

Law and Policy Group

GRIST

Resources for tracking state and local retirement initiatives

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This article summarizes state retirement initiatives for private-sector workers and rounds up relevant Mercer and third-party resources. This listing is updated periodically and may not always reflect the latest developments in every locality.

California

In 2012, the state legislature passed the California Secure Choice Retirement Savings Trust Act, creating the [CalSavers](#) program. CalSavers is a mandatory payroll-deduction Roth IRA program for nongovernmental employers — both for-profit and not-for-profit — that have at least one employee in California and don't offer a retirement plan or an auto-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA.

The program originally covered employers with five or more employees in California, but [legislation](#) (Ch. 192) enacted in August 2022 reduced the threshold to one employee. However, sole proprietorships, self-employed individuals and other businesses without employees are exempt.

Covered employers must register newly eligible employees within 30 days of hire. CalSavers will send an information packet to the employee, who will then have 30 days to opt out. An eligible employee is one who is at least 18 years old, is covered by the state's unemployment insurance laws and receives a W-2 with California wages.

The default contribution rate is 5% of an employee's gross pay. Under the program's auto-escalation provision, after employees have participated for at least six months, contributions increase by 1% every Jan. 1 until the contribution rate reaches 8%. Employees can opt out of auto-escalation or change their contribution rate at any time.

Employers are prohibited from making contributions, pay no program fees and have no fiduciary liability. Employers must remain neutral about the program, neither endorsing nor discouraging employee participation.

The CalSavers Retirement Savings Board will send a penalty notice to employers that do not comply with the program. Employers face a penalty of \$250 per eligible employee if they fail to comply within 90 days after receiving the notice. An additional penalty of \$500 per eligible employee applies if the employer is still not in compliance 180 days after receiving the notice.

Employer enrollment deadlines. CalSavers opened for employers to enroll on July 1, 2019, with phased-in enrollment deadlines based on an employer's number of eligible employees (although employers can join at any time). Registration deadlines have already passed for covered employers with five or more employees. Employers with one to four employees must register by Dec. 31, 2025. Each spring, the state reassesses employers' status under the program's mandate based on prior-year employee data. Newly covered employers will be notified and have until Dec. 31 to register. Employers can register for the program at <https://employer.calsavers.com/>.

Unsuccessful court challenge. In 2018, a self-described pro-taxpayer group filed a lawsuit to stop CalSavers from taking effect, arguing that ERISA preempts the program. The district court disagreed and [dismissed](#) the case on the grounds that CalSavers isn't an ERISA plan. After the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals [upheld](#) the dismissal, the plaintiffs then appealed to the US Supreme Court, which [declined](#) to hear the case. CalSavers remains operational today.

Non-Mercer resources

- [CalSavers Retirement Savings Program](#)
- [CA Gov't Code tit. 21](#), CalSavers Retirement Savings Trust Act (CA Legislative Information)
- [CalSavers regulations](#) (CalSavers Retirement Savings Board, Jan. 1, 2023)

Mercer Law & Policy resources

Links to any resources on Mercer Link are accessible to Mercer consultants. Clients and prospects may contact their consultants for copies or access 2019 and later GRISTs via the Law & Policy Group's [webpage](#) on mercer.com.

- [Judge finds CalSavers not preempted by ERISA](#) (April 2, 2019)
- [California enacts auto-IRA program for private-sector workers](#) (Sept. 30, 2016)
- [California lawmakers approve retirement savings mandate for private-sector workforce](#) (Sept. 10, 2012)

Colorado

The state enacted [2019 Ch. 236](#) and [2020 Ch. 295](#) to create and implement the Colorado Secure Savings Program, a mandatory state-run, payroll-deduction IRA program. Private-sector Colorado employers — for-profit and not-for-profit — have to participate in the program if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Have been in business for at least two years
- Had five or more employees in Colorado at any time during the previous calendar year
- Have not offered a tax-favored retirement plan for at least two years

Employers in Colorado that aren't required to participate in the program can do so voluntarily. Employers participating in a multiple-employer plan are exempt.

The final registration deadline for employers was June 30, 2023. Newly eligible employers can register for the program or certify their exemption on the [Colorado SecureSavings](#) portal website.

