

Effectively Communicating Your Retirement Plans

Breanna Radtke

Administrator

Mid-America Carpenters
Regional Council Benefit Funds
Chicago, Illinois

Heidi tenBroek

Principal and
Communication Consultant
Milliman, Inc.
Seattle, Washington



The opinions expressed in this presentation are those of the speaker. The International Foundation disclaims responsibility for views expressed and statements made by the program speakers.

International Foundation
OF EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS 

Agenda

- Communication methods
- Financial literacy
- Building a model of education
- Messages for participants, employers, trustees, administrators
- Q&A session

Communication Methods

Traditional Methods

- Mail
 - Postcards
 - Newsletters
 - Letters
- Phone
 - Outbound calls
 - Inbound phone messages
 - Text messages

Chicago Regional Council of Carpenters Millmen Pension Fund
December 31, 2020 Benefit Statement

Your Years of Service
Your service data as of the final office records as of December 31, 2020:
Your service year for 2020: 1
Years of Pension Credit: 36.00
Last Annuitant: 6.00

Your Benefit Amount
Based on your Final Office Records, you may be eligible to receive the following annuitized benefit:

From	To	Years of Credit	Annual Rate	Benefit
1/1/2012	12/31/2020	9.00	\$1,000.00	\$9,000.00
1/1/2013	12/31/2013	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1/1/2014	12/31/2014	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1/1/2015	12/31/2015	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1/1/2016	12/31/2016	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1/1/2017	12/31/2017	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1/1/2018	12/31/2018	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1/1/2019	12/31/2019	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1/1/2020	12/31/2020	1.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Total (Maximum Benefit)				\$10,000.00

Looking for Your 1099-R Pension Tax Form?
Log in to the Member Portal to view and download your 1099-R tax form. It will be available by the end of January 2023.
Tap this postcard for step-by-step instructions.

Accessing the Member Portal
Go to carpentersmillmen.org and select **Member Login** in the top right corner. If this is your first visit to the Member Portal, you'll need to register.
1. Select **Register** (under the green Login button).
2. Enter your information, and create a password.
3. Read the terms of use, scroll to the bottom, and select **Accept**.
4. Select **Register for Access**.
5. Confirm your identity by text or email, enter the code you receive, and select **Verify**.
6. Review the terms of use, scroll to the bottom, and select **Accept**.
7. Select **My Dashboard**.
You'll find your 1099-R tax form under **My Pension** on the left side of the screen.
Scan the QR code to log in or register.
Need some extra help? Watch the registration video that appears on the login page for the Member Portal.

Digital Methods

- Email
- Social media
 - Funny/engaging content
 - Video/tutorials
- Website
 - Calendar of events
 - Resource library
 - Documents and forms
 - Member portal

Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Benefit Funds
You are a new recipient of pension benefits

What to Expect:
 Beginning with your second check, all pension payments will be made via direct deposit. Check stubs are not mailed to your home, but you'll be able to view your monthly check stub with a detailed breakdown of each payment on the Member Portal. If you aren't already registered, you can do so at <https://bit.ly/3W1m1rh>.

The following materials are available for you:
Summary Plan Description (SPD) - Provides information on the Pension Plan rules and regulations.
Summary of Material Modifications (SMM) - Provides information about changes to the Plan since the SPD was published.
 Access these materials online at: bit.ly/3W1m1rh

Scan this QR code to access.

If you have questions about this notice, contact the Retirement Benefits Department at (312) 787-9455, menu option #4, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.



Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council Benefit Funds and BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois present

Medicare Advantage Webinar

Ease your transition to Medicare Advantage (MAAP) and ensure that you understand your benefits.

Details: 3rd Wednesday of every month
Speakers: BlueCross BlueShield
Time: 10:00am - 11:00am (EST)

Webinar Agenda:

- ABCs of Medicare
- MAAP Plan Highlights
- Prescription Drug Coverage
- Cost Contribution
- Free Advertisements
- Supplemental Benefits
- Q & A

Scan this QR code to register for the webinar or visit www.bluecrossillinois.com/maap. You will also be emailed a link to join ahead of the webinar each month.

Save your Money for Retirement

Strategy	Annual Withdrawal	Annual Tax	Annual Net	Final Balance
IF YOU WITHDRAW FROM YOUR ACCOUNT	\$10,000	\$2,000	\$8,000	\$25,000
IF YOU LEAVE THE \$10,000 INVESTMENT GROWING 6.8% EACH YEAR*	\$10,000	\$1,000	\$9,000	\$25,000

By withdrawing \$10,000 from your account today—after taxes and tax penalties—you will receive only \$7,000 today and lose \$25,000 less when you're ready to retire!

