



Supplement Your Retirement Savings with SUNY Voluntary 403(b) Savings Plan

This program provides a way for you to direct additional retirement savings through payroll deduction. This account is immediately vested (100% owned by you¹), with flexible options and professional investment advisors available at no additional cost.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Am I eligible to participate?

Yes, all employees receiving earnings from SUNY State and Community College campuses are eligible to participate in SUNY's Voluntary 403(b) Savings Plan (VSP).

2. What types of contributions can I make?

Contribution amounts are voluntarily selected by you and are deducted from your paycheck.

- **Traditional (pre-tax):** With the Traditional (pre-tax) option, your original contributions are not included in your taxable income the year they are made. All contributions plus any earnings accumulated are income tax deferred, until you withdraw your savings.¹ This provides you with a tax deferral on all the accumulated compound growth of your investment earnings.
- **Roth (after-tax):** Money invested in the Roth (after-tax) option is taxed when it is deducted from your paycheck and it provides the potential to withdraw all accumulated earnings on a tax-free basis in retirement with a Qualified Distribution.²
- **Both Traditional (pre-tax) and Roth (after-tax):** You can also save both pre-tax and Roth to your account, although the combination of any such contributions cannot exceed the annual *standard maximum limit* allowed by the IRS. *Please refer to the chart in question 3 for additional information on types of catch-up contributions.*

See question 13 for additional information on Pre-tax and Roth contributions.

3. How much may I contribute?

You choose the amount, within certain annual limits. You may change your contribution as frequently as you wish, in accordance with your payroll required effective dates.

Additional information is available at www.suny.edu/benefits/vsp.

2026 Annual Contribution Limits

Yr End Age	2025 Contribution Limit	2026 Contribution Limit
Under age 50	\$23,500 (Standard Limit)	\$24,500 (Standard Limit)
Age 50+	\$31,000 (\$23,500 + \$7,500 Catch-up)	\$32,500 (\$24,500 + \$8,000 Catch-up*)
Age 60–63**	\$34,750 (\$23,500 + \$11,250 Catch-up)	\$35,750 (\$24,500 + \$11,250 Catch-up*)

*Participants with 2025 SUNY FICA earnings greater than \$150,000:

2025 FICA earnings greater than \$150,000, beginning in 2026, ALL catch-up contributions must be Roth (after-tax). (*FICA earnings can be found in box 3 on your W-2 form*). Investment providers are available to assist you with questions on Roth. Education and assistance will be offered throughout the year. Please also consult with your tax advisor as Roth (after tax) contributions could affect your tax planning.

** For Participants age 64 and older, the Age 50+ maximum limits apply.

4. Are there other ways for me to save for retirement through SUNY?

State campus and most Community College employees are eligible to participate in the NYS Deferred Compensation Plan (NYSDCP, a section 457 plan) for pre-tax and after-tax savings through payroll deduction (www.nysdcp.com, 800-422-8463).

- Plan comparison chart (SUNY Voluntary 403(b) Savings Plan (VSP) and NYS Deferred Compensation Plan (NYSDCP) is available at: <https://www.suny.edu/benefits/vsp/>
- Note: Certain community colleges may offer an alternative 457 plan option other than NYSDCP, questions on plans available to you, can be referred to your campus Human Resources benefit office.

Important note: Contributions to a 457(b) (deferred compensation) plan do not offset contributions to the SUNY Voluntary 403(b) Savings Plan. The maximum annual contribution limits apply to each plan separately, 2025 Standard limit, under age 50: \$47,000 (catch-up contributions to each Plan also apply); 2026 Standard limit, under age 50 standard limit \$49,000 (catch-up contributions to each Plan also apply), those with FICA earnings greater than \$150,000, all catch-up contributions must be Roth (after-tax).

5. How will contributions to a separate (non-SUNY) employer retirement plan effect my individual limits?

This plan is set up under Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code. If, through another employer, you contribute to a 403(b) or 401(k) plan, the individual taxpayer limits would apply to all annual contributions combined.

Additional information is available at www.suny.edu/benefits/vsp.

6. How do I open an account?

Visit www.retirementatwork.org/suny to enroll.

