

# PERA SmartSave Newsletter



## Did you ring in the New Year with a tax refund?

While a tax refund may be a nice way to get some quick cash, did you know that it means you overpaid your taxes and gave the government an interest-free loan for the year? The average income tax refund in 2021 was \$2,775.<sup>1</sup> Think about what an amount like that could do working for you all year instead of for the government. Increasing your contributions to the Plan may be both the tax and retirement saving strategy you've been looking for.

Rather than waiting for a refund next year, increasing your voluntary pre-tax contributions now to save an additional \$2,000 for the year could mean much more for you in retirement.<sup>2</sup>



What about this year's tax refund? While it may be tempting to treat yourself with the extra cash, what if you paid it forward by taking care of something that hasn't happened yet? Stashing your refund in an emergency savings fund can give you financial confidence, especially when life hands you an unexpected hard time. With unexpected emergency expenses, it's a matter of when and not if. Check out these and more ideas for your refund this year so you can breathe easier, save more, and grin from ear to ear.

**Save for your best life.**

Visit [blog.voya.com/financial-decisions/save-your-best-life](https://blog.voya.com/financial-decisions/save-your-best-life).

## Get in charge of your money

How do you budget, where is your money spent and is there an opportunity to save? Find out by utilizing the budgeting tool today at <https://www.voya.com/tool/budget-calculator>.

## Go green

Electing paperless allows you to reduce clutter, save time and have secure, 24/7 access to account documents and statements. Log in to your account at [PERASmartSave.voya.com](https://PERASmartSave.voya.com) and select *My Profile*. Follow the instructions to update your communication preferences to paperless.

## Roth, another way to save

In addition to your pre-tax retirement savings option, you can also choose to save after taxes with Roth contributions. Visit [voyadelivers.com/Roth](https://voyadelivers.com/Roth) for more information on the benefits of Roth!

## Retiring or already retired? Consider staying (for) a while.

Whether you are thinking about retiring or have already made the move, consider staying a while as part of our Plan family. You have worked hard and saved consistently to build up your retirement savings, and we want to help you make the most of your retirement. Here are just some of the ways that the Plan can support you to and through retirement.

### For those who are within 5 years of retirement:

If retirement is within sight but still a couple years away, special catch-up saving options may be available to help maximize your retirement savings in your final working years. Visit [voya.com/irslimits](https://voya.com/irslimits) for information about the age 50 and older catch-up<sup>3</sup>, the 403(b) 15 years of service catch-up<sup>4</sup>, and the 457 special election catch-up<sup>5</sup> options.

**For retirees:** Did you know that you can still stay in the Plan even after you've retired? The only thing that has changed in retirement is that you cannot make new contributions to the Plan. You continue to have access to all of your Plan's financial resources and tools, and can actively manage your investments like you were when you were still working.

**For both:** You may want to consider meeting with a financial professional and tax advisor to review your retirement saving and income strategy to help you maintain your retirement lifestyle while also making it last for the long-term.

When you stay with the Plan—to and through retirement—you utilize all of the Plan's resources and benefits to your advantage. Together, we can help you live the best life in retirement that you've envisioned and planned for.

### Voya Learn: 10 steps to your journey to retirement

For those who are nearing retirement, we have a variety of videos, workbooks and checklists to prepare you to stretch your savings and make it last. Visit [voya.com/page/nearing-retirement-10-steps-your-journey](https://voya.com/page/nearing-retirement-10-steps-your-journey).

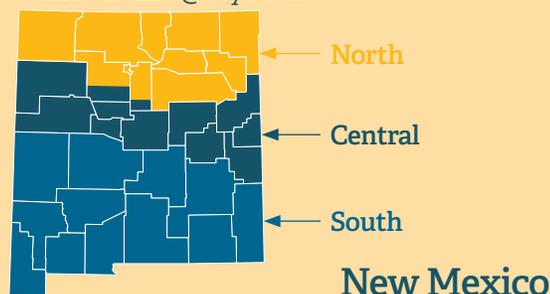
## Be cybersafe

Keep your accounts safe by registering, then logging in regularly to review activity to ensure no unauthorized use occurred. You'll get further protection and account restoration with the Voya S.A.F.E. (Secure Accounts for Everyone) Guarantee program. To learn more visit [voya.com/articles/safe-guarantee](https://voya.com/articles/safe-guarantee). Visit [PERASmartSave.voya.com](https://PERASmartSave.voya.com), click Login and then Register Now.



## Your local Retirement Plan Representatives<sup>5</sup>

- ⚙ Northern NM | temporarily vacant  
please email [PERA-SmartSave@state.nm.us](mailto:PERA-SmartSave@state.nm.us)
- ⚙ Central NM | Paul Lium | (505) 699-8548  
[Paul.Lium@voya.com](mailto:Paul.Lium@voya.com)
- ⚙ Southern NM | Linda Miller | (575) 520-2660  
[Linda.Miller@voya.com](mailto:Linda.Miller@voya.com)



## Accessing Your Account

 Log on to [PERASmartSave.voya.com](https://PERASmartSave.voya.com)

 Call 833-424-SAVE (7283); 800-579-5708  
(Hearing Impaired Number)

If you have questions or need assistance, Voya Customer Service Associates are available to help. They're available weekdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., MT, excluding stock market holidays.

<sup>1</sup> IRS, 2021 Filing Season Statistics, October 2021.

<sup>2</sup> These examples assume retirement age of 65, annual investment of \$2,000, average annual return of 7% compounding once annually. These assumptions are meant for educational use and not a guarantee of future results.

<sup>3</sup> Age 50 and older before year-end. If you participate in a 457(b) plan, the Age 50+ Catch-up is only available if the plan is sponsored by a governmental employer.

<sup>4</sup> This special election catch-up applies to employees participating in an eligible governmental 457(b) deferred compensation that have elected the special catch-up available in the three years prior to the year of normal retirement age. If you are eligible for both the Age 50 and older catch-up and the special election catch-up under your 457(b) plan, IRS rules do not allow you to use both in the same calendar year. IRS rules permit you to use the catch-up that lets you contribute the greater amount.

<sup>5</sup> Information from registered Plan Service Representatives is for educational purposes only and is not legal, tax or investment advice. Local Plan Service Representatives are registered representatives of Voya Financial Advisors, Inc., member SIPC.