* 6.8% investment growth rate over 30 years based on average long-term investment growth rate of 6.8%.

Keeping your money in your account now can make a big difference later.

Use of AI in Communications

- 1st draft for letters, articles, social media posts, emails, etc.
- Translation of documents/forms
- Embedded in communication tools like Constant Contact, Mail Chimp, Canva, etc.
- **Note:** Nothing should be shared without human review

Strategies to Consider

- Targeted information by age/stage, income level, previous benefits
- Bite-sized education
- Event-driven reminders
- Personas
- Personalized communications
- Meetings or one-on-one sessions
- Translation

Personal Stories

- More meaningful messaging when coming from a peer
- Can share personal messaging and the impact of benefits and services
- Testimonials can be shared on a variety of topics

Member Testimonial Sample



Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy

Financial literacy is key to avoiding debt burdens which can lead to poor credit, bankruptcy, housing foreclosure, and other negative consequences.

Greater financial literacy can lead to better money management and higher savings

57%

of adults are
considered financially
literate

~70%

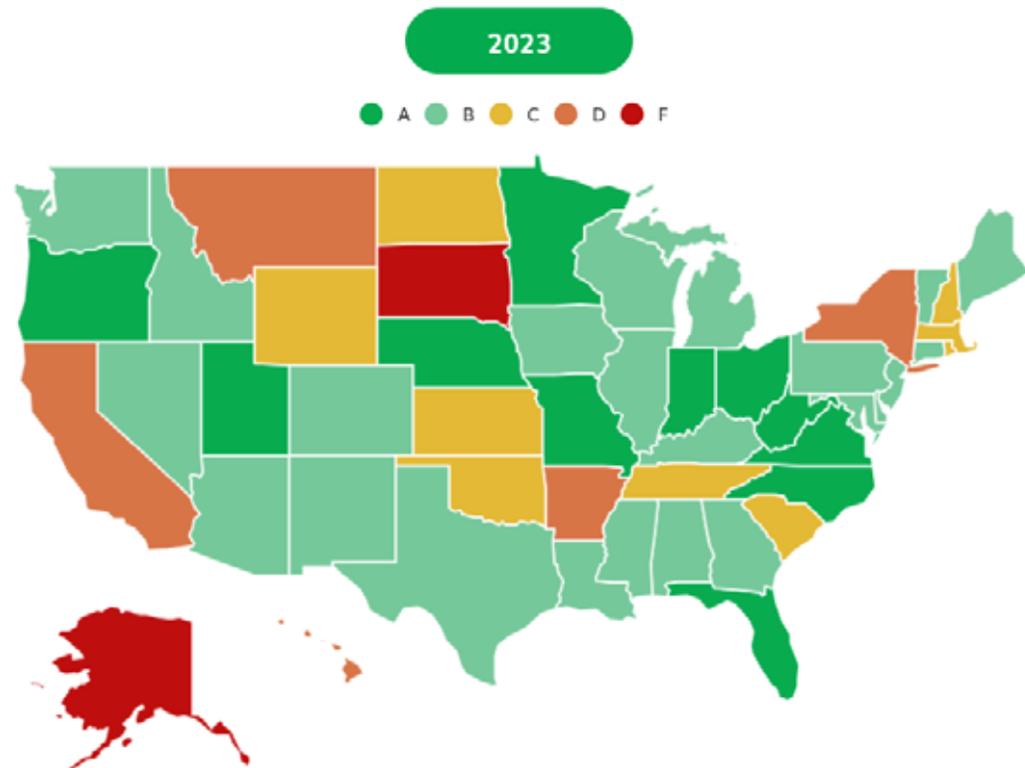
of Americans familiar
with 401(k)s don't use
them

Source: www.marketwatch.com/guides/banking/financial-literacy-statistics/

Financial Literacy

Americans lost an average of **\$1,506** in 2023 due to financial illiteracy

Financial Literacy Grades By State



Source: www.marketwatch.com/guides/banking/financial-literacy-statistics/

Financial Literacy

- Retirement and savings
 - Importance of starting early
- Investment education
- Emergency savings
- Value of the Plan

...the ability to understand and effectively use various financial skills, including personal financial management, budgeting and investing

How Various Sources of Retirement Income Work Together

- Traditional 3-legged stool
 - Pension/annuity
 - Defined contribution plan/savings
 - Social Security



Connect Participants With Retirement Resources

More than half of employees say that worrying about their finances distracts them from work.

- Financial Wellness
 - Retirement planning
 - Emergency savings
 - Student loans
 - Budgeting and debt
- Education
 - Calculators and tools
 - Investing, risk profile
 - Retirement concepts
 - Needs and income in retirement

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute and Greenwald Research, 2022-2023 Workplace Wellness Survey

Connect Participants With Retirement Resources

- Personal support
 - Making a plan
 - Understanding options
- Transition to retirement
 - Retirement readiness
 - Spending in retirement
 - Healthcare options

Building a Model of Education

Goals

- What are your objectives for your plans?
- What are the highest needs/pain points?
- What do participants need?

