



Retirement Roadmap for UW-Whitewater Employees

Social Security & Medicare | WRS | UW 403(b) SRP | WDC 457

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General Plan Mechanics Only

The information provided in this presentation is strictly for educational and informational purposes. It is intended to outline the general features, eligibility rules, and structural mechanics of the Universities of Wisconsin retirement program options.

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Official Plan Documents Govern

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this information. In the event of any discrepancy between this presentation and the official plan documents, the official Universities of Wisconsin Benefits portal and Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) guidelines will govern.

Purpose of today: a retirement roadmap

This session connects the retirement-related programs available to UW-Whitewater employees in a practical order, without turning it into a technical plan document.

Event focus

Social Security, Medicare, WRS, UW 403(b) SRP, and WDC 457.

What you should leave with

General features, key differences, and how required and voluntary benefits fit together.

Required framework

Social Security taxes, Medicare timing, and WRS provide the core retirement structure for eligible employees.

Voluntary flexibility

The UW 403(b) SRP and WDC 457 Program can add extra savings, tax choice, and timing flexibility.



Roadmap idea: use the talk to know what to ask next, then use official estimates for your own numbers.

Planning frame: required programs create the foundation; voluntary plans help fill gaps and add flexibility.

Today's route: decisions in practical order

- 1 Social Security** When to claim and what affects the monthly benefit
- 2 Medicare** Age 65 timing, parts of Medicare, and working past 65
- 3 WRS** Eligibility, vesting, pension calculation, and sick leave credits
- 4 403(b) vs. 457** How the voluntary savings plans differ, including pros and cons
- 5 Action steps** What to check this week, this month, and before a retirement date

Goal: understand the general features, key differences, and where to go for your own numbers next.

Think in layers, not one magic number

Retirement planning is easier when employees picture income, health coverage, and savings as layers that start at different times.

Optional savings

403(b), WDC 457, IRA, personal savings

Sick leave credits

May help pay eligible State Group Health premiums

WRS

Wisconsin Retirement System pension

Medicare

Federal health coverage at 65+

Social Security

Federal monthly retirement income

No single account answers every retirement question; the pieces work together.

Three planning questions

1. When do I want income to start?
2. What health coverage applies at that date?
3. What savings bridge or cushion do I need?

Best employee habit




Keep one retirement folder with SSA, Medicare, WRS, 403(b), 457, beneficiary, and health insurance information.



Social Security

Start with the federal income layer: eligibility, claiming age, work, taxes, and household strategy.

Social Security - Two Primary Issues

- 1) **Significant Increase in Life Expectancy.** People are living longer - life expectancy 
 - In 1940, the life expectancy of a 65-year-old was almost 14 years; today it's about 20 years.
- 2) **Number of workers (paying) relative to number of retirees (receiving).** More retirees than there used to be  AND # of workers per beneficiary 
 - There are currently **2.8 workers** for each Social Security beneficiary. By 2035, there will be **2.3 workers** for each beneficiary.
 - By 2035, the number of Americans age 65 or older will increase from 58 million today to 76 million.

The last 5 Trustees Reports have indicated that Social Security's **Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI)** Trust Fund reserves would become **depleted in 2033**; then, **current SS tax income will only cover 79% of current scheduled benefits.**

The Trustees project that the Hospital Insurance (HI) trust fund, aka **Medicare Part A**, will be **depleted in 2036**. **Continuing program income will be sufficient to pay 89% of scheduled benefits.**

Social Security

Trust Funds	% of FICA Tax Received
Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI)* - SS retirement & SS survivors benefits	5.30% up to \$184,500 (2026)
Disability Insurance (DI)* - SS disability benefits	.90% up to \$184,500 (2026)
Hospital Insurance (HI) - Medicare Part A	1.45% (all compensation)
Supplementary Medical Insurance (SMI) - Medicare Part B (medical) - Medicare Part D (prescription)	0% (funded by general tax revenue & monthly premiums)

6.20%
+
1.45%
= 7.65%

- * **OASDI (OAS+DI)** = Old Age, Survivor, and Disability Insurance = 6.2% up to wages of \$184,500 (2026)
- Additional High Income Medicare Tax of 0.9% on wages, compensation, or self-employment income in excess of \$250,000 MFJ or \$200,000 single and head of household.

Social Security: what it is and what drives it

Social Security is not a UW benefit, but it is usually one of the biggest retirement income layers employees need to coordinate.

