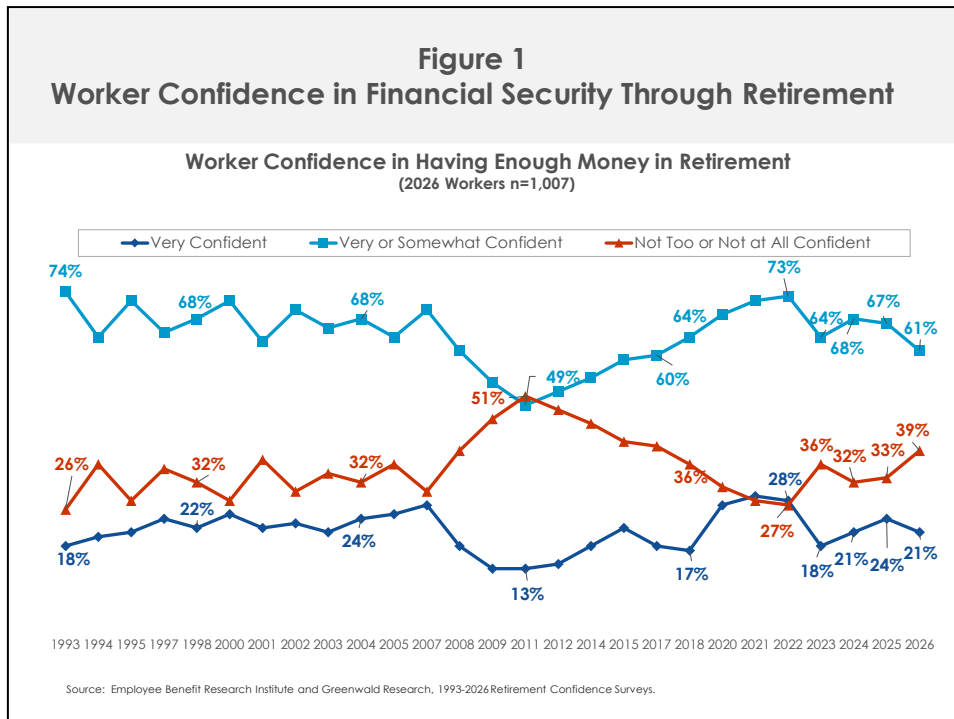


2026 RCS FACT SHEET #1 RETIREMENT CONFIDENCE

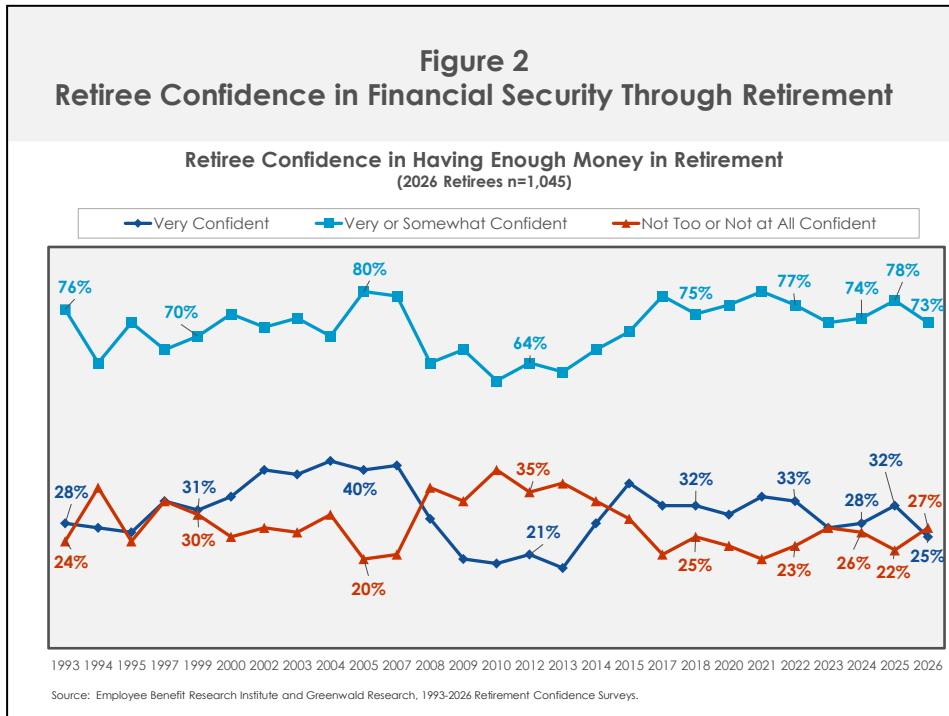
Just over one in five Americans feel very confident about their ability to have enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement years. Workers who say debt is a problem are, not surprisingly, less confident, while those who have a retirement plan are more confident.

