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RESOURCE

RETIREMENT CONSIDERATIONS

HOW ARE YOU PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT?

Whether you have your retirement date circled on the calendar this year or coming up in the next few years, start now to get your financial ducks in a row and make sure you're checking the right boxes before the big change. This resource will help you identify your specific retirement goals and cover information on planning and strategies that can help you achieve them.

Simple Tips for Ramping Up Your Retirement Savings

No matter where you are in your life, saving for retirement is likely one of your most important financial goals. But, even if you have professional guidance and a clear strategy for your desired future, you could still be missing some straightforward ways to maximize your savings.

The reality is: Most people do not save enough money for retirement. In fact, the National Institute on Retirement Security estimates that Americans have at least a $6.8 trillion gap between the amount they have saved and the amount they need. Alarmingly, they found the gap could be as high as $14 trillion.

We are always here to help you address major life events and financial changes, but we also want to share some simple ways to increase your savings now.

How prepared are you?

Have you already started saving for retirement?

Are you contributing to a workplace 401(k) plan?

Do you have a plan to manage existing debt?

Does your household operate from a spending plan that aligns with your values?

Evaluating Budget Items & Spending Values

Changing major aspects of your budget — such as your housing or healthcare costs — can significantly impact your savings potential, but may also take time to implement. To start saving more today, look at the little places where you spend money and determine if those purchases reflect your values. For example, do you eat lunch out every day? If you do, but you're meeting new contacts or it brings you time for a mental break, those might be important choices. Do you have entertainment packages you aren't really using, such as cable TV or online memberships? Saving a few dollars each day can add up to thousands of dollars over a year, which is money you can put toward your retirement.

Remember to Imagine the Retirement You Desire

Effective retirement strategies often focus on building a clear vision of how you would like to spend life after your career. As you go about your daily life and make financial decisions, how often do you reflect on this vision?

Rather than only thinking about your retirement goals during financial reviews or major choices, start incorporating this picture into your regular decision-making process. For example, each time you make a purchase, ask yourself if you'd rather have this item or put the money toward the retirement you desire. You may discover that by grounding each purchase in this way, you spend less on items you don't really care about — and have more money to put toward the retirement you've dreamed about.

Capture Your Employer's Full 401(k) Match

U.S. employees lose around $24 billion a year by not saving enough in their 401(k) to claim their company's full matching contribution. Many companies require a minimum contribution from the employee in order to earn the full employer match. If your employer matches a portion of your retirement contributions, make sure you contribute at least enough to claim what is essentially free money. And if you are age 50 or older, remember that you can contribute extra "catch-up contributions" each year to your 401(k) on top of the regular annual limit. The amount you can contribute varies each year, so look into the most recent limit updates.

Another way to help save more in your 401(k) is to increase your savings amount by at least 1-2% every time you get an increase in compensation. This could be during your annual review, promotion, or any other time you see an increase in your income. By making the savings increase at the same time, you are less likely to "feel" it because you don't become accustomed to living on a larger paycheck before making a change.

Saving for retirement is a big responsibility, but it does not have to be a burden. With these simple changes — and support from professionals who care about your future — you can focus on creating a lifestyle that matches your dreams. We are here to help you at each step, so please let us know if you have any questions about these tips or the bigger strategies guiding your retirement.

Retirement Checklists

The following checklists are designed to help you consider your goals and needs as you work toward retirement. If any questions arise that you would like to speak with us about, let us know.

If any checklist refers you to another checklist you need to review, email your request with the name of the checklist to support@searcyfinancial.com.

Master List of Goals

Goal setting is fundamental to sound financial planning. It is essential to identify and prioritize objectives. Sometimes, you may have difficulty expressing and assigning precedence to your goals. Or, you may simply overlook a need or objective.

In response to this challenge, we're offering a Master List of Goals checklist. This resource is inspired by the work of Ray Sin, Ph.D.; Ryan O. Murphy, Ph.D.; and Samantha Lamas, who authored "Goals-Based Financial Planning: How Simple Lists Can Overcome Cognitive Blind Spots" in the Journal of Financial Planning.