What it is

Federal monthly retirement income based on your lifetime covered earnings. You can typically start at age 62 if eligible.

Eligibility

Most workers need 40 Social Security credits, roughly 10 years of covered work. Credits determine eligibility, not the benefit amount.

What affects the estimate

Earnings history, claiming age, future work, and family benefits such as spouse, ex-spouse, survivor, or disability-related benefits.

What to check now

Create or update your my Social Security account; review your earnings record; compare estimates at 62, full retirement age, and 70.

Your Social Security Statement

WANDA WORKER

April 28, 2025

Retirement Benefits

You have earned enough credits to qualify for retirement benefits. To qualify for benefits, you earn "credits" through your work—up to four each year. Your full retirement age is 67, based on your date of birth, April 5, 1962. As shown in the chart, you can start your benefits at any time between ages 62 and 70. For each month you wait to start your benefits, your monthly benefit will be higher—for the rest of your life.

These personalized estimates are based on your earnings to date and assume you continue to earn \$54,489 per year until you start your benefits. Learn more at ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/estimates.html.

Disability Benefits

You have earned enough credits to qualify for disability benefits. If you become disabled right now and you have enough recent work, your monthly payment would be about \$2,083. Learn more at ssa.gov/disability.

Survivors Benefits

You have earned enough credits for your eligible family members to receive survivors benefits. If you die this year, members of your family who may qualify for monthly benefits include:

Spouse, if caring for a disabled child or child younger than age 16: **\$1,562**

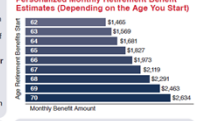
Spouse, if benefits start at full retirement age: **\$2,083**

Total family benefits cannot be more than: **\$3,862**

Your spouse or minor child may be eligible for an additional one-time death benefit of \$255. Learn more at ssa.gov/survivors.

We base benefit estimates on current law, which Congress has revised before and may revise again to address needed changes. Learn more about Social Security's future at ssa.gov/ThereForLife.

Personalized Monthly Retirement Benefit Estimates (Depending on the Age You Start)



Medicare

You have enough credits to qualify for Medicare at age 65. Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people:

- age 65 and older,
- under 65 with certain disabilities, and
- of any age with End-Stage Renal Disease (ESRD) (government kidney failure requiring dialysis or a kidney transplant).

Even if you do not enroll at age 65, you may need to sign up for Medicare within 3 months of your 65th birthday to avoid a lifetime late enrollment penalty. Special rules may apply if you are covered by certain group health plans through work.

For more information about Medicare, visit medicare.gov or ssa.gov/medicare or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) (TTY 1-877-486-2048).

Earnings Record

Review your earnings history below to ensure it is accurate because we base your future benefits on our record of your earnings. There's a limit to the amount of earnings you pay Social Security taxes on each year. Earnings above the limit do not appear on your earnings record. We have combined your earlier years of earnings below, but you can view your complete earnings record online with my Social Security. If you find an error, view your full earnings record online and call 1-800-772-1215.

Work Year	Earnings Taxed for Social Security	Earnings Taxed for Medicare (begin 1950)
1971-1980	\$ 2,142	\$ 2,142
1981-1990	87,102	87,102
1991-2000	246,009	246,009
2001	34,147	34,147
2002	34,443	34,443
2003	36,021	36,021
2004	38,032	38,032
2005	39,711	39,711
2006	41,829	41,829
2007	43,971	43,971
2008	45,170	45,170
2009	44,603	44,603
2010	45,668	45,668
2011	47,061	47,061
2012	48,560	48,560
2013	49,095	49,095
2014	50,005	50,005
2015	51,998	51,998
2016	52,103	52,103
2017	53,251	53,251
2018	53,969	53,969
2019	54,553	54,553
2020	54,489	54,489
2021	Not yet recorded	

Taxes Paid

Total estimated Social Security and Medicare taxes paid over your working career based on your Earnings Record:

Social Security taxes: You paid \$75,568

Medicare taxes: You paid \$18,158

Employer: \$77,498

Employer: \$18,158

Important Things to Know about Your Social Security Benefits

Social Security benefits are not intended to be your only source of retirement income. You may need other savings, investments, pensions, or retirement accounts to make sure you have enough money when you retire.