Covered employers must auto-enroll employees and deduct 5% of their pay, unless an employee opts out or elects a different amount. A covered employee is anyone age 18 or older employed by a covered employer for at least 180 days and earning wages subject to Colorado state income tax.

Employers that fail to comply face fines of up to \$100 per year for each eligible employee not enrolled, with a maximum penalty of \$5,000 in a calendar year. Employers have no fiduciary responsibility for the program.

In August 2023, Colorado partnered with [Maine](#) to help launch that state's program. Under the Partnership for a Dignified Retirement, the states will share a program administrator providing recordkeeping, custodial and administrative services to participating employers and employees in each state. [Delaware](#), [Vermont](#) and [Nevada](#) are also members of the partnership.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Colorado SecureSavings web portal](#)
- [Colorado SecureSavings Program](#)
- [Colorado SecureSavings program description](#)
- [2020 Ch. 295](#) (CO General Assembly, July 14, 2020)
- [2019 Ch. 236](#) (CO General Assembly, May 20, 2019)

Mercer Law & Policy resource

- [Colorado enacts state-run auto-IRA program](#) (Aug. 27, 2020)

Connecticut

State legislation [2016 Act 29](#) and [2016 Act 3](#), §§ 95–108 established a mandatory auto-IRA payroll-deduction program known as the Connecticut Retirement Security Program (called the Connecticut Retirement Security Exchange before July 1, 2022). The pilot program launched in October 2021, followed by the official program kickoff on April 1, 2022.

Private-sector Connecticut employers — whether for-profit or not-for-profit — must participate in the program if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Have been in business for at least two years
- Had five or more employees in Connecticut on Oct. 1 of the previous year
- Paid five or more Connecticut workers at least \$5,000 in taxable wages in the prior calendar year
- Do not offer a tax-qualified retirement plan

The final registration deadline for existing employers was March 30, 2023. Newly eligible employers can register or certify their exemption [here](#).

Private-sector employers with fewer than five Connecticut employees may elect to participate in the program.

Participating employers can't make any contributions but must automatically enroll covered employees (unless they opt out), timely remit payroll-deduction contributions and distribute board-prepared enrollment materials and other communications. Employers have no fiduciary liability for the program.

A covered employee is anyone age 19 or older who is employed for at least 120 days in Connecticut by a nonexempt employer and whose service with that employer is recognized for unemployment compensation purposes under state law.

Connecticut has entered into an agreement with [Rhode Island](#) to share a program administrator providing recordkeeping, custodial and administrative services to each state's participating employers and employees. More information about the program is available on the [MyCTSavings](#) website.

Non-Mercer resources

- [MyCTSavings](#) (CT Retirement Security Authority)
- [Connecticut Retirement Security Program](#) (CT Comptroller's Office)
- [2016 Act 3](#) (CT General Assembly, June 2, 2016)
- [2016 Act 29](#) (CT General Assembly, May 27, 2016)

Mercer Law & Policy resource

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- [Connecticut enacts auto-IRA program for private-sector workers](#) (June 14, 2016)

Delaware

State legislation ([Ch. 405](#), [HB 205](#)) enacted in August 2022 created the Delaware Expanding Access for Retirement and Necessary Saving Program (Delaware EARNs), an auto-enrollment payroll-deduction Roth IRA. Employers have no fiduciary responsibility for the program but are responsible for informing employees about it and remitting their contributions on time.

Private-sector Delaware employers — whether for-profit or not-for-profit — must participate in the program if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Have been in business since at least July 1 of the previous calendar year
- Employ at least five covered employees in the current and previous calendar years
- Do not offer a tax-favored retirement plan

The final registration deadline for existing employers was Oct. 15, 2024. New employers become subject to the program in the calendar year after the first year in which they meet these criteria. Employers can register or certify their exemption [here](#).

Any employee age 18 or older with Delaware wages from a covered employer is eligible for the program, unless the employee participates in a multiemployer plan or is covered by the federal Railway Labor Act (which applies to certain railroad and airline employees). The program is also available on a voluntary basis to self-employed individuals.