Goals can change. Even changes that seem modest can affect your financial plan.

Sometimes it can be helpful to work with a tool that allows you to frame your priorities as they relate to:

- Retirement and lifestyle goals
- Tax planning & healthcare goals
- Self-development and professional goals
- Estate planning and wealth transfer goals

Take a moment and consider the questions included in "Master List of Goals." Whether you answer "YES" to one question or several questions, let's talk.

We would be happy to help guide you from goal planning to developing a plan for financial freedom.

2026 · MASTER LIST OF GOALS

RETIREMENT GOALS	YES	NO
Do you need help deciding when you want to retire?	☐	☐
Do you want to retire early?	☐	☐
Do you want to slow down and work part time (semi-retire)?	☐	☐
Do you want to take sabbaticals during your career?	☐	☐
Do you want to feel confident about your plans for retirement?	☐	☐
Do you want to feel confident about your retirement income sources (e.g., investment accounts, retirement plans, pension plans, Social Security)?	☐	☐
Do you want to feel confident about your current (and future) financial situation?	☐	☐
Do you plan to change your residency in retirement?	☐	☐

FAMILY GOALS	YES	NO
Do you want to have or adopt a child?	☐	☐
Do you want to save for a child or relative's education?	☐	☐
Do you want to save for any family milestones (e.g., bar/bat mitzvahs, graduations, weddings)?	☐	☐
Do you want to support family members who may require special needs planning?	☐	☐
Do you have any parents or other family members you want to care for?	☐	☐
Do you have plans to change your marital status?	☐	☐

SELF-DEVELOPMENT & PROFESSIONAL GOALS	YES	NO
Do you want to achieve financial independence or improve your overall financial health?	☐	☐
Do you want to pursue more education or certifications for personal or professional reasons?	☐	☐
Are you looking for professional advancement (new job, career, promotion)?	☐	☐
Do you want to optimize your employee benefits and compensation package?	☐	☐
Do you want to start your own business?	☐	☐

ASSET & DEBT GOALS	YES	NO
Do you want to reduce the risk of market volatility on your investments?	☐	☐
Do you want to increase the rate of return on your investments?	☐	☐
Do you want to improve your cash flow (increase income or reduce expenses)?	☐	☐
Do you want to increase the amount you keep in your emergency fund?	☐	☐
Do you want to save more for future goals?	☐	☐
Do you want to protect your real and personal property from risk?	☐	☐
Do you want to refinance or pay off any loans (such as mortgages or student loans)?	☐	☐
Do you want to refinance, consolidate, or pay off any debts (such as high-interest credit cards)?	☐	☐
Do you have plans for a second home or vacation/investment/ rental property?	☐	☐

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2026 · MASTER LIST OF GOALS

LIFESTYLE GOALS	YES	NO
Are you planning to move (such as changing your residence) now or in the future?	☐	☐
Are you planning to purchase or sell a home?	☐	☐
Are you planning to purchase or sell a second home?	☐	☐
Do you want to make a significant home improvement or major purchase?	☐	☐
Do you want to buy or lease a vehicle?	☐	☐
Do you want to plan a large vacation now or in the future?	☐	☐

TAX PLANNING GOALS	YES	NO
Do you want to reduce your tax liability now?	☐	☐
Do you want to reduce your tax liability in the future?	☐	☐
Do you want to support a charity?	☐	☐
Are you planning to sell a business, real estate, or another major asset?	☐	☐

HEALTH CARE GOALS	YES	NO
Do you need to plan for a disability?	☐	☐
Do you want to plan for long-term care expenses?	☐	☐
Do you want to plan for future medical expenses?	☐	☐
Do you need to make changes to your health insurance coverage?	☐	☐
Do you want to age in your home and avoid a nursing home?	☐	☐
Do you need to prepare for a possible illness (for either you or your spouse)?	☐	☐

ESTATE PLANNING & WEALTH TRANSFER GOALS	YES	NO
Do you want to provide gifts to your children and loved ones during your lifetime?	☐	☐
Do you want to protect your assets from creditors, bankruptcy, or divorce?	☐	☐
Do you want to feel secure that your appointed fiduciaries will carry out your wishes in the event of your incapacity and/or d eath?	☐	☐
Do you want to ensure that your spouse or other family members are cared for in the event of your death?	☐	☐
Are there charitable organizations that you want to support?	☐	☐
Do you want to ensure your assets pass to your heirs easily?	☐	☐
Do you want to place some restrictions on the assets your heirs will inherit?	☐	☐

MISCELLANEOUS GOALS	YES	NO
Are there any other goals you want to consider that are not addressed above?	☐	☐

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What Issues Should I Consider Before I Retire?

