

# 2026 Tax REFERENCE GUIDE



Columbus Life  
Insurance Company

A member of Western & Southern Financial Group

## Tax Brackets for 2026

Taxable income (i.e., income minus deductions and credits) between:

### Married, Joint & Surviving Spouses

Taxable Income Range	Marginal Tax Rate
\$0–\$24,800	10%
\$24,801–\$100,800	12%
\$100,801–\$211,400	22%
\$211,401–\$403,550	24%
\$403,551–\$512,450	32%
\$512,451–\$768,700	35%
over \$768,701	37%
<i>Capital gains/qualified dividends</i>	
\$0–\$98,900	0%
\$98,901–\$613,700	15%
over \$613,700	20%

### Single

\$0–\$12,400	10%
\$12,401–\$50,400	12%
\$50,401–\$105,700	22%
\$105,701–\$201,775	24%
\$201,776–\$256,225	32%
\$256,226–\$640,600	35%
over \$640,601	37%
<i>Capital gains/qualified dividends</i>	
\$0–\$49,450	0%
\$49,451–\$545,500	15%
over \$545,500	20%

### Married, Separate

\$0–\$12,400	10%
\$12,401–\$50,400	12%
\$50,401–\$105,700	22%
\$105,701–\$201,775	24%
\$201,776–\$256,225	32%
\$256,226–\$640,600	35%
over \$640,601	37%
<i>Capital gains/qualified dividends</i>	
\$0–\$49,450	0%
\$49,451–\$306,850	15%
over \$306,850	20%

### Head of Household (HOH)

\$0–\$17,700	10%
\$17,701–\$67,450	12%
\$67,451–\$105,700	22%
\$105,701–\$201,775	24%
\$201,776–\$256,200	32%
\$256,201–\$640,600	35%
over \$640,601	37%
<i>Capital gains/qualified dividends</i>	
\$0–\$66,200	0%
\$66,201–\$579,600	15%
over \$579,600	20%

### Estates and Trusts

\$0–\$3,300	10%
\$3,301–\$11,700	24%
\$11,701–\$16,000	35%
over \$16,000	37%
<i>Capital gains/qualified dividends</i>	
\$0–\$3,300	0%
\$3,301–\$16,250	15%
over \$16,250	20%

### Corporate Tax Rate

<i>Capital gains/qualified dividends</i>	21%
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## Standard Deduction

Married, joint	\$32,200
Single; married, separate	\$16,100
HOH	\$24,150
Blind or over age 65: add \$1,650 if married, \$2,050 if single or HOH (no phaseout)	

Additional deduction for over age 65: add additional \$6,000 for each qualifying senior Phaseout	
Single, HOH	\$75,000–\$175,000
Married, joint	\$150,000–\$250,000

## Mortgage Interest Deduction

On acquisition indebtedness up to \$750,000 for 1st and 2nd homes  
No deduction for home equity indebtedness unless used to substantially improve the home

## State and Local Tax (SALT) Deduction Limit

Married, joint, single, HOH	\$10,000 minimum–\$40,400
Married, separate	\$5,000 minimum–\$20,200
Phaseout for deducting SALT above minimum	
Married, joint, single, HOH	\$505,000–\$606,333
Married, separate	\$252,500–\$303,167

## Alternative Minimum Tax Exemption Amount

Married, joint	\$140,200
Single, HOH	\$90,100
Estates and Trusts	\$31,400
Married, separate	\$70,100

## IRA and Pension Plan Limits

IRA contribution	
Under age 50	\$7,500
Age 50 and over	\$8,600

Phaseout for deducting IRA contribution <sup>1</sup>	
Married, joint	\$129,000–\$149,000 MAGI
Single, HOH	\$81,000–\$91,000 MAGI
Married, separate	\$0–\$10,000 MAGI

Phaseout for deducting spousal IRA <sup>1</sup>	\$242,000–\$252,000 MAGI
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Phaseout of Roth contribution eligibility	
Married, joint	\$242,000–\$252,000 MAGI
Single, HOH	\$153,000–\$168,000 MAGI
Married, separate	\$0–\$10,000 MAGI