You need at least 10 years of work (40 credits) to qualify for retirement benefits. Your benefit amount is based on your highest 35 years of earnings. If you have fewer than 35 years of earnings, years without work count as 0 and may reduce your benefit amount.

To keep up with inflation, benefits are adjusted through "cost of living adjustments."

If you get retirement or disability benefits, your spouse and children may qualify for benefits.

When you apply for either retirement or spousal benefits, you may be required to apply for both benefits at the same time.

If you and your spouse both work, use the my Social Security Retirement Calculator to estimate spousal benefits.

The age you claim benefits will affect the benefit amount for your surviving spouse. For example, claiming benefits after your full retirement age may increase the Spouse's benefit start at full retirement age amount on page 1; claiming early may reduce it.

If you are divorced and were married for 10 years, you may be able to claim benefits on your ex-spouse's record. If your ex-spouse receives benefits on your record, that does not affect your or your current spouse's benefit amounts.

If you receive a pension from earnings not covered by Social Security, your benefits may have been reduced prior to January 2024. The Social Security Finance Act ended the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset. Learn more at ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/socialsecurity/financeact.html.

Learn more about benefits for you and your family at ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/learnmore.html.

When you are ready to apply, visit ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/apply.html.

The Statement is updated annually. It is available online, or by mail upon request.

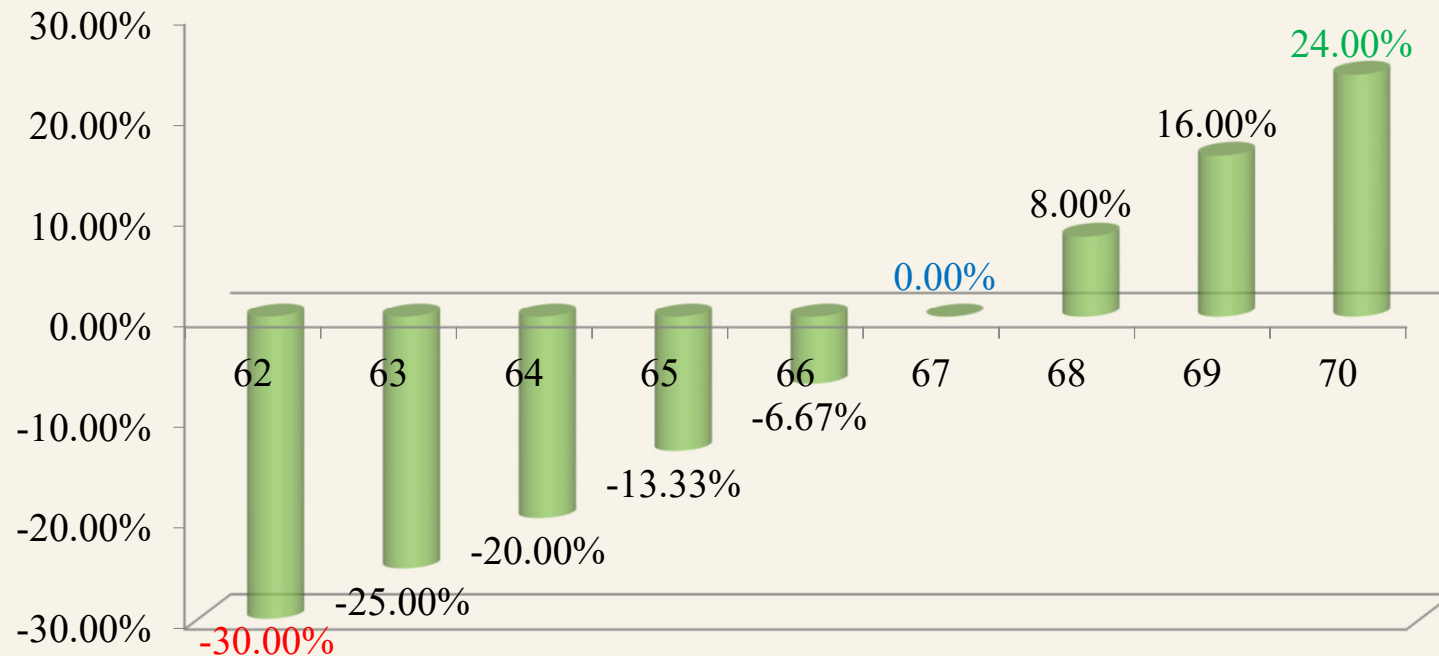
SSA.gov | Follow us on social media ssa.gov/socialmedia