This checklist covers 32 of the most important planning issues to identify and consider for someone who is about to retire. It's structured as follows:

- Cash Flow Issues
- Health Insurance Issues
- Asset & Debt Issues
- Tax Planning Issues
- Long-Term Planning Issues
- Other Issues

2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER BEFORE I RETIRE?

CASH FLOW ISSUES	YES	NO
Will your cash flow needs change? If so, consider developing a new income and expense plan.	☐	☐
Will you receive a pension? If so, consider the following: ■ There may be multiple payout options (single, joint, lump sum). ■ Coordination strategies may exist among your pension, Social Security, and/or life insurance.	☐	☐
Could there be pensions and/or retirement benefits from a previous employer that you may be forgetting?	☐	☐
Are you retiring early? If so, consider the following: ■ Social Security benefits may be reduced if you earn more than $24,480 and are collecting benefits prior to your full retirement age (FRA) or if you earn more than $65,160 in the year you reach FRA. ■ Social Security benefits will be reduced if you collect prior to your FRA. ■ You can access your 401(k) penalty-free if you leave your employer after turning 55.	☐	☐
Are you currently married? If so, consider additional Social Security claiming strategies.	☐	☐
Were you married previously and are you currently unmarried? If so, consider the following: ■ If the marriage lasted 10 years and ended in divorce, you may be eligible for benefits under your ex-spouse's record. See "Am I Eligible For Social Security Benefits If I Have Been Divorced?" flowchart. ■ If the marriage lasted more than nine months and ended due to your spouse passing away, you may be eligible for benefits under your deceased spouse's record. See "Am I Eligible For Social Security Benefits As A Surviving Spouse?" flowchart.	☐	☐

HEALTHCARE AND INSURANCE ISSUES	YES	NO
Will you be retiring before age 65 and need health insurance? If so, consider the following: ■ You are not eligible for Medicare until age 65 (unless you qualify for an exception). ■ If you are a Health Insurance Marketplace enrollee, you may be eligible for the Premium Tax Credit. This may help reduce the amount you spend on health insurance premiums, but be mindful of the sensitive MAGI threshold cliff at 400% of the FPL.	☐	☐
Will you have to change your employer-sponsored health insurance upon turning 65 or upon retiring from your employer? If so, and you are under age 65, you may need to look to COBRA or the Health Insurance Marketplace. If you are age 65 or over, you may need to sign up for Medicare.	☐	☐
Will you need additional insurance such as vision or dental coverage?	☐	☐
Are you contributing to an HSA? If so, consider HSA and Medicare coordination issues. See "Can I Make A Deductible Contribution To My HSA?" flowchart.	☐	☐
Will your MAGI exceed $109,000 (single) or $218,000 (MFJ)? If so, you may be subject to Medicare IRMAA Surcharges. Reference "Will I Avoid IRMAA Surcharges on Medicare Part B & Part D?" flowchart.	☐	☐
Are you disabled? If so, you may be eligible for certain benefits or have the ability to access benefits early.	☐	☐
Have your needs for life insurance changed?	☐	☐
Are you concerned about funding long-term care? If so, consider LTC insurance, self-insurance strategies, and assisted living communities. See the "What Issues Should I Consider When Purchasing Long-Term Care Insurance?" checklist.	☐	☐
If you have LTC insurance, does it need to be reviewed to ensure that it meets your needs?	☐	☐

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2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER BEFORE I RETIRE?

