

Retirement toolkit



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A useful retirement toolkit is available online in PDF format at the following address: dol.gov/ebsa/pdf/retirementtoolkit.pdf.

This toolkit was jointly developed by the Department of Labor, the Social Security Administration, and the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services. It contains general advice applicable to all retiring workers, rather than specific to retiring federal workers. Much of the information in this column has been adapted from that toolkit.

Many significant retirement-related decisions are triggered by an individual reaching a certain age.

If you are still working at the Postal Service, you can make one age-based in-service withdrawal of at least \$1,000 up to the full amount of the account. (Withdrawals will be taxed as regular income, but no 10 percent early withdrawal penalty will be levied.)

Age 60—You are eligible to retire if you have 20 years or more of service, under CSRS or FERS. Note that accumulated sick leave does *not* count toward the 20 years needed for eligibility to retire. Instead, accumulated sick leave counts only toward years of service used in computing the dollar amount of your retirement annuity.

Age 62—You are eligible to retire if you have five years or more of service, under CSRS or FERS. Note that accumulated sick leave does *not* count toward the five years needed for eligibility to retire. Instead, accumulated sick leave counts only toward years of service used in computing the dollar amount of your retirement annuity.

Under FERS, annuity calculation is increased to 1.1 percent per year of creditable service if you are separated at age 62 or older with 20 years or more of service.

This is the earliest age to begin collecting early Social Security retirement benefits. Early Social Security benefits are subject to earnings offsets, up until your full Social Security Retirement age, if you have wage or self-employment earnings that exceed an annual amount set by Social Security. In 2013, the amount is \$15,120. For every \$2 earned over that amount, your Social Security benefit is reduced \$1. The offset no longer applies after you reach full Social Security retirement age.

Age 65—You are eligible for Medicare. Sign up for Medicare beginning three months prior to your 65th birthday.

Agers 65-67—You are eligible for full Social Security, depending on year of birth. (See below.) Full Social Security Retirement Age is also called “full retirement age” or “normal retirement age.”

Age 70.5—Begin taking required withdrawals from your Thrift Savings Plan account, or be subject to penalties.

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Age 50—Begin making catch-up contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). The IRS sets the annual contribution limits, which can change. In 2013, the catch-up contribution limit, available to TSP participants age 50-plus, is \$5,500.

Check your Social Security statement each year for accuracy and to track your estimated Social Security benefit and, if applicable, estimate your FERS annuity supplement.

Age 55—Under CSRS, you are eligible to retire if you have 30 years or more of service. Note that accumulated sick leave does *not* count toward the 30 years needed for *eligibility* to retire. Instead, accumulated sick leave counts only toward years of service used in computing the dollar amount of your retirement annuity.

Age 55-57 (MRA)—Under FERS, you are eligible to retire if you have 30 years or more of service. MRA is Minimum Retirement Age, and it depends on your year of birth. (See chart below.) Note that accumulated sick leave does *not* count toward the 30 years needed for *eligibility* to retire. Instead, accumulated sick leave counts only toward years of service used in computing the dollar amount of your retirement annuity.

You are eligible for a special annuity supplement if you retire at MRA or older with 30 years or more of creditable service. The special annuity supplement is subject to earnings offsets if you have wage or self-employment earnings that exceed an annual amount set by Social Security. In 2013, the amount is \$15,120. For every \$2 earned over that amount, the special annuity supplement is reduced by \$1 the following year. The supplement ends when you reach age 62.

Age 59.5—At this age, there are no more tax penalties for early withdrawals from the TSP.

Minimum Retirement Age Chart		Full Social Security Retirement Age	
If you were born	Your MRA is	Year of Birth	Full Retirement Age
Before 1948	55	1937 or earlier	65
In 1948	55 and 2 months	1938	65 and 2 months
In 1949	55 and 4 months	1939	65 and 4 months
In 1950	55 and 6 months	1940	65 and 6 months
In 1951	55 and 8 months	1941	65 and 8 months
In 1952	55 and 10 months	1942	65 and 10 months
In 1953-1964	56	1943-1954	66
In 1965	56 and 2 months	1955	66 and 2 months
In 1966	56 and 4 months	1956	66 and 4 months
In 1967	56 and 6 months	1957	66 and 6 months
In 1968	56 and 8 months	1958	66 and 8 months
In 1969	56 and 10 months	1959	66 and 10 months
In 1970 and after	57	1960 and later	67