FREE CHECKLIST · RETIREMENT INCOME

Required minimum distributions: a planning checklist for 2026

RMDs are not optional, and the penalty for a miss is steep. Most of the tax they create can be planned years ahead. These are the steps we take with clients, in order.

Know your start date

- [ ] Born 1951 through 1959: RMDs begin the year you turn 73. Born 1960 or later: they begin at 75.
- [ ] Your first RMD can wait until April 1 of the next year, but that puts two RMDs in one tax year.
- [ ] Roth IRAs and Roth 401(k)s have no RMDs for the original owner.
- [ ] Still working? RMDs from your current employer's plan may wait until you retire if you own 5 percent or less of the company.

Get organized

- [ ] List every account subject to RMDs: traditional, SEP and SIMPLE IRAs, 401(k), 403(b) and 457(b) plans.
- [ ] Consider consolidating old employer plans. IRAs can be combined for RMDs; each employer plan needs its own.
- [ ] Estimate the amount: December 31 balance divided by the IRS factor (26.5 at age 73, about 3.8 percent).
- [ ] Choose the account to draw from and set federal and Utah tax withholding.

Reduce the tax

- [ ] Use the years before RMDs begin for partial Roth conversions in lower tax brackets.
- [ ] From age 70½, give to charity by qualified charitable distribution, up to $111,000 per person for 2026. It counts toward your RMD and never shows up in income.
- [ ] Check whether a larger RMD pushes you over a Medicare premium threshold two years later.
- [ ] Coordinate RMDs with Social Security timing and any pension so income lands in the years you choose.

Stay on schedule

- [ ] Put a reminder on your calendar for early November so the distribution is done well before December 31.
- [ ] Inherited an IRA after 2019? Most beneficiaries must take annual distributions and empty it within ten years.
- [ ] Missed one? Take it right away and file Form 5329. The penalty is 25 percent, or 10 percent if fixed within two years, and it can be waived for reasonable cause.
- [ ] Review the plan each year. RMD factors, limits and your tax picture change.

Want a second set of eyes? Book a 20-Minute Fit Call.

A short, relaxed conversation with an advisor, virtual or in person. No prep, no obligation. Scan the code or visit **apexflowwealth.com/book-a-consultation**. Salt Lake City office: 1371 E 2100 S, Suite 100 · 385-606-0358.

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