Form SSA-7005-SM-01 (04/25) | Enclosure Publication XXXXXXX, Publication XX-XXXXX

Social Security claiming ages are a tradeoff

Full Retirement Age With Full Benefits	Year Born
66 years	1943 – 1954
66 years, 2 months	1955
66 years, 4 months	1956
66 years, 6 months	1957
66 years, 8 months	1958
66 years, 10 months	1959
67 years	1960 - present

Social Security claiming ages are a tradeoff



- Uses **National Average Wage Index** to convert to current dollars
- Incorporates the **highest 35 years** of earnings (i.e. if earnings were maxed out for 35 years, an additional high earning year wouldn't increase benefits)
- Important to **validate earnings history** on SS statement – can be errors

Social Security claiming ages are a tradeoff

Do not claim just because you stopped working. Claim when the timing fits your income, health, spouse/survivor needs, and tax picture.

62

Earliest retirement benefit

Monthly amount is permanently reduced.

65

Medicare age

Not the same as Social Security full retirement age.

FRA

Full retirement age

Usually 66-67, depending on birth year.

70

Highest monthly SS amount

Delayed credits stop after age 70.

Key reminder

Retirement from UW-Whitewater and claiming Social Security are separate decisions. They can happen on different dates.

Do the comparison

Look at your SSA estimates at multiple claiming ages. A spouse or survivor situation can change the best answer.

Social Security: work, taxes, and household issues

These are the three issues that most often surprise employees when they only look at the monthly estimate.

Working while claiming

Before full retirement age, earnings above the annual limit can temporarily reduce benefits. After full retirement age, work earnings do not reduce Social Security retirement benefits.

Taxes

Social Security can be taxable depending on total income. Pensions, wages, retirement account withdrawals, and spouse income can all matter.

Household strategy

Spouse, ex-spouse, survivor, and dependent benefits can make the best claiming age different from a single-person calculation.

The One Big Beautiful Bill Act provides a temporary deduction for tax years 2025-2028, specifically for seniors aged 65+

- Deduction Amount: Up to \$6,000 per individual or \$12,000 for couples.
- Income Limits: Full deduction is available for single filers with MAGI under \$75,000 and joint filers under \$150,000.
- Phase-out: The deduction reduces for higher earners and disappears entirely above \$175,000 (single) or \$250,000 (joint).

The Social Security Fairness Act, signed into law in January 2025, fully repealed both the Government Pension Offset (GPO) & Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP), with effects retroactive to January 2024

- Beneficiaries who were previously reduced may be entitled to adjusted monthly benefits and retroactive payments, depending on their filing history and SSA processing.

Social Security action checklist

- 1 Create or sign in to my Social Security**
Use the official SSA site (ssa.gov) and keep login access secure.
- 2 Verify earnings history**
Look for missing years, wrong employer amounts, or name changes.
- 3 Compare 62, full retirement age, and 70**
Avoid relying on a co-worker's claiming age.
- 4 Coordinate with Medicare at 65**
Medicare timing is separate from Social Security timing.

Do first: make sure your SSA earnings record is right before relying on the estimate.

Medicare

Then protect the health coverage timeline: age 65, enrollment windows, and coordination with UW employment.



Medicare basics: the parts in plain English

Medicare is individual coverage. A spouse or dependent may need a separate plan or different timing.

A
Hospital
Inpatient hospital, skilled nursing facility, hospice, some home health

B
Medical
Doctor visits, outpatient care, preventive care, durable medical equipment

D
Drugs
Prescription drug coverage through a Part D plan or many Advantage plans

Extra
Two paths
Original Medicare plus add-ons, or Medicare Advantage through private plans

Part A monthly premium = \$0

If your yearly income in 2024 was:			
File individual tax return	File joint tax return	File married & separate tax return	You pay each month (in 2026):
\$109,000 or less	\$218,000 or less	\$109,000 or less	\$202.90
above \$109,000 up to \$137,000	above \$218,000 up to \$274,000	not applicable	\$284.10
above \$137,000 up to \$171,000	above \$274,000 up to \$342,000	not applicable	\$405.80
above \$171,000 up to \$205,000	above \$342,000 up to \$410,000	not applicable	\$527.50
above \$205,000 and less than \$500,000	above \$410,000 and less than \$750,000	above \$109,000 and less than \$391,000	\$649.20
\$500,000 or above	\$750,000 or above	\$391,000 or above	\$689.90

