

# INTRODUCTION

Retirement is not a single event but rather a process involving a series of decisions over time. It is important to begin planning for retirement early in life but it is never too late to begin. While most people focus on finances when planning for retirement, it is equally important to consider emotional and social aspects of your life. This publication guides you in developing a retirement plan that takes into account all these important considerations.

**Chapter 1, *More than Money Decisions***, has activities that help couples and individuals identify their approach to life and priority values. It provides tools for setting and reviewing goals and explains how you can productively discuss priorities among goals and areas of disagreement. These activities will help you focus your energies in the right direction and provide a starting point for other retirement planning decisions covered in the book.

**Chapter 2, *Will You Be Able to Afford the Life You Want?***, helps you assess your current expenses so you can estimate the income you will need in retirement. The chapter helps you project your current expenses into retirement considering the effects of inflation. With this income target for retirement in mind, you will know how much you will need to save. The chapter also helps you determine your net worth. How early or late you want to retire will also be a factor in determining what you currently need to do.

Increasingly, people need to make decisions about financial products within their pension plans and in individual retirement saving plans. **Chapter 3, *Developing Income Sources***, gives you the basic information needed to plan for retirement income. It is never too late to save for retirement, but the earlier you begin, the better. Money takes time to grow.

**Chapter 4, *Saving and Investment Options***, provides basic information about accumulating money beyond the retirement income sources discussed in Chapter 3. It presents eight building blocks to establishing a solid financial foundation that includes saving and investing. The chapter outlines criteria to consider in making decisions about investment choices. It provides advantages and disadvantages of many saving and investment products.

Wondered if you need a financial planner to assist with pre-retirement planning? **Chapter 5, *Should You Hire a Financial Planner?*** helps you answer that question. It outlines the content of a good financial plan as well as listing what you need to do before consulting with a financial planner. It includes qualifications for financial planners and questions to ask before you hire one.

Unexpected events can threaten the plans you make and the assets you are trying to protect for retirement. There are a number of ways to protect yourself against the risks you and your family face. **Chapter 6, *Protecting Against Risks with Health and Life Insurance***, includes information on health insurance concerns at retirement such as Medicare and Medicare supplements. It also briefly discusses health-related risk protection documents such as powers-of-attorney, living wills, health-care powers of attorney, and long-term care insurance. The life insurance section has information on types of life insurance, choosing the appropriate life insurance policy, and figuring out how much life insurance you need. A glossary of terms is also included.

Retirement plans often need to be reviewed and revised as time goes on and if major events such as death, marriage, divorce, or illness occur. Whether you have started planning for retirement or not, this book will be an invaluable resource.