

Firefighters Family Financial Checklist



Sequoia Financial Group
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Purpose: This checklist is designed to assist firefighter families in establishing and reviewing their annual financial picture. Some items may not apply, however, the basic concepts are toward building a solid financial future.

Date of this review: _____ / _____ / _____

Retirement Information

Pension:

1. Have an estimate of the pension? Amount? \$_____.
2. Pension subject to annuity withdrawal?
 - a. Pre-tax?
 - b. Any after-tax?
 - c. Value of account? \$_____.
3. Pension have DROP option?
 - a. Value of account? \$_____.
4. Pension have different payout options?
 - a. Single life? Amount? _____.
 - b. Joint and 50% Survivor? Amount? _____. Amount to spouse? _____.
 - c. Joint and 75% Survivor? Amount? _____. Amount to spouse? _____.
 - d. Joint and 100% Survivor? Amount? _____. Amount to spouse? _____.
5. Health care in retirement?
6. Health care to spouse in retirement?

Deferred Comp (§457(b) plan):

7. Contributing to deferred comp? % of pay _____ or \$ per pay _____.
8. Room for additional contributions (Max \$19,000 under age 50/\$25,000 over age 50 for 2019)?
9. Using over age 50 catch-up (\$6,000 for 2019)?
10. Using special deferred comp (§457) catch-up (3 years/ \$38,000 for 2019)?
11. Researched investment options?
12. Other investment company options?
13. Balance in deferred comp (§457): \$_____.

Defined Contribution (§401(a) plan that employer usually contributes to):

- 14. Employer contributing to defined contribution plan? % of pay _____.
- 15. Employee contributing to defined contribution plan? % of pay _____.
- 16. Researched investment options?
- 17. Other investment company options?
- 18. Balance in defined contribution: \$_____.

Social Security:

- 19. In an exempt system?
 - a. Estimated windfall elimination?
 - b. Government pension offset?
- 20. Estimated retirement benefit?
 - a. Early retirement (age ____) _____ per month.
 - b. Full retirement age (age ____) _____ per month.
 - c. Late retirement age (age 70) _____ per month.
- 21. Considered restricted?
- 22. Considered earnings limits?
- 23. Considered taxation of benefits?

IRAs:

- 24. Have regular IRA contributions?
 - a. Roth?
 - b. Traditional?
 - c. Nondeductible?
- 25. Annual contribution(s): \$_____.
- 26. Balances in IRAs:
 - a. Roth: \$_____.
 - b. Traditional: \$_____.
 - c. Nondeductible: \$_____.
- 27. Reviewed investments?

General Retirement Questions:

- 28. Planned retirement age? _____ Date: _____
- 29. Any buyouts on retirement?
 - a. Sick pay?
 - b. Unused vacation?
 - c. Shift differentials?
- 30. Any opportunity to buy service?

Risk Management and Insurance

Life Insurance:

31. Have life insurance?
- a. How much? _____ On whom? _____
 - b. What kind?
 - i. Term?
 - 1. Term of years?
 - 2. How long? _____ Termination date? _____
 - ii. Variable Universal?
 - iii. Universal life?
 - iv. Whole life?
32. What's the premium? \$ _____ .
33. Who's the beneficiary? _____ .
34. Shopped the policy?

Health Insurance:

35. Have health insurance? When? _____
36. Who's covered? _____
37. Any co-pays? Amount: \$ _____ .
38. Continue in retirement?
39. Long Term Care Insurance?

Auto and Homeowners:

40. Checked coverage?
41. Shopped policy? When? _____
42. Checked for discounts?
- a. Non-smoker?
 - b. Safe driver?
 - c. Association discounts?
 - d. Alarm systems?
43. Checked policy change by raising deductibles?
44. Considered umbrella coverage?

General Risk Management:

45. Have list of valuable papers?
- a. Birth Certificate
 - b. Social Security Card
 - c. Insurance Policies
 - d. Will, Trust, POA

- 46. Valuable papers in a safe place?
- 47. Someone know where the safe place is?
- 48. Have tax returns in safe place?
- 49. Have list of pin numbers and in safe place?
- 50. Have copy of contents of wallet in safe place?
- 51. Have family emergency plan?

Kids

- 52. Have savings program for kids/grandkids?
 - a. §529 plan?
 - b. UGMA/UTMA account?
 - c. Coverdell account?
- 53. Where? _____
- 54. How much are you contributing? \$_____.
- 55. What's the balance? \$_____.
- 56. When do you need the money? _____
- 57. Do you have a POA for your children over 18 years old?
- 58. Considered IRA for kids/grandkids (if kids have earned income)?
 - a. Roth?
 - b. Traditional?
- 59. Shopped financial aid?
- 60. Parents filed FAFSA early?
- 61. Considered all scholarships?

Investments

- 62. Made periodic review of investments?
- 63. Checked:
 - a. Relative performance?
 - b. Fees and expenses?
 - c. Manager changes?
 - d. Ratings?
- 64. Reviewed asset allocation?
- 65. Checked:
 - a. Fixed income allocation?
 - b. Equity allocation?
 - c. Other asset allocation?
- 66. All investment accounts titled correctly?
- 67. Any orphan accounts or IRAs?
- 68. Accounts invested consistently?

Cash Flow

- 69. Have a budget or spending plan?
- 70. Using auto-bill pay?
- 71. Have funds going to small side account?
- 72. Building up cash reserve (in bank) of 3-6 months?
- 73. Spending policy for larger expenses?

Debt

- 74. Have elimination plan on expensive debts?
- 75. Pay extra on mortgage?
- 76. Know rate, balance and payment on all debts?
- 77. Any 'orphan' credit cards that can be paid off?

Taxes

- 78. Have a tax plan?
- 79. Know you tax bracket? What is it? _____
- 80. How much room in that bracket? _____
- 81. Taking advantage of 457/401(k)?
- 82. Consider Roth conversion?
- 83. Maximizing charitable contributions?
 - a. Considered appreciated property?
 - b. Thought about Qualified Charitable Contributions? (over 70 ½)?
 - c. Considered Donor Advised Fund in high income years?

Estate Planning

- 84. Reviewed every asset for titling and beneficiary designation?
- 85. Have correct primary and secondary beneficiaries:
 - a. Life insurance?
 - b. §457/401(k)?
 - c. IRAs?
 - d. 401(a)?
- 86. Using beneficiary designations on investment and bank accounts? (POD or TOD?)
- 87. Have updated Will?
- 88. Have updated Financial Power of Attorney?
- 89. Have updated Health Care Power of Attorney?
- 90. Have updated Trust?
- 91. Asset titled to Trust?
- 92. Any new assets since last review?
- 93. Using deeds to transfer real property effectively?

- 94. Any new or prospective inheritances?
- 95. Guardians named in Will for minor kids?
- 96. Aware of parent's estate plan?
- 97. Have you done a testamentary letter?

The Big Picture

- 98. Have a handle on the overall plan?
- 99. Does everyone know their relative roles and duties?
- 100. Have an opportunity for a small monthly review?
- 101. Set the date of the next comprehensive review?

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