In December 2023, the program's board voted to join the Partnership for a Dignified Retirement, a multistate consortium led by the [Colorado SecureSavings Program](#). States in the partnership will share a program administrator that provides recordkeeping, custodial and administrative services to participating employers and employees in each state. [Maine](#), [Nevada](#) and [Vermont](#) are also members of the partnership.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Delaware EARNs website](#)
- [Delaware EARNs Program Board website](#) (DE Office of State Treasurer)
- [2022 Ch. 405](#), [HB 205](#), Delaware EARNs Act (DE State Legislature, Aug. 18, 2022)

- [Implementation of Delaware EARNs to begin](#) (DE Office of State Treasurer, Aug. 18, 2022)

Hawaii

In July 2022, Hawaii enacted [Act 296](#) to create the Hawaii Retirement Savings Retirement Program, a payroll-deduction IRA program for private-sector employees. Initially, the program did not require auto-enrollment. However, in 2025, the state enacted [Act 113](#) to add an auto-enrollment requirement. To encourage participation, the initial law also provides that the state may make a matching contribution of up to \$500 for each of the first 50,000 participants that remain enrolled for 12 consecutive months.

Private-sector employers in Hawaii will have to offer the program unless they have offered a workplace retirement plan for some or all of their employees at any time during the past two years. Unlike other state programs, this exemption apparently applies only if the employer offers its plan to all employees. Employers will not be considered fiduciaries for the program. However, employers will be responsible for providing employees written notice of their right to opt into the program and for withholding and timely transmitting employee contributions.

Employers failing to enroll an employee who has opted in will face a \$25 penalty for each month the employee remains unenrolled, and penalties will increase to \$50 per month after the initial penalty is assessed. For each missed employee contribution, the employer will also have to deposit a make-up contribution equal to the employee's contribution rate plus 6% interest.

Employees age 18 or older will be eligible to participate if they are Hawaii residents, work for an employer required to offer the program and receive wages subject to Hawaii state income tax. The default deferral rate is 5%, but employees can elect a different percentage. The legislation calls for holding contributions in Roth IRAs, but a state-appointed board responsible for the program has authority to add a traditional IRA option. The statute leaves the board responsible for determining an implementation time frame.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Hawaii's Retirement Savings Program](#) (HI Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, May 15, 2023)
- [2025 Act 113](#), Relating to the Hawaii Retirement Savings Act (HI State Legislature, May 29, 2025)
- [2022 Act 296](#), Hawaii Retirement Savings Act (HI State Legislature, July 12, 2022)

Illinois

In 2015, the state enacted legislation creating the [Illinois Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program](#), an auto-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA that launched in 2018. As originally enacted, the program generally covered any employer with 25 or more workers in the state, but amendments passed in 2021 expanded the program to cover employers with five or more workers. The initial law also provided only

for Roth IRAs, but amendments enacted in 2025 allow participants to have both traditional and Roth IRAs.

The final registration deadline for existing employers was Nov. 1, 2023. Newly eligible employers may register or certify their exemption [here](#).

Employers are exempt if they sponsor a tax-favored retirement plan — even if the plan doesn't cover any Illinois workers or all workers — or have been in business less than two years. Amendments to the law adopted in June 2023 exempt governmental employers.

The program is available to employees age 18 or older who have wages subject to Illinois income tax. The default contribution rate is 5% of an employee's gross pay. The 2021 amendments provide for automatic increases in the default contribution rate up to 10% of an employee's compensation.

The state initially required covered employers to register eligible new employees with the program within 30 days of hire unless they elect to opt out, but the 2025 program amendments increased the deadline to 120 days after an employee's hire date. Noncompliant employers could face a fine of \$250 per employee for the calendar year in which the employee should have been enrolled. The penalty increases to \$500 per employee for each subsequent year an eligible employee who hasn't opted out remains unenrolled. Employers have no fiduciary responsibility for the program.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Illinois Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program](#)
- [Pub. Act 104-0100](#), amendments to Illinois Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program (IL General Assembly, Aug. 1, 2025)
- [Pub. Act 103-0043](#), amendments to Illinois Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program (IL General Assembly, June 9, 2023)
- [Pub. Act 102-0179](#), amendments to Illinois Secure Choice Retirement Savings Program (IL General Assembly, July 30, 2021)
- [IL Admin. Code tit. 74, §§ 721.100–721.720](#), Illinois Secure Choice Savings Program regulations
- [820 IL Comp. Stat. 80](#), Illinois Secure Choice Savings Program Act (IL General Assembly)