If your yearly income in 2024 was:			
File individual tax return	File joint tax return	File married & separate tax return	You pay each month (in 2026):
\$109,000	\$218,000 or less	\$109,000 or less	Your plan premium
above \$109,000 up to \$137,000	above \$218,000 up to \$274,000	not applicable	\$14.50 + your plan premium
above \$137,000 up to \$171,000	above \$274,000 up to \$342,000	not applicable	\$37.50 + your plan premium
above \$171,000 up to \$205,000	above \$342,000 up to \$410,000	not applicable	\$60.40 + your plan premium
above \$205,000 and less than \$500,000	above \$410,000 and less than \$750,000	above \$109,000 and less than \$391,000	\$83.30 + your plan premium
\$500,000 or above	\$750,000 or above	\$391,000 or above	\$91.00 + your plan premium

2026 Part D national base premium—\$38.99

Medicare timing: do not miss the enrollment windows

Medicare timing can create penalties or coverage gaps, so the age 65 checkpoint belongs on every retirement roadmap.



Special Enrollment Period: If you have group health insurance coverage by an employer with 20+ employees, you can delay Medicare until retirement (Part A and/or Part B).

- No harm in enrolling for Part A at 65 (no premium), would just have to fill out coordination of benefits paperwork.
- Part B premium is based on income, so usually best to delay until retirement if qualified group coverage exists.

Best habit: start Medicare questions 3-6 months before age 65 or before retiring after age 65.

Medicare and UW-Whitewater employment

The right Medicare timing may depend on whether coverage is based on active employment, retiree coverage, COBRA, spouse coverage, and HSA status.

While actively working

State Group Health may interact with Medicare differently than retiree coverage. Ask before age 65.

Retiring after 65

Coordinate Part A, Part B, drug coverage, and retirement date so there is no gap.

After retirement

Retiree health premiums, Medicare, and sick leave credits may all be part of the health-cost plan.

Spouse or dependent coverage

A spouse may have a different Medicare date, employer coverage, or plan choice.

Bring to benefits conversations: retirement date, spouse coverage, HSA status, current health plan, and Medicare questions.

A high-angle photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, there is a paved walkway with a circular garden bed. The middle ground shows a large green lawn with several trees and a building with a purple banner that says '150'. The background features more campus buildings and a line of trees under a clear sky.

Wisconsin Retirement System

Next, understand the core UW pension foundation: eligibility, vesting, annuity calculations, and sick leave credits.

WRS at UW-Whitewater: the pension foundation

For eligible employees, WRS is the required retirement system and a central part of the UW-Whitewater retirement package.

WRS is automatic for eligible employees

- Provides a retirement annuity if you meet eligibility rules
- Also includes disability, death, and separation benefit provisions
- Administered by the Wisconsin Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF)
- Your annual WRS statement is a key planning document

2026 contribution snapshot

Most UW general/teacher employees:

Employee: 7.20% pre-tax

UW employer: 7.20%

Sick leave contribution: 1.60%

Rates are updated annually.

**Normal Retirement Age is 65 for general employees and teachers.
Minimum retirement age is generally 55 for most WRS employees and 50 for protective occupations; you must also end WRS employment and be vested.**

WRS eligibility and vesting are different ideas

Eligibility answers “Am I covered?”

Vesting answers “Do I keep the employer-funded retirement benefit if I leave?”

Eligibility - am I covered?

- Depends on appointment type, expected hours, and expected duration
- Employees first covered on/after July 1, 2011 generally must be expected to work at least 2/3 time for at least one year
- Common thresholds: University Staff 1,200 hours/year; Faculty, Academic Staff, and Limited: employees 880 hours/year
- Employees can become eligible later if hours or duration change

Vesting - do I keep the employer part?

- Depends on when you first became WRS-covered
- On/after July 1, 2011: generally need five years of WRS creditable service
- Before July 1, 2011: generally immediately vested under UW guidance
- A full year of service varies by employment category

Eligibility details can vary by appointment. Verify your own record with UW-Whitewater HR/benefits staff.

How the WRS retirement benefit is calculated

At retirement, ETF calculates both methods and generally pays the higher annuity amount.