ASSET & DEBT ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you have stock options, grants, or restricted stock units? If so, consider how your retirement affects your rights, and the impact upon your tax liability and your cash flow planning.	☐	☐
Will your investment objectives or risk tolerance change?	☐	☐
If you are a business owner, do you need an exit strategy or a succession plan?	☐	☐
If you have annuities or illiquid assets, do they need to be reviewed to understand options?	☐	☐
Do you have a loan on any employer retirement plans? If so, you may need to plan for how to pay it back and be mindful before rolling the balance to another plan.	☐	☐
Do you have a deferred compensation plan? If so, coordination strategies may exist among other sources of retirement income, to optimize cash flow and manage income taxation.	☐	☐
Do you have multiple accounts with similar tax treatment (e.g., multiple 401(k)s or IRAs)? If so, consider consolidating accounts to reduce complications.	☐	☐
Will you change your residence? If so, this may impact tax liability, cash flow planning, and your Medicare Advantage plan if you move out of the network.	☐	☐

TAX PLANNING ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you expect to have large Required Minimum Distributions? If so, consider strategies to reduce the RMD such as Roth conversions.	☐	☐
Upon retirement, do you expect your income to be lower? If so, consider deferring any Roth conversions until you are in a lower tax bracket. Reference "Should I Consider Doing A Roth Conversion?" flowchart. (continue on next column)	☐	☐

TAX PLANNING ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
Are you or your spouse aged 65 or older? If so, consider whether the new senior deduction ($6,000 per eligible person) could free up additional bandwidth for other tax planning strategies (e.g., Roth conversions, capital gain harvesting, etc.), but be mindful of the MAGI phaseout thresholds.	☐	☐

LONG-TERM PLANNING ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you expect your estate will exceed your unused federal estate and gift tax exclusion amount (maximum $15 million, or $30 million if you are married)? If so, consider strategies to plan for a possible federal estate tax liability.	☐	☐
Are you charitably inclined? If so, consider charitable giving strategies to reduce your tax burden. See the "What Issues Should I Consider When Establishing My Charitable Giving Strategy?" checklist.	☐	☐
Is your estate plan old or possibly outdated? If so, consider the following: ■ Double-check that your listed beneficiaries and estate plan personnel (e.g., trustee, power of attorney, etc.) are still up-to-date, especially in light of any recent changes to your family structure (e.g., marriage, divorce, children, etc.). ■ Consider whether the increase and permanence of the estate and gift lifetime exemption might prompt changes to your estate plan.	☐	☐
Do the account beneficiaries need to be reviewed and possibly updated? This includes retirement plans, life insurance, and TOD accounts.	☐	☐

OTHER ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you have any unused vacation days? If so, you may be eligible to use them prior to retiring or you may receive compensation.	☐	☐
Are there any state-specific issues that should be considered (such as unique taxation rules)?	☐	☐

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What Issues Should I Consider With My Social Security Retirement Benefits?

Social Security retirement benefits can be particularly complex, and many people really struggle with the decision on how to file.

With this guide, you may be better able to determine how to best approach Social Security retirement benefits, and whether your benefits may tie in with other financial planning goals.

This checklist covers the key issues to consider when you must make a decision surrounding Social Security retirement benefits, such as:

- Determining whether to file early or delay benefits.
- Understanding the claiming options you have at your disposal.
- Coordinating benefits with a spouse or ex-spouse.
- Understanding how benefits may impact other tax-planning goals.

2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER WITH MY SOCIAL SECURITY RETIREMENT BENEFITS?

