

Your Journey to Retirement PATHWAYS

WRS MEMBER NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2025



WYOMING RANKS 3RD ON LIST OF BEST STATES FOR RETIREMENT

The 2025 Bankrate study analyzed eight categories to determine the rankings, including affordability, weather, safety, healthcare, local taxes, and cultural attractions. Wyoming ranks highly for retirement due to its lack of income tax and strong performance in affordability, safety, and entertainment. The study determined healthcare is the state's weakness, ranking Wyoming 39th nationally in that category.

New Hampshire topped the list as the best state for retirees, followed by Maine, Wyoming, Vermont, and Idaho. The study named Louisiana as the worst state for retirement. For the full article go to <https://bit.ly/beststatesretirement>



WYOMING EDUCATORS:

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE RULE OF 85

The State of Wyoming is the single largest employer in the WRS pension system, accounting for about 18% of the active members. However, the largest group of members isn't state employees, but rather those working in pre-K-12 education. With 18,109 active members, this group is more than double the number of state employees. For many in this group, a key consideration for retirement is the "Rule of 85."

Under the Rule of 85, a member is eligible for retirement benefits without a reduction if their age plus years of service in the WRS equal 85 or more. The Rule of 85 no longer applies once a member reaches retirement age (60 for Tier 1 or age 65 for Tier 2).

Teachers, if you're a contracted employee and have reached the Rule of 85, be sure to review your contract. It's important to know if you can leave your position before the school year ends.

NEW EMPLOYEE

457 DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN ENROLLMENT:

Wyoming Retirement Systems (WRS) employees have the opportunity to enroll in the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan. This voluntary, tax-advantaged account is a great tool to help you meet your retirement goals. If employees are not automatically enrolled by their agency, the necessary form can be found on our website. Once completed, submit the form directly to the Deferred Compensation team email at wrs.457pln.wyo.gov. Feel free to call the team at 307-777-3325 with questions.

457 DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN HANDBOOK UPDATES:

We've recently updated the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan Handbook, a comprehensive resource for Wyoming Retirement System (WRS) members. This resource is packed with information for WRS members, covering everything from making contributions and understanding withdrawal regulations to navigating life event scenarios and managing your account.

Please visit <https://retirement.wyo.gov/members/pension-handbooks/> to take a look at the 457 Handbook.





PENSION FRAUD PREVENTION

Pension fraud can devastate your retirement savings. Being vigilant and knowing the red flags are your best defenses. Here's what to look for to prevent pension fraud:

Unexpected Contact (Cold Calls, Emails, Texts)	If you receive unsolicited contact about your pension, it's probably a scam. Hang up, delete the email, or block the sender.
"Free Pension Reviews"	Be careful of offers for a "free pension review." Legitimate financial advice isn't free. Scammers use this tactic to get your information.
Promises of Unrealistic Returns	Guaranteed high returns with little to no risk are a red flag for a scam. All investments involve some risk.
Pressure to Act Quickly or Time-Limited Offers	Scammers create a false sense of urgency, pressuring you to act quickly by calling the opportunity "one-off" or "time-limited."
Offers to "Unlock" Your Pension Early	Offers to access your pension before age 55 are almost certainly scams. With limited exceptions, withdrawing funds early can lead to significant tax penalties.
Unusual or Complex Investments	Be wary of investments in things like overseas property, forestry, or storage units. If you don't understand an investment, especially an unregulated one, don't invest in it.
Lack of Clear Contact Information	Be suspicious if a company's only contact information is a mobile number or a PO Box. Legitimate businesses provide a clear physical address and a landline number.
Using Couriers for Documents or Pressuring for Quick Signatures	This is a tactic to get you to sign documents without proper review.
Claims of Tax Loopholes or Extra Tax Savings	Be very skeptical of anyone promising "legal loopholes" to reduce taxes on your pension.
Impersonation	Scammers often impersonate legitimate organizations to gain your trust. Always independently verify who they are.

WRS will never release your funds without going over your benefit with you after verifying your identity. If you have any suspicions, contact our office immediately at 307-777-1977.

Other Key Prevention Strategies To Avoid Fraud:

- Reject Unexpected Offers
- Don't Be Rushed or Pressured
- Seek Independent Financial Advice
- Educate Yourself on Scam Tactics
- Protect Your Personal Information
- Monitor Your Accounts
- Strong Passwords and Device Security

If you suspect or are a victim of pension fraud, report it to the proper authorities. This may include your pension provider, local law enforcement, or a government body like the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at [ReportFraud.ftc.gov](https://www.ftc.gov/report-fraud).



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RetireFest 2025: A Success!

We had a fantastic time at our second annual WRS RetireFest held on July 30, 2025 in Cheyenne! It was great to see over 200 WRS members come out to get ready for the “longest vacation of their lives”—retirement. Attendees learned about their retirement benefits from a variety of experts, and we loved seeing our members feel empowered to make informed decisions and confidently embrace their future.

The festivities were enhanced with prizes, music, and great food from G-licious BBQ and Quesos Kitchen.

Get to Know Your WRS Board



Robert Leibrich

WRS Board Member Representing
the Community at Large

Robert (Bob) Leibrich, CPA/PFS CFP® is a Vice-President and Wealth Advisor with First Interstate Bank in Sheridan, WY since 1997. He has been in Wealth Management since 1985. In his role, Bob specializes in building wealth solutions that empower individuals, foundations, and corporations to achieve their long-term financial goals. He has been a leader in establishing the State of Wyoming as a very favorable wealth destination point in the United States. Bob is active in conducting presentations for local and regional conferences on trusts, estate, retirement and financial planning topics.

Bob graduated from the MBA program at the University of South Dakota and obtained a B.S. in Business Administration from Northern State University. Bob is a member of the American Institute of CPAs and is a Certified Financial Planner.

Bob is actively engaged in the Sheridan community through the College board, various community non-profits, and his church. Bob and LaDonna have been married for 40 years and have three grown children who are all working in Wyoming.

retirement.wyo.gov



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