

## PLAN PROFILE

### Plan: New York State Deferred Compensation Plan

457(b) pre-tax and Roth

**Participants:** 260,524

**Assets:** \$35.3 billion

**Administrator:** Nationwide

**Investment Consultant:** Callan

**Category:** National Retirement Security Month

**Initiative:** National Retirement Security Month campaign

## BACKGROUND

The State of New York, like much of the nation, was impacted by economic conditions in 2022. Inflation rates in the New York City Metropolitan Area rose by **6.1%** in March 2022 compared to the previous year, marking the highest annual rate in 30 years<sup>1</sup>. This inflationary period saw steep increases in essential household items, notably in energy, transportation, recreation, and food, which strained the purchasing power of New Yorkers<sup>1</sup>.

These economic pressures compounded the already challenging task of retirement planning for State of New York employees. Between January 2022 and October 2023, **22.3% of NYSDCP's participant base** decreased and/or paused their contributions. Overall, plan assets **decreased by \$5.4 billion** in 2022.

As we approached October 2023 and National Retirement Security Month, we wanted to offer participants education and guidance to help them get back on track and meet their retirement goals.

## GOALS

Our campaign was driven by two primary goals:

- **Educate participants** on retirement planning and financial wellness best practices to enhance their confidence in their retirement outlook.
- **Motivate participants** who had reduced or ceased their retirement contributions between October 2022 and October 2023 to reassess and rejuvenate their retirement strategies.

*We have always used NRSM as a way to connect with our participants regarding the importance of saving for retirement. In 2023, we decided to create a robust outreach effort to engage with participants via a variety of methods. These efforts were extremely successful as noted by the results, and we believe it is a model that should be used by all 457(b) plans in the country, - Sharon Lukacs, NYSDCP Executive Director*

## DESCRIPTION

Our comprehensive campaign employed the following tactics:

- **Educational Resources:** We created a collection of web articles, tools, and resources to guide participants in assessing their retirement readiness. Tools and resources were curated to address participant concerns with market and economic conditions as well as other financial

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.osc.ny.gov/reports/inflation-new-york-city-metropolitan-area>

wellness topics, such as balancing debt repayment and saving for retirement and other goals, taking steps to set good financial habits, and understanding Social Security.

- **Campaign Awareness Email:** To increase participant awareness of the campaign, we sent segmented emails on how the campaign and resources could help participants increase their retirement readiness and learn more about factors that can affect them. The awareness email was segmented with messaging based on their estimated retirement age.
- **Segmented Emails for Participants Who Decreased or Stopped Contributions:** As 22% of participants had decreased or stopped contributions since January 2022, we targeted those participants with segmented messages to encourage them to take advantage of National Retirement Security Month and campaign resources to get on track. Messaging was tailored to participants based on their estimated retirement age.
- **Recognition Emails:** We also targeted 25% of participants who had made no changes or increased contributions and also had email addresses on file. For these participants, we acknowledged the participants' consistent savings efforts and celebrated their commitment to retirement goals. We also encouraged them to take advantage of the campaign to maintain progress towards their goals.
- **Webinars:** Plan account executives facilitated series of in-person and virtual webinars to help address various aspects of retirement readiness and financial wellness, educate participants on the importance of saving for retirement, and advertise other NRSM resources. Topics included: NYSLRS pension, quarterly economic overview, asset allocation, Social Security, and pre-retirement.
- **Employer Communications and Kits:** We equipped employers in the NYSDCP with resources to disseminate directly to their employees, shared via email and our quarterly employer newsletter.
- **Participant Newsletter:** An NRSM-themed article was featured in the quarterly participant newsletter to increase awareness of the campaign and offer additional actionable tips for building retirement security.

## RESULTS

The campaign's impact was significant:

- Engagement with our educational resources increased by an **480%** from the previous year's campaign, including the last week of September and full month of October for both years.
- The campaign contributed to a **19% lift** in participant engagement with tools that allow them to evaluate their progress towards retirement goals and project the impact a contribution increase could have on their income in retirement. The campaign also contributed to a **2% increase in** participant contributions. By the end of 2023, plan assets increased by **\$5 billion**.
- Participant engagement with in-person and virtual education presentation and discussions **increased by 673.3%** from the previous year. Throughout the month of October, **6,445 participants and state** employees eligible to enroll in the plan attended 20+ webinars and in-

person presentations facilitated by NYSDCP Account Executives. An **additional 4,000 individuals** participated in discussions with Account Executives during educational booths held throughout the month.

- Account Executives also facilitated outreach webinars for local municipal employers who are eligible to participate in the plan. More than **80% of employers** joined the NYSDCP during National Retirement Security Month.
- Participants have also continued to return to the campaign resources, even after the end of the campaign. From September 25, 2023, to March 31, 2024, overall **engagement increased by 521%** from the previous year, received an **additional 7.3% increase** in engagement **without additional promotion** after November 1, 2023. For the same period, the overall **bounce rate decreased by 61.6%**, compared to 2022. This demonstrates the value that participants found in the educational resources offered through the campaign, even outside of observance of National Retirement Security Month.
- In addition, **13% of participating New York employers** downloaded the NRSM kits, indicating a proactive stance towards employee retirement education. Like participants, employers also continued to access the campaign resources even after the campaign concluded. The employer page received an **additional 6% increase** in engagement from November 1, 2023, to March 31, 2024, **without any additional promotion**.

## **FEASIBILITY**

The success of our campaign demonstrates its replicability and feasibility for other plans. The strategies we implemented are scalable and adaptable, making it possible for any plan to execute a similar campaign and achieve comparable results by leveraging field representatives, participant data and insights, and employer messaging.

