6 QUESTIONS
TO ASK BEFORE RETIRING

You've reached the point in your life when you're considering retirement. How can you decide if the time is right? Your annual expenses may depend on your non-financial goals in retirement. What is your plan in retirement? As you determine what will bring meaning to your life in retirement, travel, time with family, charitable work, or other passions become important, your goals may change. Here are a few questions to think about as part of your planning.

1. Will I have enough money? This is a critical question if you are going to meet your needs and wants, and enjoy your new life in retirement. Assessing your post-retirement financial situation can be challenging because it can be hard to determine exactly how much income you will have or what your expenses will be. As a starting point, it's possible to get a sense of what your Social Security income will be based on your Social Security earnings record and the age you choose to retire by using the **Social Security Administration calculators.** Try to also estimate the income you will receive from other sources, such as pensions and investments and any consulting or part-time work.

2. What will my costs be? It's also possible to create a budget of your expenses in retirement using your current expense budget and making any potential adjustments, such as lower housing costs if you expect to downsize or pay off your mortgage. You can update your income and expense estimates annually as you get closer to retirement to be sure they are realistic.

3. How long will your retirement income last? Those who reach age 65 today can expect to live an average of about 20 more years, according to the Social Security Administration, but keep in mind one-quarter of those will live past age 90. Using a **life expectancy calculator** is recommended, but remember this is only an estimate and does not take into account your lifestyle or other risk factors.

4. When is the right time to take Social Security? You can begin receiving Social Security benefits as early as 62, but as tempting as it sounds, that may not be your best choice. If you start collecting benefits before your full retirement age, they will be reduced. If you wait until full retirement age (which varies based on the year you were born), you'll get a higher monthly benefit. Put off retirement until age 70, however, and your benefits will be even higher. Your CPA can help you understand your options.

5. What about health care costs? This question is top of mind for many people. Nearly 6 in 10 workers say the cost of health care is hurting their ability to save for retirement, according to the **Employee Benefit Research Institute's 2026 Retirement Confidence Survey.** Among retirees, 3 in 5 say their health care expenses in retirement have been higher than expected. Workers also

remain concerned about the future of Medicare, with only about half expressing confidence that Medicare will continue to provide benefits of equal value in the future. It's wise to factor potentially higher health care costs into your retirement budget planning. **Fidelity's July 2026 estimate** says a 65-year-old retiring in 2026 can expect to spend an average of $185,500 on health care and medical expenses throughout retirement.

6. Do I actually want to quit? Jobs can offer a great deal of fulfillment and social interaction, and many retirees miss both when they quit working. One way to prevent that is to plan in advance how you'll spend your time. Will you continue to work part-time, become a volunteer, pursue educational interests, or travel? Do your plans fit with your expected financial situation?

Retirement can be an exciting time of life, but there can be a lot of uncertainty when it comes to planning for retirement and deciding when to retire. Your CPA can offer information and insights you need to make important financial decisions.