Confidence in Having a Comfortable Retirement

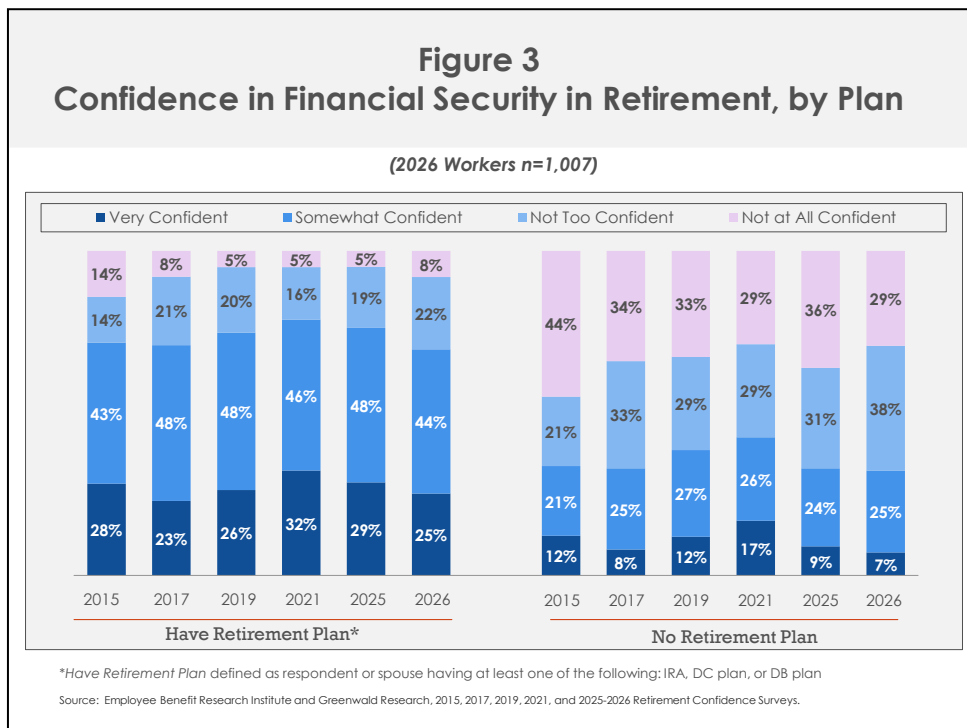
The 2026 Retirement Confidence Survey (RCS) finds that six in 10 American workers (61 percent) feel confident in their ability to have enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement, with 21 percent feeling very confident (Figure 1). This percentage confident is down from 67 percent in 2025, and it is at its lowest level since 2017.



The level of confidence expressed by those already in retirement is higher than for those yet to retire. Seventy-three percent of retirees report feeling either very or somewhat confident about having enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement years, which is down from 78 percent in 2025. One-quarter of retirees feel very confident (25 percent) in 2026 (Figure 2).