- Register or Click already registered if you have an account, Sign in then select *Enroll in VSP* under **Save more**. If you have a 403(b) account and you are not currently contributing, select *My retirement* under **Make changes**.
- Enter your contribution amount and check the box if you wish to allocate between Traditional (pre-tax) and/or Roth (after-tax). (Please note: If you elect to contribute a flat dollar amount that exceeds the amount available in your net pay, a partial deduction will be made equal to the amount of net pay available. This will result in a \$0 net paycheck.)
- Select the effective date and click *Next*.
- Select your investment provider(s) and click *Next*.
- Once you review and confirm your contributions, you will be asked to open an investment account with each investment provider you have selected or newly selected.
For assistance with Retirement@Work or enrollment, call **1-866-271-0960**. You can also download a step-by-step [enrollment guide](#) (www.TIAA.org/sunyvsp).

7. Where can I invest my money?

You choose the provider(s) you wish to invest with, and in which of their funds, including stock funds, bond funds and/or guaranteed funds you would like to invest. Contributions are always 100% vested. The providers below are available to you.

All investment providers have Professional Financial Representatives available to assist you, at no additional fee.

- **Corebridge Financial**
603-594-8340 or <https://www.corebridgefinancial.com/rs/suny/home>
- **Fidelity Investments**
844-FOR-SUNY (844-367-7869) or www.netbenefits.com/suny
- **TIAA**
866-662-7945 or www.tiaa.org/suny
- **Voya Financial**
800-584-6001 or <https://suny.beready2retire.com>

8. What type of investment choices are available to me?

Investment Choices include:

- **Retirement Target Date funds:**
 - **General Target Date Fund:** Professionally managed model portfolio based on your projected retirement date. The diversified mix of investments would change to reduce risk as you near and enter retirement. Available through all investment providers.
 - **Custom Target Date Fund:** SUNY Target Allocation Retirement Series “STARS”:

Additional information is available at www.suny.edu/benefits/vsp.

Managed by CAPTRUST, selecting investment options from the plans' core investment lineup for SUNY participants. STARS model portfolios also include attributes of the TIAA Traditional guaranteed annuity, which provides a fixed interest rate each year and the option of guaranteed income in retirement. For additional information please refer to: <http://tiaa.org/sunystars>.

➤ **Select your own investments (do-it-yourself or work with an advisor at no additional cost)**

- Contact information for authorized investment advisors each Investment Provider: <https://www.suny.edu/benefits/vsp/403bproviders/>

➤ **Managed Account services** (additional fee applies), available through the investment providers.

9. Where do I find complete information on the investment choices available to me?

A wide variety of equity and bond investments, in addition to guaranteed fixed interest accounts are available. All investment providers offer financial advisors for individual account assistance at no additional cost. Visit www.suny.edu/retirement/choosinginvestments/ for general investment selection information.

10. Are loans available under the plan?

Yes. Two outstanding loans are permissible from your Traditional (pre-tax) account balance under the plan, subject to Internal Revenue Code regulations. Generally, up to one-half of your pre-tax account balance or an aggregated maximum of \$50,000. Specific information pertaining to loans is available from each investment provider. Loans are not available on Roth (after-tax) account balances.

11. May I roll money from other plans into this plan?

Yes. If you are eligible to transfer funds from a previous employer's plan or Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you may roll pre-tax money into this plan. Contact your investment provider for assistance.

12. May I convert Traditional (pre-tax) assets to Roth (after-tax)?

Yes, if you are eligible to transfer funds from Traditional (pre-tax) assets to Roth (after-tax). Please note the amount converted is taxable in the year of conversion; there is no tax withholding on the conversion and the election to convert is irrevocable.

Additional information is available at www.suny.edu/benefits/vsp.