## SUPPORTING EXAMPLES – Participant campaign

### Taking advantage of your retirement plan is the first step

No matter where you are in your retirement journey, it's important to have a plan that can help you reach your goals. NYSDCP can help you come up with a strategy and see it through. Whether you want to accumulate or spend down savings, adjust your approach due to changing needs or talk to an Account Executive, we can help. **Attend one of our upcoming webinars to learn more about topics that can help you with your retirement game plan.**

### Take steps to build confidence in your retirement strategy and outlook.

NYSDCP offers webinars on various topics each month. Celebrate NRSM with us by learning all October long. This month's topics include:

- NYSLRS pension**  
An overview of the New York State and Local Retirement System (NYSLRS) pension and how it can help provide for your future. [Register now](#)
- Economic overview**  
An update on the state of the economy for the second half of 2023, including the outlook for the Federal Reserve, inflation, and upcoming prospects. [Register now](#)
- Asset allocation**  
A conversation about the basics of NYSDCP investment options and how diversification can help create an asset allocation best suited for your retirement goals. [Register now](#)
- Social Security**  
A discussion about your Social Security benefits, including eligibility, age-based considerations, and benefits adjustments for spouses and divorcees. [Register now](#)
- Pre-retirement**  
A conversation about important considerations as you get closer to retirement, including longevity, income sources, asset consolidation, and required minimum distributions (RMDs). [Register now](#)
- Statewide School Specific Enrollment and Plan Overview**  
These webinars are designed to help school district and educational employees learn more about their available options. We will walk through the benefits of joining the NYSDCP, step by step direction on how to enroll, the comparison of a 403(b) and a 457(b), and the ability to have both plans. Keep an eye out for an invite from your employer.

### Participant campaign web page

Over the past year, you kept working toward your retirement goals at a steady pace. **Great work!**

To celebrate your savings efforts, you're invited to join our National Retirement Security Month activities. We're hosting webinars and answering your most pressing questions about retirement planning and financial wellness all month long.

Visit our [website](#) to track your progress toward your goals and access other resources that are available only during the month of October.

### Targeted email for participants who had increased contributions or contributed consistently

The past few years have been hard on our wallets. For nearly half (44%) of Americans, saving for retirement took a back seat to staying on top of day-to-day expenses last year<sup>1</sup>.

### We're celebrating National Retirement Security Month (NRSM) with some good news:

- You can take steps today to help boost your confidence in your retirement outlook.
- Time is on your side. Contributing to your retirement plan today and increasing over time can make a difference in the long run. Use our [resources](#) to calculate whether a change in contribution makes sense for you.

Celebrate NRSM with us by learning more about steps you can take today that will help you reach your retirement goals.

### Targeted email for earlier-career participants who had decreased or stopped contributions

The past few years have been hard on our wallets. For nearly half (44%) of Americans, saving for retirement took a back seat to staying on top of day-to-day expenses last year<sup>1</sup>.

### We're celebrating National Retirement Security Month (NRSM) with some good news:

- You can take steps today to help boost your confidence in your retirement outlook.
- You still have [options for retirement planning](#), even as you approach retirement.


Celebrate NRSM with us by learning more about steps you can take today that will help you reach your retirement goals.

### Targeted email for later-career participants who had decreased or stopped contributions

## SUPPORTING EXAMPLES – Employer campaign examples

Help employees feel confident in their retirement readiness

October is National Retirement Security Month.



Saving for retirement can feel daunting when market conditions are fluctuating. Retirement confidence is at an all-time low with employees feeling their savings will be insufficient in retirement.

<b>74%</b>	<b>84%</b>	<b>41%</b>
of public employees are not confident they are on track to finance security in retirement.*	of employees are confident that the increasing cost of living will have a harder hit than in your industry.	of workers are not confident that they will have enough money to last their entire lives.*





Compared with 2022, employee retirement confidence has significantly dropped, returning to levels last seen in 2008 during the global financial crisis. We want to help your employees boost their confidence about their retirement savings and their ability to improve their retirement outcome. We've developed a comprehensive set of campaign materials that can help you communicate to your employees, "You've got this," as you encourage them to find out whether they're on track with their retirement savings goals and what changes they can make if they're not.

Get the "You've Got This" campaign kit.

Download our campaign kit and use it to help employees feel more confident in their retirement readiness.

Download

What's included in the kit:

 <p><b>Campaign overview</b></p> <p><small>This campaign overview contains sign and messaging of each piece available in the campaign kit.</small></p>	 <p><b>Emails</b></p> <p><small>These five emails cover retirement planning steps and help employees to better understand, build and track their or in any calendar you choose.</small></p>	 <p><b>Newsletter article</b></p> <p><small>Our most readable article about National Retirement Security Month is ready for you to place in your next employee communication.</small></p>	 <p><b>Employee campaign page</b></p> <p><small>Our most readable article about National Retirement Security Month is ready for you to place in your next employee communication.</small></p>
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Employer campaign web page with downloadable kit



National Retirement Security Month

## Help your employees feel confident in their retirement readiness



October is National Retirement Security Month.

Did you know that **74%** of public employees are not confident that they are on track to financial security in retirement?

Retirement confidence is at an all-time low due to fluctuating market conditions and other employee financial challenges.

Help boost your employees' confidence in their retirement readiness with this downloadable kit to help communicate to your employees, "You've got this."

[Get the kit](#)

New York State Deferred Compensation Plan

Employer promotional launch email