Top Ten Questions

1. Am I on track to retire?
2. What's the difference between pre-tax and Roth savings?
3. How can I take out a loan?
4. What happens to my account if I leave?
5. Do I have the right investments?

Top Ten Questions

6. What can I expect from my pension plan when I retire?
7. How can I save for retirement and pay off debt?
8. Can I combine my previous employer retirement plan?
9. When should I start Social Security?
10. Why does the pension plan earn less on investments than my 401(k)?

Tools and Resources for Members

- Leverage the resources available through your vendors
- Make resources available through multiple media
 - Webinars and in-person meetings
 - Email
 - Mailings
 - Flyers

“Just-In-Time” Information

- Timing—When do they need the details (now or when the situation arises for them?)
 - Easy to find when needed
 - Reminders and awareness
 - Tie to member events (eligibility, vesting, turning 65, anniversary, etc.)

Tips for Success

- Partner with Plan professionals
 - Understand what each brings to the table
- Put communications on the meeting agenda
- Have a strategy
 - Understand your audiences
 - Map out your messages
 - Coordinate with other trusts/funds that touch your members

Tips for Success

- Who sends the message?
 - Who does audience pay the most attention to?
 - Credibility
- Set up a subcommittee and clear approval process
- Enable union reps with good information
- Communicate outside big changes



**Messages for Participants,
Employers, Trustees,
Administrators**

Know Your Audience

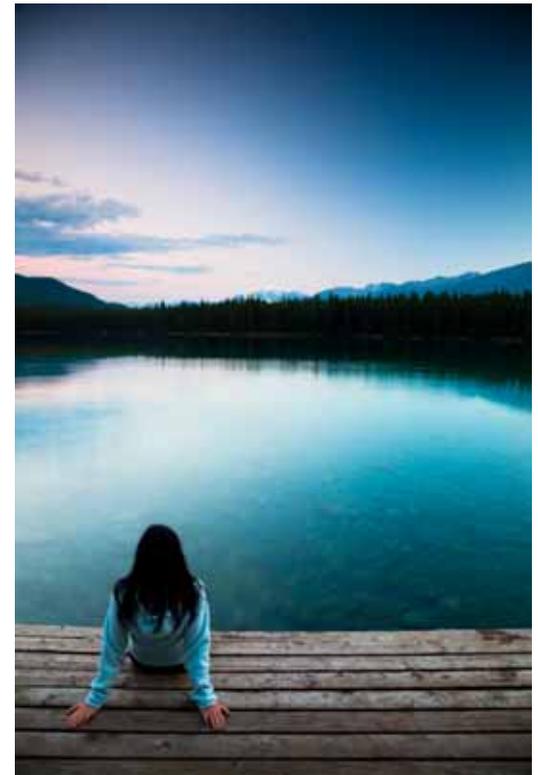
- Conduct a stakeholder analysis
- Listen to participants, employers, trustees, administrators

Know Your Audience

- Employee/member listening and feedback
 - Track questions and calls
 - Ask the “front line”
 - Focus groups
 - Surveys
 - Feedback loop
 - Social media forums
 - Liaisons

Know Your Audience

- Not just what they are, but who they are
 - Motivation
 - Behavior drivers
 - Incentives



What Does Each Stakeholder Need?

- Participants
- Employers
- Trustees
- Administrators

Develop the Right Key Messages

- Vary by audience
- WIIFM
- Put it in context
- Explain the “why”
- Honest, balanced communication can build trust, even when messages are difficult

Put Yourself in the Participant's Shoes

- One size does not fit all
- Connect with employee resource groups
- Learn about barriers/risks participants in various situations face
- Aspirational and attainable
- Accessible



Highlight the Value

- All plans
 - How your program stacks up compared to peer organizations
 - Promote the total investment from the organization
 - Testimonials from recent retirees and current participants

Highlight the Value

- Defined Contribution
 - Participation in the market
 - Competitive fees
 - Spending flexibility in retirement
 - Ability to leave money to heirs
- Defined Benefit
 - Foundation of stable income
 - Like insurance—
Safety net
 - Disability and pre-retirement death benefits
 - May provide annuity more efficiently

Key Takeaways

- Effective retirement plan communication goes hand in hand with financial literacy
- Multi-media is a must
- Audience segmentation (and understanding) is key to conveying messages that resonate

Questions

Your Feedback
Is Important.
Please Scan
This QR Code.

Session Evaluation

