



# Retirement Planning: Mid-Career Checklist

By John K. Naland

- Beneficiary designations:** ensure they are up-to-date: DS-5002 (FS retirement benefit), SF-1152 (unpaid compensation), SF-2823 (FEGLI), and TSP-3 (TSP)  
*Reference: ALDAC 19 State 35376 of April 9, 2019 “Retirement Planning One Year Out”*
- Retirement planning seminars:** take one or more FSI courses: RV105 (2-day, mid-career), RV106 (half-day, annuity/TSP/financial planning), RV101 (4-day, late career), RV103 (1-day, financial planning/estates), RV104 (1-day, annuity/TSP/Social Security/Medicare)  
*References: FSI intranet, [www.state.gov/career-transition-center-ctc/](http://www.state.gov/career-transition-center-ctc/)*
- Understand your benefits:** pension, annuity supplement, Social Security, TSP, FEHB  
*References: FSI seminars, Employee Retirement Portal online seminars (State), “Retirement Planning 101” Foreign Service Journal, April 2020*
- Prior service (if applicable):** buyback military, Peace Corps, or other service; obtain retirement credit for prior CS service; verify your retirement Service Computation Date  
*Reference: ALDAC 19 State 124340 of Nov 26, 2019 “Retirement Credit for Prior Service”*
- Divorce decree (if applicable):** have divorce documentation reviewed by GTM/RET  
*References: ALDAC 14 State 126786 of Oct 28, 2014 “Divorce and FS Retirement Benefits,” ALDAC 19 State 35376 of April 9, 2019 “Retirement Planning One Year Out”*
- TSP:** maximize contributions, chose a portfolio with average returns that beat inflation, decide between Roth and Traditional accounts  
*References: [www.tsp.gov](http://www.tsp.gov), FSI seminars, ERP online seminars (State)*
- Estate planning:** obtain documents such as a will, power of attorney, and medical directive  
*Reference: FSI seminars*
- Long-term care insurance:** consider getting it  
*References: [www.ltcfeds.com](http://www.ltcfeds.com), FSI seminars*
- Social Security:** understand pros and cons of various starting ages between 62 and 70  
*References: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov), FSI seminars, ERP online seminars (State)*
- Post-Retirement Employment:** understand potential impact on annuity supplement and Social Security payments  
*Reference: FSI seminars*
- FEHB health and FEGLI life insurance:** maintain coverage during last five years of service  
*Reference: ALDAC 15 State 35130 of April 1, 2015 “Retirement Planning Five Years Out”*
- AFSA:** review retiree resources on AFSA website; maintain AFSA membership  
*Reference: <http://www.afsa.org/retirement-services>*