GENERAL ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you need to check that your income has been accurately reflected in your Social Security benefits estimates? If so, consider reviewing your most up-to-date Social Security benefits statement. Check the accuracy for all years of reported income, and be sure to report any discrepancies to the Social Security Administration (SSA). Be mindful that your Primary Insurance Amount (PIA) assumes you keep working until you file, and does not reflect adjustments for inflation.	☐	☐
Are you concerned about when you will receive your first check after filing for your Social Security retirement benefits? If so, consider keeping enough money available for short-term needs, as it may take up to 3 months before receiving your first check after filing.	☐	☐
Are you currently below the required 40 Social Security credits for receiving a Social Security retirement benefit? If so, consider whether it makes sense to continue working in order to meet the minimum eligibility requirements. Be aware that 1 Social Security credit is earned for every $1,890 in earnings (for 2026), with a maximum of 4 credits allowed per year.	☐	☐
Do you need to review the options you may have if you change your mind about when to file? If so, consider the following: ■ If you have claimed your benefits less than 12 months ago, you may be able to do a "withdrawal of application" (i.e., pay back benefits received and continue to delay) to allow your benefits to continue growing. ■ If you have already reached your full retirement age (FRA), you may be able to suspend your benefits for continued growth (up until age 70) or submit a retroactive filing (i.e., file as if you had claimed earlier).	☐	☐

CLAIMING ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you need to review whether it makes sense to claim your Social Security retirement benefits early? If so, consider whether certain factors (e.g., poor health/longevity, single, no dependents, lack of savings, etc.) may lend themselves to filing early. (continue on next column)	☐	☐

CLAIMING ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
Do you need to review whether it makes sense to delay claiming Social Security retirement benefits? If so, consider whether certain factors (e.g., good health/longevity, married, dependents, ample savings, etc.) may lend themselves to delaying filing. Furthermore, consider whether the unique advantages of Social Security retirement benefits (e.g., COLA-based income, attractive risk-adjusted growth from Delayed Retirement Credits, inflation hedge, etc.) may complement certain investment objectives that traditional investment portfolios may struggle to satisfy.	☐	☐
Are you planning to continue working after claiming your Social Security retirement benefits? If so, consider the following: ■ Benefits claimed prior to the month of your full retirement age (FRA) will be subject to the earnings test (e.g., reduced by $1 for every $2 or $3 dollars earned, depending on your situation). If appropriate, consider staying under the 2026 annual earnings limit of $24,480 ($65,160 if you attain your FRA this year). ■ Be mindful that your Social Security benefits may continue to increase (if your income is high enough to replace lower income years in your 35 highest-earning years of work history on an inflation-adjusted basis) even after you've claimed your benefits.	☐	☐
Do you need to review spousal coordination strategies for maximizing your (and your spouse's) Social Security retirement benefits? If so, consider the following: ■ It may be worth delaying your own benefits until age 70 (even in poor health) to lock in a larger survivor benefit for your spouse (especially if they are younger). However, be mindful that spousal benefits (limited to 50% of your PIA) can't be claimed by your spouse until you claim your own. There is no benefit to delaying spousal benefits beyond one's FRA, and spousal benefits are still reduced if claiming before one's FRA. (continue on next page)	☐	☐

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2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER WITH MY SOCIAL SECURITY RETIREMENT BENEFITS?

CLAIMING ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
■ If your spouse is deceased, you may be eligible to claim a survivor benefit based on their own benefit (generally 100% of what they were taking, see the "Am I Eligible For Social Security Benefits As A Surviving Spouse?" flowchart). Remember to contact the SSA to claim your $255 death benefit.		
Have you ever been divorced (including deceased ex-spouses), and were you previously married for at least 10 years? If so, consider the following: ■ Determine whether it makes sense to file for spousal benefits on your ex-spouse (50% of their PIA) instead of taking your own benefits. Be mindful that re-marrying may forfeit your ability to claim spousal benefits on your ex-spouse. ■ If your ex-spouse is deceased, you may be eligible to claim survivor benefits based on their record. Additionally, remarrying after age 60 (or after age 50, if disabled) does not disqualify you from claiming survivor benefits on your deceased ex-spouse.	☐	☐

TAX ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you need to review how your Social Security retirement benefits can be coordinated/optimized with other tax planning goals? If so, consider the following: ■ Be aware of the provisional income calculation on your benefits, and understand the extent to which the taxable and non-taxable portion of your benefits may affect your AGI and/or MAGI. Be mindful of any sudden/unexpected increases in income (e.g., capital gains distributions, sale of assets, etc.) that may trigger additional taxation on your benefits. (continue on next column)	☐	☐