Formula method

Final average earnings
× formula factor
× creditable service
then adjusted for age / annuity option

Money purchase method

Total dollar value of your WRS account
converted to an annuity under money-purchase
factors

ETF calculates both

and pays the **higher** benefit

What employees can influence: years worked, salary history, retirement age, beneficiary choices, and whether they take a separation benefit.

Use your WRS statement as the planning anchor

Every year

Review statement

Check earnings, service, beneficiaries, and projected benefit information.

5-10 years out

Model dates and income layers

Compare possible WRS, Social Security, Medicare, and savings timelines.

12 months out

Request official estimates

Ask ETF about annuity options, beneficiary choices, taxes, and timing.

Retirement window

Coordinate application dates

Align UW-W separation date, WRS start date, health coverage, and Medicare.

Easy win: check beneficiaries after marriage, divorce, birth or adoption, death in the family, or name changes.

WRS decision to avoid rushing: separation benefit

If you leave UW-Whitewater before retirement age, the “cash out or leave it” decision can affect the future pension.

Leave the WRS account

- May preserve a future WRS retirement benefit
- Allows the account to keep WRS service history
- Usually worth comparing if vested
- Get an ETF estimate before deciding

Take a separation benefit

- One-time payment of employee contributions plus interest
- Generally gives up employer contributions and service
- Can have tax consequences and possible penalties
- Closes the WRS account

Before cashing out WRS, pause and ask ETF what you may be giving up.

Unused sick leave can help with retiree health premiums

Sick leave credits are often a valuable bridge for retiree health costs, but they are not cash and they do not replace Medicare timing decisions.

Basic idea: unused sick leave hours × eligible pay rate = credits for eligible State Group Health premiums

Can help pay

- State of Wisconsin Group Health Insurance premiums
- Pharmacy coverage tied to State Group Health
- Optional Uniform Dental in some cases
- Premiums until credits are exhausted

Cannot do

- Cannot be cashed out as income
- Cannot pay non-State Group Health premiums
- Cannot pay Medicare Part A or Part B premiums
- Cannot replace Medicare enrollment decisions

Long-service note: employees with 15+ years of continuous state service may have additional Supplemental Health Insurance Conversion Credit (SHICC) credit rules to ask about.

403(b) and 457 voluntary savings

Finally, compare the optional plans: what they have in common, how they differ, and the pros and cons of each.



Why optional savings still matter

WRS and Social Security may form the foundation, but optional savings can create flexibility around timing, taxes, and surprises.

Bridge years

Money for years before Social Security or Medicare starts

Flexibility

One-time expenses: car, roof, travel, family, relocation

Tax mix

Pre-tax and Roth savings can create options later

Inflation cushion

Extra savings can absorb price changes over time

Peace of mind

Less pressure to take WRS or Social Security at the first possible date

Reality check

UW 403(b) SRP and WDC 457 are voluntary, employee-funded plans. There is no UW employer match.

UW 403(b) Supplemental Retirement Program (SRP)

The UW 403(b) SRP is a voluntary plan that lets employees save through TIAA and/or Fidelity using pre-tax, Roth, or both.

How it works

- Voluntary; employee makes the entire contribution
- No UW employer match
- Choose TIAA and/or Fidelity
- UW-curated investment lineup plus guaranteed fixed-rate annuity options
- Contributions generally come from the first two biweekly paychecks of the month

2026 contribution limits

- Age 49 and under: \$24,500
- Age 50-59: \$32,500
- Age 60-63: \$35,750
- Age 64+: \$32,500
- 15-year service catch-up may add \$3,000/yr if eligible
- Age-based catch-ups may be Roth-only for certain higher earners

UW-Whitewater relevance: TIAA/Fidelity counseling is available; verify 15-year and Roth catch-up eligibility before maxing out.

Wisconsin Deferred Compensation (WDC) 457 Program

The WDC 457 Program is a voluntary governmental deferred compensation plan administered by ETF with recordkeeping through Empower.

How it works

- Voluntary; employee makes the entire contribution
- No UW employer match
- Administered by ETF; Empower is the recordkeeper
- Pre-tax, Roth, or both
- Enroll or change contributions through WDC; employer code is UW

2026 contribution limits

- Regular limit: \$24,500
- Age 50-59: \$32,500 total
- Age 60-63: \$35,750 total
- Age 64+: \$32,500 total
- Special 3-year catch-up may allow up to twice the basic limit if eligible
- Cannot combine special 3-year catch-up with age catch-up

Big differentiator: after separation, WDC-originated governmental 457 funds generally avoid the 10% early distribution tax; regular taxes may still apply.