SEP contribution	
Up to 25% of compensation, limit	\$72,000
Compensation to participate in SEP	\$800
SIMPLE elective deferral	

Under age 50	\$17,000
Age 50 to 59 <sup>2</sup>	\$21,000
Age 60 to 63 <sup>2</sup>	\$22,250

401(k), 403(b) <sup>3</sup> , 457 <sup>4</sup> and SARSEP elective deferral	
Under age 50	\$24,500
Age 50 to 59 <sup>2</sup>	\$32,500
Age 60 to 63 <sup>2</sup>	\$35,750

Annual defined contribution limit	\$72,000
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Annual defined benefit limit	\$290,000
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Highly compensated employee	\$160,000
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Key Employee in top heavy plans	\$235,000
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Annual compensation taken into account for qualified plans	\$360,000
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## Qualified Charitable Distribution Limit

CRAT	\$111,000
	\$55,000

Maximum qualified longevity annuity contract (QLAC) premium	\$210,000 <sup>5</sup>
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## Gift and Estate Tax

Gift tax annual exclusion	\$19,000
Annual exclusion for gifts to noncitizen spouse	\$194,000
Estate and gift tax rate	40%
Unified estate & gift/GST exemption	\$15,000,000

## Additional Medicare Tax on Income Exceeding \$200,000 (\$250,000 married, joint; \$125,000 married, separate)

Additional tax on excess of earned income <sup>6</sup>	0.9%
Additional tax on Net Investment Income <sup>7</sup>	3.8%

## 199A Qualified Business Income Deduction Phaseout

Married, joint	\$403,500–\$553,500
All others	\$201,775–\$276,775

## Qualified Overtime Compensation Deduction

Married, joint	\$25,000
Single; married, separate	\$12,500

Phaseout	
Married, joint	\$300,000–\$550,000
Single; married, separate	\$150,000–\$275,000

## Qualified Tip Deduction

Maximum deduction	\$25,000
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Phaseout	
Married, joint	\$300,000–\$550,000
Single; married, separate	\$150,000–\$400,000



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## Education

Coverdell Education Savings Account Phaseout	\$2,000
Married, joint	\$190,000–\$220,000
All others	\$95,000–\$110,000

Student loan interest deduction limit Phaseout	\$2,500
Married, joint	\$170,000–\$200,000 MAGI
All others	\$85,000–\$100,000 MAGI

Lifetime Learning Credits Phaseout	\$2,000
Married, joint	\$160,000–\$180,000
All others	\$80,000–\$90,000

Tax-free savings bonds interest phased out	
Married, joint	\$152,650–\$182,650 MAGI
All others	\$101,800–\$116,800 MAGI

## Social Security<sup>8</sup>

Maximum taxable earnings base	\$184,500
Amount Needed to Earn	
One Credit (Maximum 4 per year)	\$1,890

Social Security and Medicare Tax Rates	
Employee	7.65%
Employer	7.65%
Self-Employed	15.30%

Maximum Monthly Retirement Benefit at Full Retirement Age <sup>9</sup>	\$4,152
Cost of Living Adjustment	2.8%

Income causing Social Security benefits to be taxable <sup>10</sup>	
Married, joint	
Up to 50% taxable	\$32,000 MAGI
Up to 85% taxable	\$44,000 MAGI
Single	
Up to 50% taxable	\$25,000 MAGI
Up to 85% taxable	\$34,000 MAGI

## Reduction of Social Security retirement benefits:

In years before full retirement age, \$1 in benefits will be reduced for every \$2 of earnings in excess of \$24,480. In the year of full retirement age, \$1 in benefits will be reduced for every \$3 of earnings in excess of \$65,160 (applies only to months of earnings prior to full retirement age). There is no limit on earnings beginning the month an individual attains full retirement age.