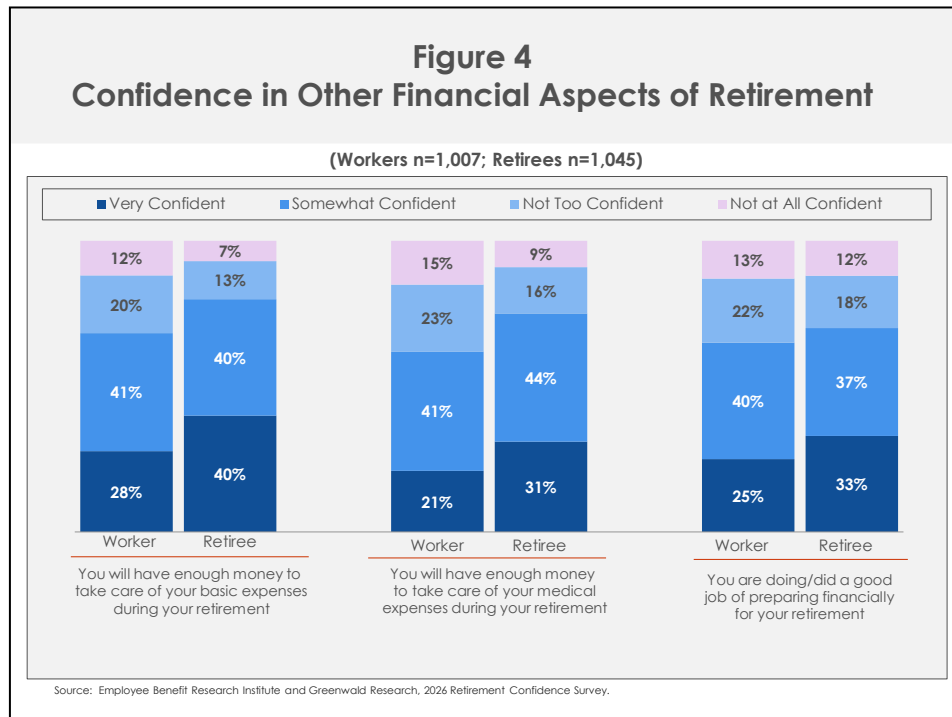


Retirement confidence continues to be strongly related to retirement plan participation, whether in a defined contribution (DC) plan, defined benefit (DB) plan, or individual retirement account (IRA). Workers reporting they or their spouse have money in a DC plan or IRA or have benefits in a DB plan from a current or previous employer are more than twice as likely as those without any of these plans to be at least somewhat confident (70 percent with a plan vs. 32 percent without a plan) (Figure 3).



Confidence in Other Financial Aspects of Retirement

Nearly seven in 10 workers (69 percent) report feeling very or somewhat confident about being able to afford basic expenses in retirement, including 28 percent who feel very confident. Workers' confidence in their ability to afford basic expenses is higher than the confidence they report regarding their ability to pay for medical expenses in retirement. Just over one in three workers (38 percent) are not too or not at all confident they will have enough money for medical expenses in retirement. A similar but smaller share is not too or not at all confident that they are doing a good job in preparing financially for retirement (35 percent) (Figure 4).