Mercer Law & Policy resources

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- [Employers with 500 or more Illinois workers may need to act on state-run Roth IRA in November](#) (July 30, 2018)

- [Illinois set to enact retirement savings mandate for private-sector workers](#) (Dec. 5, 2014)

Maine

In January 2024, Maine launched the [ME Retirement Investment Trust](#) (MERIT), an auto-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA. Enacted in 2021 ([Ch. 356](#)), the program is mandatory for private-sector for- and not-for-profit employers in the state with five or more employees, unless one of two exceptions applies:

- The employer has offered a tax-favored retirement plan at any time in the current or past two calendar years.
- The employer has not been in business during both the current and previous calendar year.

The program is optional for employers with fewer than five employees.

Existing covered employers initially had to register by June 30, 2024, but amendments to the program enacted in 2023 extended the deadline to Dec. 31, 2024. Employers can register or certify their exemption [here](#).

Any employee age 18 or older with Maine wages from a covered employer is eligible for the program, unless the employee participates in a multiemployer plan or is covered by the federal Railway Labor Act (which applies to certain railroad and airline employees). Employers with fewer than five employees may (but don't have to) participate in the program, in accordance with rules established by the board. The board has discretion to make the program available to self-employed individuals and independent contractors as well.

Participating employers auto-enroll employees and deduct 5% of their pay, unless they opt out or choose a different percentage. The board has discretion to reenroll participants periodically, even after they have opted out. The default savings vehicle is a Roth IRA, but the program's board has the authority to add an option for a traditional IRA.

In August 2023, Maine partnered with [Colorado](#) to form the Partnership for a Dignified Retirement. Under the partnership, a shared program administrator provides recordkeeping, custodial and administrative services to participating employers and employees in each state. [Delaware](#), [Nevada](#) and [Vermont](#) are also members of the partnership.

Non-Mercer resources

- [MERIT program website](#)
- [MERIT program description](#)
- [2023 Ch. 167 \(LD 1082, SP 451\)](#) (ME Legislature, June 12, 2023)
- [2021 Ch. 356 \(LD 1622\)](#) (ME Legislature, June 23, 2021)

Maryland

The state legislature enacted the Maryland Small Business Retirement Savings Program and Trust ([2016 Ch. 324](#)), an auto-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA program. Now known as Maryland\$aves, the program applies to for-profit and not-for-profit employers doing business in the state that pay employees through an automated payroll system or service, unless one of these exclusions apply:

- The employer currently offers — or has offered at any time in the past two calendar years — a tax-favored retirement plan or IRA separate from the state-run program.
- The employer has not been in business for two full calendar years.

Employees age 18 or older are eligible for the program if they work for a covered employer, unless any of the following apply:

- The employee is eligible for a “qualifying retirement plan” or participates in a multiemployer plan.
- The employee is covered by the federal Railway Labor Act (which applies to certain railroad and airline employees).

The program officially launched on Sept. 15, 2022. Participating employers must auto-enroll employees at a default contribution rate determined by the Maryland Small Business Retirement Savings Board. The board has set an initial default rate of 5% of gross pay, with a 1% auto-escalation each year up to 10%. Covered employees can opt in or out or choose a different deferral rate at any time. An employee’s first \$1,000 in contributions will be earmarked as emergency savings and held in a capital preservation investment fund. Any additional contributions will be held for retirement and invested in a target-date fund.

Covered employers that fail to comply do not face any penalties. However, employers that participate in the program will receive a waiver of the \$300 filing fee for the annual report that business entities must file. Employers do not have fiduciary responsibility for the program.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Maryland\\$aves website](#)
- [Maryland Small Business Retirement Savings Board website](#)
- [2016 Ch. 324](#) (MD General Assembly, May 10, 2016)

Mercer Law & Policy resource

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- [Maryland set to enact auto-IRA program for private-sector workers](#) (April 13, 2016)

Massachusetts

In 2012, the state legislature enacted the [Massachusetts Defined Contribution CORE Plan](#) ([MA Gen. Laws Ch. 29, § 64E](#)). The CORE Plan is a multiple-employer 401(k) plan open to not-for-profit employers with 20 or fewer employees. Employer participation is voluntary. All employees of a participating employer are eligible to participate and are automatically enrolled, but they can opt out.