TAX ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
■ Certain income sources (e.g., Roth accounts, withdrawals of basis, reverse mortgage, life insurance policy loans, etc.) do not increase AGI/MAGI and may keep taxation of your benefits low. ■ If appropriate, consider strategies (e.g., accelerating IRA withdrawals, Roth conversions, harvesting capital gains, etc.) that may ultimately reduce taxation on your future benefits while in low income years (e.g., pre-TCJA sunset, retired but still delaying benefits, etc.).		
Do you need to review any state-specific tax rules that may pertain to your Social Security benefits? If so, consider factoring in whether your state taxes Social Security benefits when assessing your tax planning goals.	☐	☐

OTHER ISSUES	YES	NO
Are you a business owner, and do you operate your business as an S-Corporation? If so, consider whether it makes sense to "shift" more income toward wages in order to increase the amount you are paying into Social Security (maximum taxable earnings for 2026 is $184,500).	☐	☐
Are you a business owner, and do you have the option to hire your spouse (or do you already hire your spouse) as an employee? If so, consider whether it makes sense to "shift" more income toward your spouse's wages in order to increase the amount they are paying into Social Security. Be mindful of any spousal benefits your spouse may already be entitled to, and determine whether the additional FICA taxes (that you otherwise wouldn't be paying) are worth it for the potential increase in your spouse's own benefits.	☐	☐

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What Issues Should I Consider When Establishing My Charitable Giving Strategy?

Many individuals and families are charitably inclined but need help aligning resources, priorities, and philosophy. This guide will help as you determine what, when, and how to give to charitable organizations. By analyzing your unique situation, you can start to identify opportunities and model outcomes in order to optimize the impact of charitable gifts.

This checklist helps as you consider and implement a charitable giving strategy. It covers:

- Philanthropic motivations and goals
- Cash flow considerations
- Asset selection when funding gifts
- Charitable giving vehicles
- Tax planning and deductibility

2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN ESTABLISHING MY CHARITABLE GIVING STRATEGY?

FOUNDATIONAL ISSUES	YES	NO
Have you identified what motivates you to give?	☐	☐
Do you need to confirm that your giving is matched to your values?	☐	☐
Do you need to establish a giving plan? If so, consider creating a plan to help you decide rationally, make impactful gifts, and respond when solicited for support.	☐	☐
Do you need to conduct due diligence on a charity? If so, consider the following: Review the charity's mission, leadership, financial health, results, etc. Understand how your gift would be used (e.g., overhead, general fund, specific causes).	☐	☐

CASH FLOW ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you need to quantify how much you can afford to give?	☐	☐
Is your income fluctuating this year? If so, consider how this impacts your tax incentives and ability to make (or forego making) deductible charitable gifts.	☐	☐
Do you want to make a substantial gift to a charity during your lifetime, but also want an income stream for yourself or another noncharitable beneficiary? If so, consider the following: If the charity you wish to benefit offers a charitable gift annuity (CGA), you can give cash, securities, and possibly other assets in exchange for a fixed stream of income from the charity for your lifetime. (Note the gift tax consequences if the noncharitable annuitant is not yourself.) A charitable remainder annuity trust (CRAT) can make annual payments of a fixed amount of the trust's assets to you or a noncharitable beneficiary for a term of years (not to exceed 20) or lifetime(s), with the remainder passing to the charitable beneficiaries. (continue on next column)	☐	☐

CASH FLOW ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
A charitable remainder unitrust (CRUT) can make annual payments of a fixed percentage of the trust's assets, revalued each year, to you or a noncharitable beneficiary for a term of years (not to exceed 20) or lifetime(s), with the remainder passing to the charitable beneficiaries.		
Do you want to make a substantial gift to benefit a charity for a term of years, but ultimately retain the assets for yourself or your heirs? If so, consider the following: A charitable lead annuity trust (CLAT) can make payments of a fixed amount for a term of years, lifetime(s), or a combination thereof, with the remainder passing to noncharitable beneficiaries of your choice (e.g., your heirs). A charitable lead unitrust (CLUT) can make payments of a fixed percentage of the trust's assets, valued annually, for a term of years, lifetime(s), or a combination thereof, with the remainder passing to noncharitable beneficiaries of your choice (e.g., your heirs).	☐	☐

