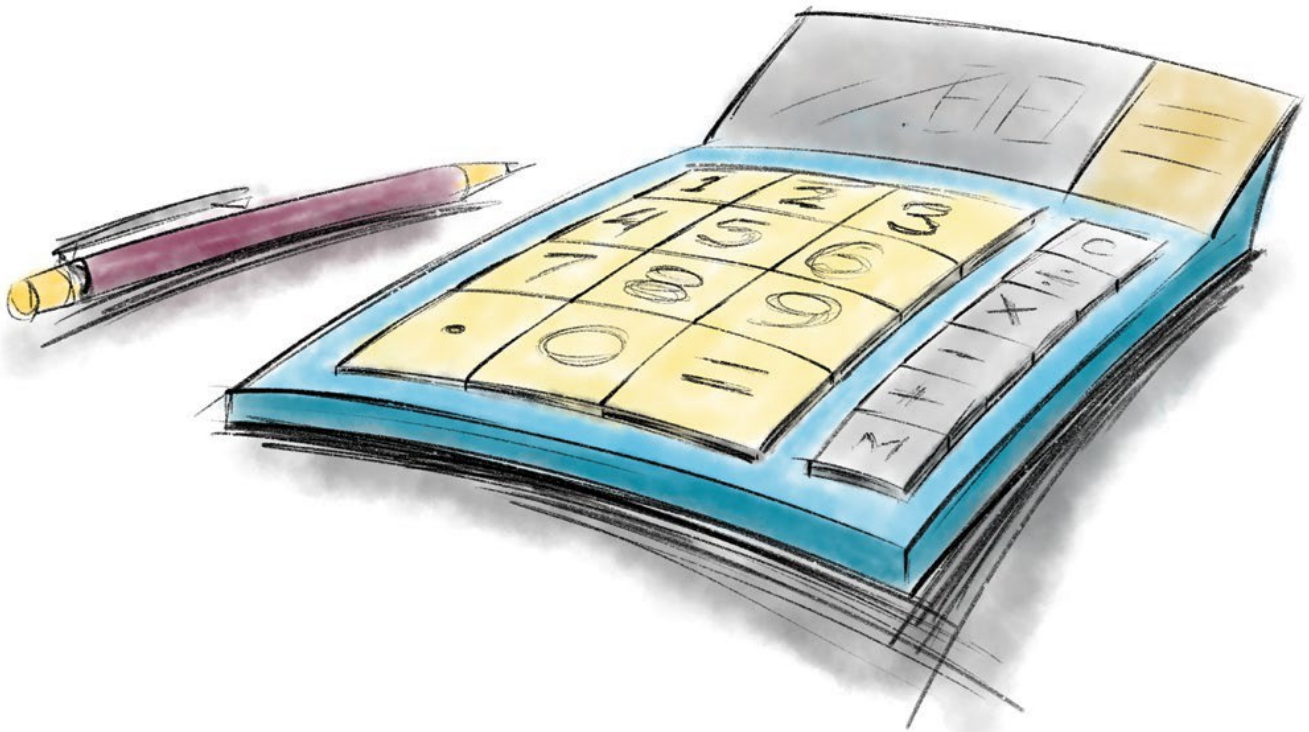
If you participate in the Adventist Retirement Plan and die before retiring, your surviving spouse may request distribution or rollover of your retirement savings account balance. Contact Empower Retirement or Adventist Retirement for more information. If you participated in the Defined Benefit Plan and are married, your spouse may receive survivor benefits under certain criteria. If unmarried, there are no pension benefits upon your death.

## WHAT POST-RETIREMENT BENEFITS ARE AVAILABLE?

### Retirement Allowance

**The retirement allowance is a one-time benefit made to employees working half-time or more who go directly from employment to retirement (minimum age 59 ½). It comes in two portions, one based on post-1999 service (Defined Contribution Plan), and one based on pre-2000 service (Defined Benefit Plan). The pre-2000 retirement allowance is paid by the plan. There are limited exceptions that are not outlined here.**

The retirement allowance for an employee with post-1999 service is paid by the employer to the employee. In most cases,



this portion of the retirement allowance is required to be sent directly to the Adventist Retirement Plan account (check with your employer).

In another example, Ellen retires with 20 pre-2000 years of qualified service credit. Her monthly pay is \$4,500, including the area cost of living allowance, but not including benefits or reimbursement such as auto insurance, area travel allowance or tuition assistance. The calculation is shown to the below.

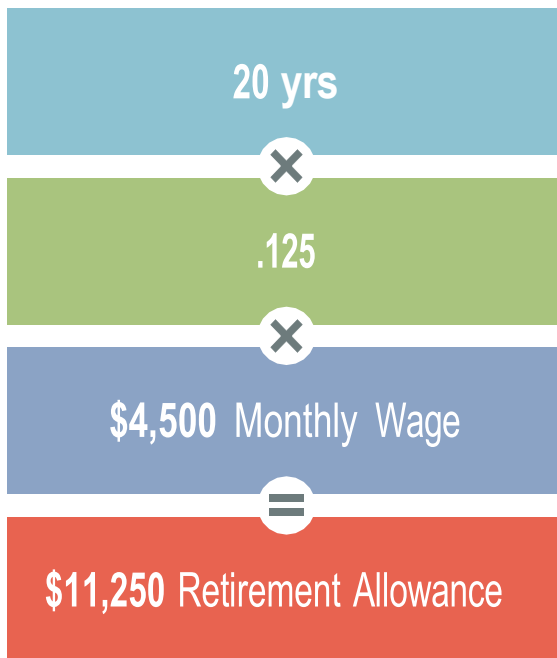
Employees with both pre-2000 and post-1999 qualified service credit, at retirement, will file for retirement benefits through their employer's human resources office using standard retirement application forms.