The program launched in October 2017. The Massachusetts legislature passed legislation to create a separate, mandatory auto-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA program, but the governor vetoed the legislation on July 4, 2025, recommending that the program be studied, not immediately implemented.

Non-Mercer resources

- [CORE Plan website](#)
- [CORE Plan statutory and regulatory information](#)
- [MA Gen. Laws Ch. 29, § 64E](#)

Minnesota

Legislation enacted in May 2023 established [Minnesota Secure Choice](#), a mandatory state-run, payroll-deduction IRA program. Private-sector Minnesota employers — for-profit and not-for-profit — have to participate in the program if they meet all of the following criteria:

- Have operated in Minnesota at any time in the past year
- Have five or more employees in Minnesota
- Have not offered nor contributed to a tax-favored retirement savings plan in the previous year

Any employee age 18 or older who works for a covered employer is eligible for the program, unless the employee participates in a multiemployer plan or is covered by the federal Railway Labor Act (which applies to certain railroad and airline employees). The program's board may establish other eligibility criteria and may also allow noncovered individuals to participate in the program. Employers must auto-enroll employees unless they opt out of the program. Contributions will be made on a Roth basis unless an employee elects to make pretax contributions.

Although the law requires the program to begin operating by Jan. 1, 2025, the program's website says the program will offer a pilot program for employers of any size during the first quarter of 2026. After that, covered employers will have a registration window based on their number of employees:

- Employers with 100 or more employees: April 1-June 30, 2026

- Employers with 50-99 employees: July 1-Dec. 31, 2026
- Employers with 25-49 employees: Jan. 1-June 30, 2027
- Employers with 10-24 employees: July 1-Dec. 31, 2027
- Employers with 5-9 employees: Jan. 1-June 30, 2028

Non-Mercer resources

- [Minnesota Secure Choice Retirement Board website](#)
- [2023 Ch. 46](#), Minnesota Secure Choice Retirement Program Act (MN Legislature, May 19, 2023)

Missouri

In July 2023, Missouri enacted [legislation](#) to create the Show-Me MyRetirement Savings Plan, a voluntary ERISA-covered multiple-employer 401(k) plan for small private-sector employers. Employees will be able to make pretax and Roth contributions, and employers will be able to contribute to the plan.

The plan is available to private-sector employers (both for-profit and not-for-profit) with 50 or fewer employees. If a participating employer's workforce increases to more than 50 employees, the employer will become ineligible to stay in the plan after five years, unless its workforce drops back below the 50-employee threshold.

For the first five years (through Aug. 27, 2028), any employer that satisfies the 50-employee threshold can join the state's plan. After this period, the plan will not be available to any employer that has maintained its own tax-favored retirement plan at any time during that year or the two preceding calendar years. The plan also will be available to self-employed workers with self-employment income allocable to the state and members of associations that don't sponsor another retirement plan.

The program's board will be ERISA plan fiduciaries responsible for the plan's design and administration, including selecting vendors (e.g., recordkeeper and investment managers), choosing investment options and establishing claims procedures. Employers will not be liable for the program's design or administration, the board's or employees' investment decisions, employees' investment losses or benefits paid to employees.

The law requires implementation of the plan to be substantially completed by Sept. 1, 2025. However, as of this article's publication date, no website or other information about the program is publicly available.

Non-Mercer resource

- [MO Rev. Stat. § 285.1015](#); [2023 SB 20](#) and [SB 75](#) (MO Legislature, July 6, 2023)

Nevada

Legislation enacted in June 2023 (Ch. 461, [SB 305](#)) creates the Nevada Employee Savings Trust Program, a state-run, auto-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA program. The program will cover for-profit and not-for-profit private-sector employers that:

- Employ more than five people in Nevada
- Have been in business for at least three years
- Haven't offered a tax-favored retirement plan in the current or prior three calendar years

The program is mandatory for employers, unless they enroll employees in a similar program offered by a trade association or chamber of commerce.

Covered employees include individuals age 18 or older who have Nevada wages from a covered employer and have worked at least 120 days for the employer. The program excludes employees covered by the federal Railway Labor Act or participating in a multiemployer plan. Employees can opt out or choose to contribute at a different rate than the program's default (which is set by the program's board).

