

State Pension Checklist



Use this checklist to support conversations about State Pension entitlement, timing, tax, National Insurance records and wider retirement income planning. It's designed as a prompt for adviser discussion and should be tailored to the client's individual circumstances.

1. Establish the client's State Pension position

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Has the client obtained a current State Pension forecast?
- ☐ Has the client checked their National Insurance record?
- ☐ Are there incomplete or non-qualifying years?
- ☐ Is the client on track for the full new State Pension?
- ☐ Are transitional rules or contracted-out history relevant?

Notes/actions

2. Confirm timing and claiming requirements

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ What is the client's State Pension age?
- ☐ Do they understand the State Pension is not paid automatically and needs to be claimed?
- ☐ Have they received or requested their claim invitation code?
- ☐ Have they gathered the information needed to claim, including bank details, marriage or divorce dates, overseas work history and foreign social security details?

Notes/actions

3. Build State Pension into retirement income planning

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Does the forecast support the client's target retirement income?
- ☐ Has any income shortfall after State Pension been quantified?
- ☐ Has the value of the State Pension as secure, inflation-linked income been explained?

Notes/actions

4. Consider whether deferral is appropriate

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Is the client still working or likely to pay tax at a higher rate?
- ☐ Could deferral improve tax efficiency?
- ☐ Do they have enough ISA, cash or other assets to bridge the gap?
- ☐ Have health, longevity and breakeven age been discussed?

Notes/actions

5. Explain State Pension taxation

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Has the client been told that the State Pension is taxable, even though tax is not deducted at source?
- ☐ Has the adviser identified how HMRC is likely to collect any tax due?
- ☐ Check interaction with employment income, pension income, rental income or drawdown.
- ☐ Review whether timing or sequencing of income could reduce tax.

Notes/actions

6. Review top-up opportunities

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Could voluntary Class 3 National Insurance contributions improve the client's outcome?
- ☐ Check whether gaps are within the usual six-year window.
- ☐ Would paying for the gap actually increase the client's State Pension?
- ☐ If yes, has the client been directed to the Future Pension Centre if they are under State Pension age, or the Pension Service if they are over State Pension age?
- ☐ Check availability of free NI credits before recommending paid contributions.

Notes/actions

7. Check National Insurance credits

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Has the client had time out of paid work due to childcare, caring responsibilities, illness, unemployment or low earnings?
- ☐ Are Child Benefit credits relevant?
- ☐ Could Carer's Credit apply?
- ☐ Could Specified Adult Childcare credits help a grandparent or family member?
- ☐ Have both partners' National Insurance records been reviewed separately, where relevant?

Notes/actions

8. Consider overseas and survivor issues

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Is the client planning to live abroad?
- ☐ If so, will annual State Pension increases apply in their intended country of residence?
- ☐ Does the client understand that the new State Pension generally does not transfer on death?
- ☐ Are protected payments, additional State Pension or pre-2016 rights relevant?
- ☐ Has survivor income been stress-tested?

Notes/actions

9. Check couple-based tax planning

Adviser discussion point

- ☐ Are the clients married or in a civil partnership?
- ☐ Is one partner a non-taxpayer and the other a basic-rate taxpayer?
- ☐ Could Marriage Allowance save tax, where one partner is a non-taxpayer and the other is a basic-rate taxpayer?

Notes/actions



royallondon.com

The Royal London Mutual Insurance Society Limited is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. The firm is on the Financial Services Register, registration number 117672. Registered in England and Wales, company number 99064. Registered office: 80 Fenchurch Street, London EC3M 4BY. Royal London Marketing Limited is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and introduces Royal London's customers to other insurance companies. The firm is on the Financial Services Register, registration number 302391. Registered in England and Wales company number 4414137. Registered office: 80 Fenchurch Street, London EC3M 4BY.