

Reinforce your Wallet and Your Well-Being



by Understanding Your Federal Benefits



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As a federal employee, you have access to a wide range of benefits. These benefits are essential assets for your financial future, and capitalizing on them requires understanding your options and making informed decisions. Here are some key strategies:

1. Understand the Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Program

- **Evaluate plans annually:** During Open Season, review your health plan options and make changes if necessary. Consider cost, coverage, and network providers.
- **Use flexible spending accounts (FSA):** FSAs allow you to set aside pre-tax money for eligible medical expenses, which can save you on taxes.

2. Maximize Your Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)

- **Contribute enough for matching:** If you're under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), contribute at least 5% to get the full agency or service match.
- **Diversify investments:** Review your TSP allocations and consider a mix of funds to match your retirement goals and risk tolerance. Go to [TSP.gov](https://www.tsp.gov) to set up and manage your account.
- **Consider a Roth TSP:** Weigh the benefits of pre-tax (traditional) vs. post-tax (Roth) contributions based on your current and expected future tax situation.

3. Leverage Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FGLI)

- **Assess your coverage needs:** Review your life insurance needs periodically — especially after life events like marriage or the birth of a child — and adjust your coverage as needed.
- **Consider optional insurance:** FGLI offers additional options beyond basic coverage, which may be beneficial depending on your circumstances.

4. Plan for Retirement

- **Understand your pension:** Know how your annuity is calculated and how factors like length of service and age affect it.
- **Know your retirement age:** Be aware of the different retirement options (e.g., immediate, early, deferred) and how eligibility is determined and plan accordingly.
- **Use retirement planning tools:** Tools like the [Federal Ballpark E\\$timate®](#) and [Social Security benefits calculator](#) can help you estimate your income and plan for a comfortable retirement.

5. Take Advantage of Paid Leave Benefits

- **Maximize sick and annual leave:** Accumulate sick leave for future use and use annual leave wisely to avoid losing any hours over your maximum carryover limit at the end of the year. Upon retirement, you can get credit toward your retirement annuity for unused sick leave, and you will be paid for any unused annual leave.

6. Review and Update Beneficiary Information

- **Keep beneficiary forms updated:** Regularly assess and adjust your beneficiary designations for life insurance, TSP, and other benefits to ensure they align with your current wishes.

7. Stay Informed

- **Attend workshops and seminars and use available resources:** Many agencies offer workshops on retirement and benefits planning. Consult your agency's Human Resources office to see what's available and visit the [Office of Personnel Management's website](#) to stay updated on benefit changes.

Federal employee benefits are complex, and many people often have questions about how to make the most of them. Free financial services are available through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Call us any time, day or night, to request additional resources and schedule an appointment with a financial expert.

24 HOURS A DAY

(800) 222-0364

foh4you.com

The EAP is a voluntary and confidential employee benefit available to eligible federal employees at no cost.