The program opened for registration July 1, 2025, with a registration deadline of September 1. The program is part of the Partnership for a Dignified Retirement, a multistate consortium led by the [Colorado SecureSavings Program](#). States in the partnership will share a program administrator that provides recordkeeping, custodial and administrative services to participating employers and employees in each state. [Delaware](#), [Maine](#) and [Vermont](#) are also members of the partnership.

Non-Mercer resource

- [Nevada Employee Savings Trust website](#)
- [Nevada Employee Savings Trust](#) (Nevada state treasurer website)
- [2023 Ch. 461, SB 305](#) (Nevada Legislature, June 13, 2023)

New Jersey

In March 2019, the state legislature enacted [2019 Ch. 56](#) — the New Jersey Secure Choice Savings Program Act. Known as RetireReady NJ, the program is mandatory for employers (both for-profit and not-for-profit) with 25 or more employees that have been in business at least two years and have not offered a tax-favored retirement plan in the past two years. Smaller or newer employers may join voluntarily.

Covered employers will auto-enroll employees in the program and deduct 3% of employees' pay, unless employees opt out or elect a different amount. Participating employers will have no fiduciary responsibility for the program.

[RetireReady NJ](#) launched statewide in July 2024, after a pilot program earlier in the year. The final registration deadline for covered employers was Nov. 15, 2024. Employers can register or certify their exemption [here](#).

Non-Mercer resources

- [RetireReady NJ](#) (NJ Treasury Department)
- [2019 Ch. 56](#), New Jersey Secure Choice Savings Program Act (NJ Legislature, March 28, 2019)

Mercer Law & Policy resource

- [New Jersey to enact retirement savings plan for private-sector workers](#) (March 5, 2019)

New Mexico

Enacted in February 2020, the New Mexico Work and Save Act ([Ch. 7](#)) creates both a state-run, payroll-deduction Roth IRA savings program and a retirement plan marketplace. Participation is voluntary for both employers and employees.

Employers eligible to participate include private-sector for-profit and not-for-profit employers that have a primary place of business physically located in New Mexico. Participating employers will not have fiduciary responsibility for the payroll-deduction IRA program, but plans offered through the marketplace will generally be subject to ERISA.

Covered employees include all full- and part-time employees of a covered employer who are at least 18 years old, unless the employee is covered by a multiemployer pension plan or the federal Railway Labor Act. The programs are also available to self-employed individuals.

The marketplace originally was slated to start operating by July 1, 2021, and the auto-IRA program by Jan. 1, 2022. After delays caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, a 2021 law ([Ch. 46](#)) extended both deadlines to July 1, 2024. However, the program's website says that as of 2025, the program is inactive, with an explanation of why the program has not moved forward.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Work and Save website](#) (NM State Treasurer's Office)
- [2021 Ch. 46](#) (NM Legislature, April 5, 2021)
- [2020 Ch. 7](#) (NM Legislature, Feb. 26, 2020)

Mercer Law & Policy resource

- [New Mexico enacts retirement and savings plan marketplace](#) (May 13, 2020)

New York

State legislation enacted in 2018 ([Ch. 55](#)) established the New York Secure Choice Savings Program (SCSP), a state-run Roth IRA program. The program covers private-sector employers — both for-profit and not-for-profit — operating in New York for at least two years that had at least 10 employees in the state during the previous year and haven't offered a qualified retirement plan in the last two years. (A bill — [S 7885](#) — introduced in January 2024 would reduce the threshold to five employees.)

Employees age 18 or older who have New York wages from a covered employer can participate in the program's payroll-deduction IRA. Legislation ([Ch. 20](#)) enacted in 2024 requires the program's board to establish an enrollment process for employees of nonparticipating employers and other individuals to voluntarily participate in the program, but this feature doesn't appear to have been implemented yet.

Although the law originally made participation voluntary, 2021 legislation ([Ch. 452](#)) makes the program mandatory for covered employers and requires them to automatically enroll employees who don't opt out. Participating employers will have no fiduciary responsibility for the program.