13. How do Traditional (pre-tax) and Roth (after-tax) compare?

	Traditional (pre-tax) option	Roth (after-tax) option
How do taxes impact my contributions?	Pre-tax contributions accumulate tax deferred. You do not pay federal or NY State income tax on the contributions when they are made, therefore, no tax withholding applies.	After-tax contributions are eligible to accumulate tax-free. However, federal and NY State income taxes apply to the contributions in the year they are made, meaning your contribution included in your taxable earnings and tax withholding will apply.
When can money be withdrawn?	Pre-tax contributions may be withdrawn upon separation from service, attainment of age 59 1/2, death, disability, or severe financial hardship.	After-tax contributions may be withdrawn upon separation from service, attainment of age 59 1/2, death, disability, or severe financial hardship.
How are my distributions taxed?	Contributions (plus earnings) are taxed at your ordinary income tax rate when you withdraw the funds. Usually this will be during your retirement, when you may be in a lower tax bracket.	Qualified Distributions ² of contributions and total accumulated earnings are tax-free, which may help you balance against increasing tax rates over time.
What are the federal tax implications?	Withdrawals are subject to federal income tax. If you are under age 59 1/2, you may be subject to an additional 10% tax, unless you separate from service after you attain age 55 or meet another qualifying exception to the early distribution penalty.	Distributions available as noted for pre-tax, however, taxes would not apply to earnings distributed as a Qualified Distribution ² .
What are the state tax implications?	Your liability for state income taxes will depend upon the laws of the state in which you live at the time of withdrawal. Current NYS law excludes the first \$20,000 of income aggregated per year, from certain pension and annuity programs, including 403(b) savings plans from taxable income if the recipient is at least age 59 1/2.	Your liability for state income taxes will depend upon the laws of the state in which you live at the time of withdrawal. Qualified Distribution ² s of contributions and earnings are both Federal and NYS income tax-free.

Need help deciding?

Consider a Roth 403(b) contribution if you:	Roth 403(b) contribution benefits:
Are not eligible to make Roth IRA contributions due to exceeding the required income threshold to be eligible to contribute.	The Roth employer retirement savings Plans does not have a limit on adjusted gross income (AGI). All employees eligible to participate in the Plan are eligible to make Roth contributions.
Would like to make Roth contributions greater than the Roth IRA limit. For those eligible to make Roth IRA contributions, the limit for 2026 is \$8,000.	In 2026, the contribution limit for a 403(b) account (\$24,500), letting you increase your after-tax retirement savings. Additional Roth catch-up contributions also apply for those over age 50. (For additional information, refer to question 3)
Feel confident your retirement income needs are met and want to leave a potential tax-free legacy.	Assets may be passed along to your beneficiaries income-tax free.
Would like to help protect retirement assets from potential tax consequences.	Roth assets are not subject to Required Minimum Distributions. After-tax assets in retirement accounts may provide a hedge against the uncertainty of future tax rates.

Is the Roth 403(b) contribution option right for you?

While it's difficult to predict what your future tax situation may be, you'll want to estimate as best as you can, taking into consideration the best choice for your current tax circumstances and how they may change over time. Please consult your tax advisor.

If you expect your tax rate during retirement will be:	Your preferred option may be:
Higher than your current rate	Roth (after-tax) contribution option. Since you already paid taxes on Roth contributions, qualified distributions are tax-free.
Lower than your current rate	Traditional (pre-tax) contribution option. While this money is taxable, you expect to benefit by being in a lower tax bracket during retirement.
Same as your current rate	Either or both.

Note: Roth 403(b) contributions are included in your maximum contribution limits, plus any catch-up limits, if applicable. Beginning in 2026, participants with prior year FICA wages greater than \$150,000, all catch-up contributions must be Roth.

Additional information is available at www.suny.edu/benefits/vsp.

Individual circumstances will impact the decision on whether to direct retirement contributions to Traditional (pre-tax) or Roth (after-tax) contributions for optimal planning results. There are also important distinctions between Roth IRA's and Roth Retirement Plan features. Please consult with one of the approved investment providers or a qualified tax advisor for any additional assistance with what would be the best savings options for you.

¹ Withdrawals of Traditional (pre-tax) assets prior to age 59½ are subject to ordinary income tax and a 10% penalty may apply. This additional tax does not apply if you separated from service in the year you attain age 55 or if older, if you are receiving a lifetime income, or in cases of death, disability, or significant unreimbursed medical expenses.

² Qualified Distributions of Roth earnings are distributed tax free no earlier than five years after contributions were first made. You must also meet at least one of the following criteria: age 59½ or older, distribution due to death, or permanently disability.