2026 limits: the headline numbers are separate

Employees may contribute to **both** plans, and the UW 403(b) SRP and WDC 457 each has its own annual limit.

Both UW 403(b) SRP and WDC 457

Basic limit: \$24,500
Age 50-59: \$32,500 total
Age 60-63: \$35,750 total
Age 64+: \$32,500 total

Important differences

403(b) extra rule: 15-year service catch-up may add \$3,000/yr if eligible
457 extra rule: Special 3-year catch-up may allow up to twice the basic limit if eligible
Roth catch-up: Age-based catch-up may be Roth-only for certain higher earners
Monitoring: Employees are responsible for staying within annual limits

Maxing both basic limits in 2026 would mean \$24,500 to 403(b) + \$24,500 to 457, before any catch-up eligibility.

403(b) vs. 457: access and “best fit” differences

Access rules are often the biggest practical difference, especially for employees thinking about retiring before age 59 1/2.

UW 403(b) SRP

Access

Generally separation, age 59 1/2, disability, or specific plan events. Early distribution tax may apply.

Special catch-up

Potential 15-year service catch-up, if eligible.

Best fit

Employees who like TIAA/Fidelity tools, fixed annuity options, or 15-year catch-up.

WDC 457

Access

After separation regardless of age. WDC-originated governmental 457 funds generally avoid the 10% early tax.

Special catch-up

Special 3-year catch-up before normal retirement age, if eligible.

Best fit

Employees who want a bridge account before age 59 1/2 or value the special 3-year catch-up.

Caution: money rolled into a 457 from another type of plan may carry different early distribution rules.

How to choose: 403(b), 457, or both?

For many employees, the first question is not “which is perfect?” It is “which one helps me take the next reasonable step?”

Choose 457 first when...

You may retire before 59 1/2 and want more flexible access after separation.

Choose 403(b) first when...

You prefer TIAA/Fidelity, value the fixed annuity option, or may use the 15-year service catch-up.

Use both when...

You are saving aggressively and want to use two separate annual limits.

Pre-tax vs. Roth?

Pre-tax lowers taxable income today. Roth uses after-tax money and may add tax flexibility later.

Simple starter move: pick a sustainable amount, automate it, then increase after raises or debt payoff.

Common employee questions to prepare for

Do I have to take Social Security when I retire from UW-W?

No. Social Security claiming is separate from your UW-W retirement date.

Do I have to enroll in Medicare at 65 if I am still working?

Maybe not for Part B if you have active employer group health coverage; confirm before age 65.

Is WRS the same as my 403(b) or 457?

No. WRS is the pension system. 403(b) and 457 are optional savings plans.

Can sick leave credits pay Medicare Part B?

No. They generally help pay eligible State Group Health premiums, not Medicare Part B.

Can I max both 403(b) and 457?

Yes. The UW 403(b) SRP and WDC 457 have separate limits.

Does UW match 403(b) or 457 contributions?

No. These voluntary plans are employee-funded.

Action plan

The goal is not to solve retirement in one session. The goal is to know the next useful step.

This month

Find your WRS statement, check beneficiaries, create/update my Social Security, and save official login links.

This year

Estimate retirement income layers, decide whether to start or increase 403(b)/457 contributions, and review Medicare timing if age 64+.

Before a retirement date

Request a WRS estimate, coordinate Medicare and health coverage, understand sick leave credits, and choose annuity/beneficiary options carefully.

You do not have to solve retirement today. You do need to know your next step.

Helpful contacts and resources

UW-Whitewater HR

Hyer Hall 330 | hr@uww.edu | 262-472-1024

Universities of Wisconsin Benefits

GetHelpUW@support.wisconsin.edu | 888-298-0141

ETF / WRS

etf.wi.gov | 877-533-5020

WDC 457 / Empower

wdcquestions@empower.com | 877-457-9327

Social Security

ssa.gov/myaccount

Medicare

Medicare.gov | 1-800-MEDICARE

Q&A

Keep personal account numbers, health details, tax questions, and plan-selection issues for a one-on-one conversation.