## POST-RETIREMENT DENOMINATIONAL EMPLOYMENT

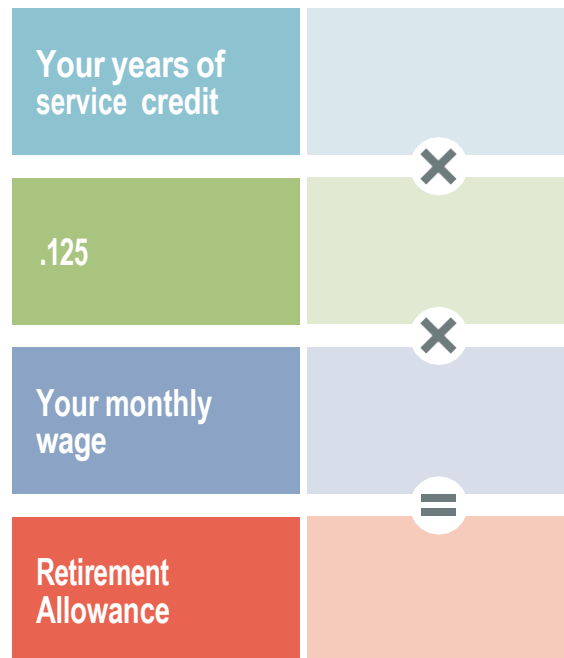
If you are receiving installment payments from the DC Plan, you may elect to suspend such payments if re-employed by a participating employer. When you again retire or separate from service, you may choose to receive a distribution of the entire account balance, including any contributions made during re-employment, or may resume installment payments.

If you retire and return to denominational employment as workers often do, be aware that there are restrictions on how much you can work and still receive DB retirement benefits. See plan documents or ask your employer for more details.

### ELLEN'S EXAMPLE



### DO YOUR OWN CALCULATIONS USING THE WORKSHEET BELOW.



# FINAL Thoughts

Successful retirement planning consists of evaluating two goals: What are you going to do in retirement and how are you going to pay for it? For many, a major retirement stressor is financial insecurity. At Adventist Retirement, our aim is to reduce that stress by providing you with information, tools and resources to enable you to put a plan in place that will provide for a secure retirement.

Visit Adventist Retirement's website for information and forms. Use tabs for employee or retiree to access relevant information: [adventistretirement.org](http://adventistretirement.org)

Empower Retirement's website (for participants of the Defined Contribution Plan) offers access to account balance, projected retirement income, and investment options: [empowermyarp.com](http://empowermyarp.com)

We hope this booklet and the resources provided are helpful to you as you make plans for your future. You may still have questions. We are eager to help! Your current or most recent employer is the best place to start since they have your service record. Please reach out to your employer or to us with your questions. If you are already retired, here are some other useful contacts.

## Main Contact

Adventist Retirement  
North American Division  
9705 Patuxent Woods Drive  
Columbia, MD 21046

### General Information:

1-443-391-7300 | 9-5M-Th

**Email:** [NADRetirement@nadadventist.org](mailto:NADRetirement@nadadventist.org)

**Fax:** 1-443-259-4880

**Website:** [adventistretirement.org](http://adventistretirement.org)

## Empower Contact

**Website:** [empowermyarp.com](http://empowermyarp.com)

**Phone:** 1-866-467-7756

## Healthcare Contact

**SHARP Line:** 1-443-391-7338

**e-mail:** [SHARP@nadadventist.org](mailto:SHARP@nadadventist.org)

When you retire you will receive by email the monthly newsletter, *Reflections*. This publication provides pertinent information regarding benefits, taxes, healthcare, and other specific information. *Reflections* issues are archived online at [AdventistRetirement.org](http://AdventistRetirement.org).

## CHECKLIST OF ITEMS YOU WILL NEED ON HAND TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION FOR RETIREMENT

- Social Security cards—self and spouse and any dependent children who will be on SHARP (Supplemental Healthcare Adventist Retirement Plan)
- Medicare cards—if eligible for SHARP
- Voided check for direct deposit
- Completed and signed Authorization Agreement for Recurring Direct Payments (ACH Debit)—this is for direct deposit of benefits into your account.
- Divorce documents—if applicable
- Statements regarding spouse's employer-funded retirement benefits, if eligible for spouse allowance
- Military induction/discharge papers, if requesting credit for military service
- Transcript from institution regarding study time, if requesting credit for graduate study
- Personal email address—NOT the work email address you currently use

Everything else needed for the retirement application should be in your employer's file.

***Note: It's a good idea to plan ahead. Once your signed and notarized Retirement Application is received by North American Division Adventist Retirement, it takes approximately 6 months for your application to be processed. Your benefits begin after your application has been processed by Adventist Retirement personnel.***



**Adventist**Retirement

[AdventistRetirement.org](http://AdventistRetirement.org)