ASSET ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you have highly appreciated securities held for more than one year? If so, consider the following: Gifts in kind to a charity allow you to avoid recognition of capital gains while making a gift of the full FMV of the securities as of the date of the gift. The deduction for gifts of capital gain property is generally limited to 30% or 20% of your AGI, depending on the type of charitable beneficiary (e.g., public charity or private foundation, etc.) and the form of the gift.	☐	☐
Do you have other non-cash assets that you would like to donate? If so, be sure to understand the value and deductibility of such assets, as well as the substantiation requirements. (continue on next page)	☐	☐

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2026 · WHAT ISSUES SHOULD I CONSIDER WHEN ESTABLISHING MY CHARITABLE GIVING STRATEGY?

ASSET ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
Do you have a traditional IRA, and are you over age 70.5? If so, consider making a Qualified Charitable Contribution (QCD) of up to $111,000 (per tax year), which would be excluded from taxable income. If you are subject to taking RMDs, a QCD can count toward satisfying your RMD. Note the "first dollars out" rule.	☐	☐
Do you have time and/or skills that you can contribute? If so, you may not take a deduction for the value of your services; however, you may be able to deduct unreimbursed expenses that you incur as a direct result of services you perform.	☐	☐

TAX ISSUES	YES	NO
Did/will you make charitable gifts this year? If so, consider the following: Any cash gift must be substantiated by financial statements or written confirmation from the charity. Cash gifts of $250 or more must be supported by a contemporaneous written acknowledgment (CWA) from the charity. Generally, noncash gifts of more than $500 require the filing of Form 8283 (in addition to a CWA for noncash gifts of more than $250). Noncash gifts of more than $5,000 must also be supported by a qualified appraisal (unless an exception applies, e.g., for publicly traded securities, vehicles, etc.). For noncash gifts exceeding $500,000, the qualified appraisal must be filed with your 1040.	☐	☐
Did you receive anything of value in exchange for a charitable gift? If so, you may take a deduction to the extent that your gift exceeds the FMV of the goods or services you received in return. A charity must provide to you a written disclosure if you make a quid pro quo gift of $75 or more.	☐	☐
Do you want to make completed gifts for income tax purposes this year, but delay/spread the distributions to charities over multiple years? If so, consider the following: A donor advised fund (DAF) allows you to make a gift and take an immediate charitable deduction while delaying delivery of the funds to the charities of your choosing. (continue on next column)	☐	☐

TAX ISSUES (CONTINUED)	YES	NO
You can use a DAF to "bunch" several years of gifts in one tax year, taking advantage of the itemized charitable deduction when your gifts might have otherwise been covered by the standard deduction. You can then spread the grants from your DAF over future years to smooth the impact to the charities.		
Do you need help determining the deductibility of your gift(s)? If so, consider the following: If itemizing deductions, charitable donations will be subject to a 0.5% AGI floor. If taking the standard deduction, you may deduct cash donations up to $1,000 ($2,000 MFJ) to qualifying public charities. If your charitable gifts are less than 20% of your AGI, you can generally take a full deduction. Above this threshold, there are several deduction limitation categories, including 60%, 50%, and 30% of your AGI, which may apply depending upon the nature of the charitable gift and beneficiary. Excess deductions can be carried forward for five years.	☐	☐
Does your taxable estate exceed your unused federal estate and gift tax exclusion amount (maximum $15 million or $30 million if you are married)? If so, consider incorporating charitable gifts in your estate plan to reduce your federal estate tax liability.	☐	☐

OTHER ISSUES	YES	NO
Do you wish to remain anonymous?	☐	☐
Do you need to review your gifting history and impact?	☐	☐
Do you want to impose restrictions on the use of gifted assets? If so, consider earmarking your funds for a specific use, cause, or initiative (provided that you don't jeopardize the gift's deductibility).	☐	☐
Have you signed a pledge agreement under which you are fulfilling annual promises? If so, consider funding (or pre-funding) your pledges when the market is up.	☐	☐

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