The program launched in October 2025. Participating employers must register according to the following deadlines:

- Employers with 30 or more employees: March 18, 2026
- Employers with 15–29 employees: May 15, 2026
- Employers with 10–14 employees: July 15, 2026

The default contribution rate is 3% of an employee's gross pay. Enrollees may optionally choose to have the contribution automatically escalate by 1% every January 1 until the contribution rate reaches 10%. Employees can change their contribution rate at any time.

Non-Mercer resources

- [New York Secure Choice website](#)
- [New York State Secure Choice Savings Program Board website](#)
- [2024 Ch. 20](#) (NY Assembly, Jan. 26, 2024)
- [S 7885](#) (NY Senate, Jan. 3, 2024)
- [2021 Ch. 452](#) (NY Assembly, Oct. 21, 2021)
- [2018 Ch. 55](#) (NY Senate, April 12, 2018)

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- [NY state mandates Secure Choice, putting fate of NYC plan in doubt](#) (June 16, 2021)
- [New York enacts voluntary payroll-deduction IRA program for private-sector workers](#) (May 23, 2018)

Oregon

In 2015, the state enacted the Oregon Retirement Savings Plan, known as [OregonSaves](#), an auto-enrollment payroll-deduction Roth IRA. Employers of all sizes must participate unless they offer a qualified retirement plan. Employers register or certify their exemption on the OregonSaves [website](#).

OregonSaves opened for employer registration in 2017, starting with the largest employers and working down. The last registration deadline for employers was July 31, 2023. Newly eligible employers in Oregon will receive notices from the state that they must sign up for the program or certify their exemption.

The program covers employees age 18 or older who are subject to Oregon's unemployment insurance laws. Employers must register employees within 30 days of their hire date. The default contribution rate is 5% of an employee's W-2 compensation, with 1% increases every Jan. 1 up to 10%. Employees can change their contribution rates at any time or opt out of the program altogether.

In addition to enrolling employees and facilitating payroll deductions, employers must distribute informational materials to employees (among other administrative duties). Employers are not program fiduciaries and must remain neutral about the program, neither endorsing nor discouraging employee participation. Employers that fail to comply with the program face civil penalties of up to \$100 per affected employee, capped at \$5,000 total per calendar year.

Non-Mercer resources

- [OregonSaves website](#)
- [OregonSaves Program Description](#)
- [OR Admin. R. 170-080-0001 to 170-080-0065](#), Oregon Retirement Savings Program regulations (OR Treasury)
- [OR Rev. Stat. §§ 178.010–178.990](#), Oregon Retirement Savings Plan (OR Legislature)

Mercer Law & Policy resources

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- [Employers now face penalties for failure to comply with OregonSaves](#) (June 3, 2019)
- [Employers with 100+ Oregon workers will get OregonSaves reminder notices in mid-October](#) (Oct. 3, 2017)
- [Employers with 100+ Oregon workers must act on state-run Roth IRA by Nov 15](#) (June 9, 2017)

Rhode Island

In June 2024, Rhode Island enacted [legislation](#) creating RISavers, a mandatory, state-run payroll-deduction IRA program. The program will cover private-sector employers — both for-profit and not-for-profit — operating in Rhode Island that have at least five employees in the state during the previous year and don't offer a qualified retirement plan. Eligible employers must participate, but other employers can voluntarily join. A pilot program is expected to launch in the spring of 2025, with full implementation shortly thereafter.

Covered employees include individuals age 18 or older who have worked at least 120 days for a covered employer. Covered employees can opt out but will be offered an opportunity at least once a year to opt back in.

Registration deadlines will be based on the employee headcount:

- One year after the program opens for eligible employers with more than 100 eligible employees
- Two years after the program opens for eligible employers with more than 50 eligible employees
- Three years after the program opens for all other eligible employers

The [website](#) launched in October 2025 and indicates that employers must register by Dec. 12, 2025.

Rhode Island has entered into an agreement with [Connecticut](#) to share a program administrator providing recordkeeping, custodial and administrative services to each state's participating employers and employees.