## Average Monthly Benefit (December 2024)

Average Monthly Retirement Benefit	
Men	\$2,181
Women	\$1,780
Average Monthly Survivor Benefit	
Men	\$1,616
Women	\$1,843

Source: *Fast Facts and Figures about Social Security, 2025*

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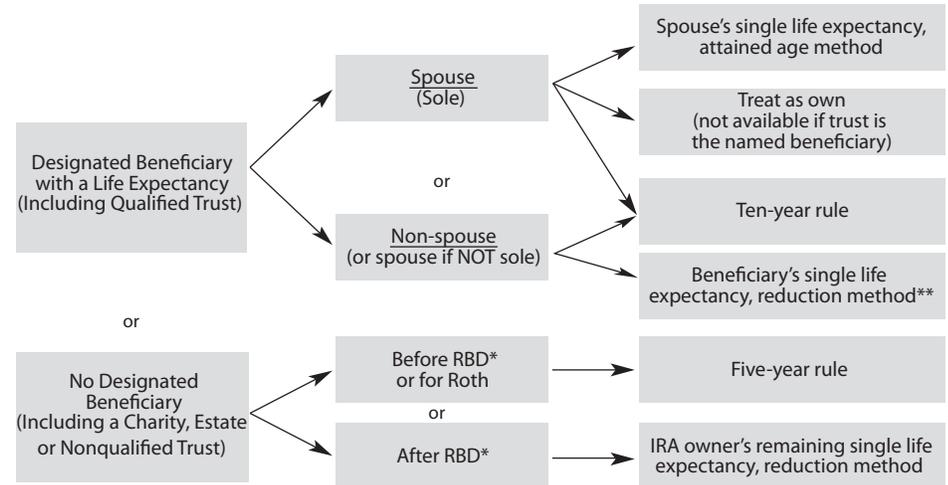
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## Uniform Lifetime Table

Use to calculate Required Minimum Distributions from IRAs and qualified plans during owner's life. If owner has spousal beneficiary more than 10 years younger, use instead Joint Life Table from IRS Pub. 590.

Taxpayer's Age	Life Expectancy	Taxpayer's Age	Life Expectancy
72	27.4	95	8.9
73	26.5	96	8.4
74	25.5	97	7.8
75	24.6	98	7.3
76	23.7	99	6.8
77	22.9	100	6.4
78	22.0	101	6.0
79	21.1	102	5.6
80	20.2	103	5.2
81	19.4	104	4.9
82	18.5	105	4.6
83	17.7	106	4.3
84	16.8	107	4.1
85	16.0	108	3.9
86	15.2	109	3.7
87	14.4	110	3.5
88	13.7	111	3.4
89	12.9	112	3.3
90	12.2	113	3.1
91	11.5	114	3.0
92	10.8	115	2.9
93	10.1	116	2.8
94	9.5	117	2.7

## IRA Beneficiary Options



\*RBD defined as "Required Beginning Date" (April 1 following the year a Traditional IRA owner reaches age 73).

\*\*Method only available if the non-spouse beneficiary is the minor child of the deceased IRA owner (until the child's age of majority), disabled, chronically ill or not more than 10 years younger than the deceased IRA owner.

- 1 Applicability depends on the type of IRA, which persons participate in an employer-sponsored plan, the type of employer-sponsored plan offered, and MAGI.
- 2 All catch up contributions limited to Roth for those earning \$150,000 and above effective in 2026. Super catch up is optional for 401(k) plans.
- 3 Special increased limit may apply to certain 403(b) contributors with 15 or more years of service.
- 4 In last 3 years prior to year of retirement, 457(b) plan participant may be able to double elective deferral if needed to catch up on prior missed contributions, but if they do, they cannot use catch up.
- 5 Increased to \$200,000 (as indexed) for contracts purchased or exchanged after 12/28/2022.
- 6 Total Employee Medicare Tax is 1.45% + 0.9% = 2.35%.
- 7 Including interest, dividends, capital gains and annuity distributions.
- 8 Source: [www.ssa.gov/news/cola](http://www.ssa.gov/news/cola), 11/19/2025.
- 9 In 2026, for those turning age 62, full retirement age is 67 years.
- 10 Income is most income including muni bond interest but only 1/2 of Social Security.

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