Non-Mercer resources

- [RISavers website](#)
- [2024 Ch. 350](#) (Rhode Island General Assembly, June 26, 2024)

Vermont

In June 2023, Vermont enacted [Act 43](#) and [S 135](#) establishing Vermont Saves, a mandatory state-run, payroll-deduction Roth IRA program. The program will cover private-sector employers — both for-profit and not-for-profit — operating in Vermont during the current and previous year if they haven't offered (or been part of a controlled group that offers) a tax-favored retirement plan in the current or prior two calendar years. Although the law doesn't specify a minimum number of employees for covered employers, enrollment deadlines apply only to employers with at least five employees.

Covered employees include individuals ages 18 or older who have Vermont wages from a covered employer. The law excludes employees covered by the federal Railway Labor Act or participating in a multiemployer plan. The state's treasurer can adopt rules treating part-time, seasonal or temporary employees as covered employees.

The program's default contribution rate is 5% of pay, but employees may change the rate or opt out. The treasurer is responsible for setting an auto-escalation rate between 1% and 8%. Employers are responsible for enrolling employees and remitting their salary deferrals but will not make additional contributions to the program. The statute calls for contributions to be made on a Roth basis but allows the treasurer to add a traditional IRA option.

In June 2024, the program's board voted to join the Partnership for a Dignified Retirement, a multistate consortium led by the [Colorado](#) SecureSavings Program. States in the partnership will share a program administrator that provides recordkeeping, custodial and administrative services to participating employers and employees in each state. [Delaware](#), [Maine](#) and [Nevada](#) are also members of the partnership.

The program opened for enrollment in December 2024, and all eligible employers were required to enroll by March 1, 2025.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Vermont Saves website](#)
- [2023 Act 43](#) (VT General Assembly, June 1, 2023)

Virginia

In April 2021, the state enacted ([Ch. 556](#)) RetirePath Virginia, an automatic-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA program for private-sector employees. For-profit and not-for-profit employers with at least 25 employees that have been operating for at least two years must participate unless they offer an auto-enrollment payroll-deduction IRA or a qualified retirement plan. Other employers may elect to participate voluntarily but must ensure their participation does not create an ERISA plan. Participating employers will have no fiduciary responsibility for the program.

Employees ages 18 or older who work at least 30 hours per week and have Virginia taxable income are eligible to participate. Employers must auto-enroll eligible employees, but employees may opt out at any time. Employer contributions are prohibited.

The program began operating on July 1, 2023. Employers eligible for RetirePath in 2023 had to [register](#) before Feb. 15, 2024. Employers can register or certify their exemption [here](#).

Non-Mercer resources

- [RetirePath Virginia website](#)
- [2021 Ch. 556](#) (VA General Assembly, April 15, 2021)

Washington

Enacted in 2015 ([Ch. 296](#)), the Washington Small Business Retirement Marketplace provides a website where self-employed individuals and employers with fewer than 100 employees can compare and shop for state-verified simple, low-cost retirement savings plans and IRAs. Participation is voluntary for both employers and employees.

The [Retirement Marketplace](#), which opened in March 2018, offers 401(k) plans with and without auto-enrollment, a safe harbor plan, a profit-sharing plan (employer-only contributions), as well as Roth and traditional IRAs. The website also provides links to educational materials and other resources for employers and individuals.

In March 2024, the state also enacted [legislation](#) to create to a new auto-enrollment IRA program for employees of private sector employers, both for-profit and not-for-profit. Employers will be covered by the program if they've been in business in the state for at least two years, maintain a physical presence in the state, don't offer a tax-favored retirement plan to their employees and had employees in the prior year who worked at least 10,400 combined hours. The program's board must consult with covered employers and employees on the program's design and implementation issues and provide periodic reports to the appropriate legislative committees. The program is expected to launch by July 1, 2027.

Non-Mercer resources

- [Washington Saves website](#)
- [2024 Ch. 327](#) (WA Legislature, March 28, 2024)
- [Retirement Marketplace](#) (WA Department of Commerce)
- [Retirement Marketplace information page](#) (WA Department of Commerce)

Mercer Law & Policy resource

Links to any resources on Mercer Link are accessible to Mercer consultants. Clients and prospects may contact their consultants for copies or access 2019 and later GRISTs via the Law & Policy Group's [webpage](#) on mercer.com.

- [First state-run voluntary retirement plan marketplace opens in Washington State](#) (March 27, 2018)

Related resource

- [Georgetown University Center for Retirement Initiatives](#)

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