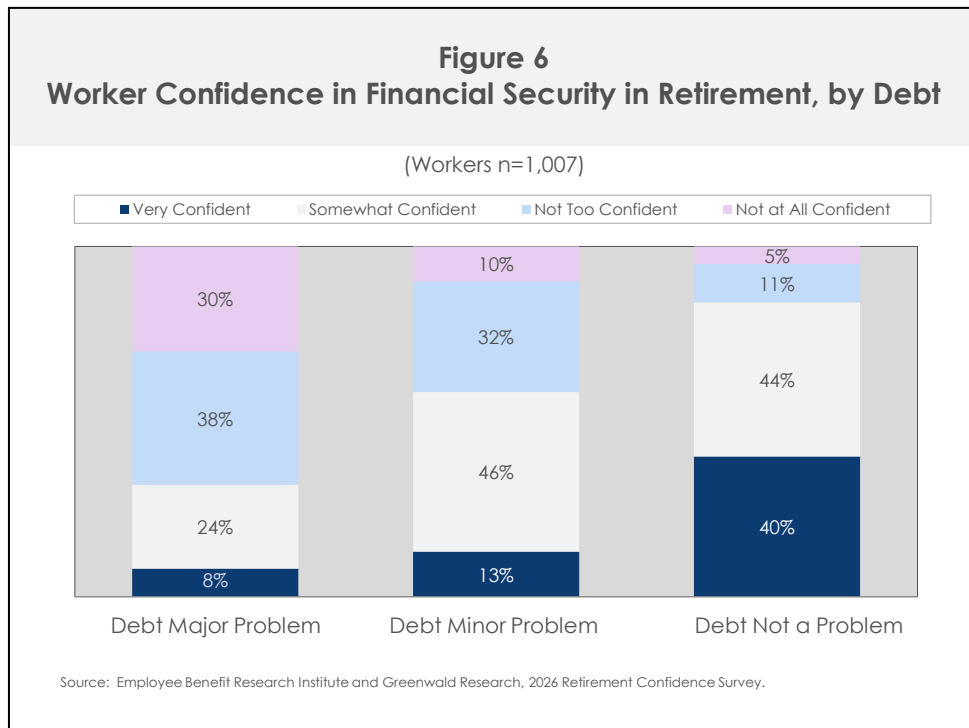
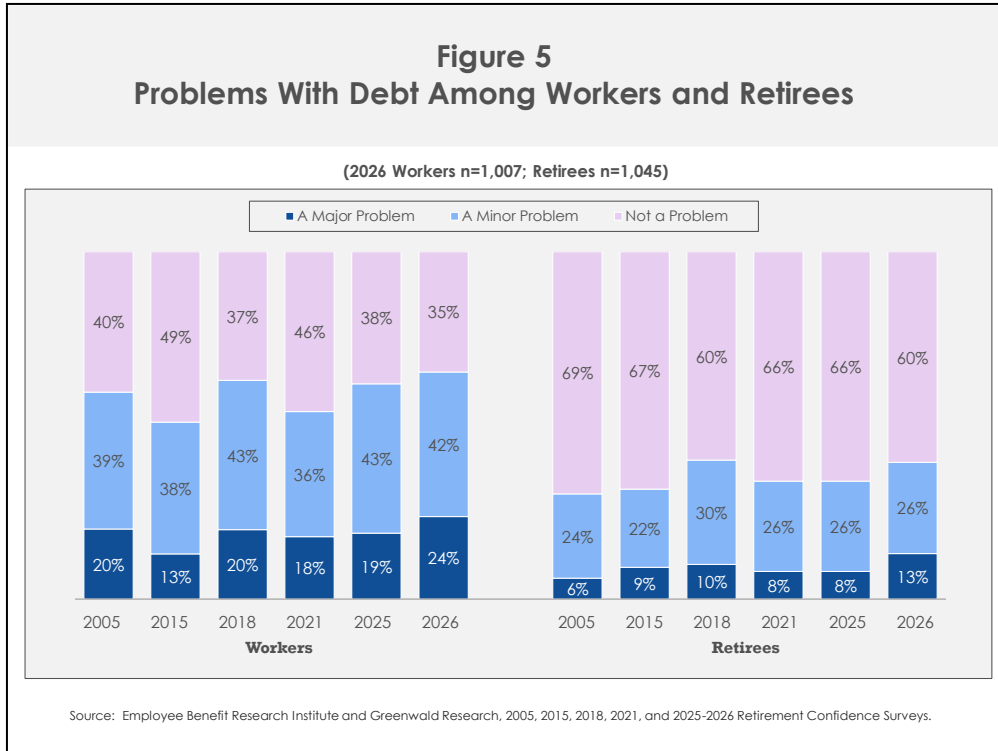
Retirees, who are already in that life stage, express higher levels of confidence than workers in having enough money to take care of expenses (basic and medical) during retirement. Four out of five retirees (80 percent) feel at least somewhat confident in their ability to afford basic expenses throughout their retirement years. Seventy-five percent are very or somewhat confident about having enough money to cover medical expenses, and 70 percent feel they did a good job preparing financially for retirement (Figure 4).

Influence of Debt on Confidence

Workers are more likely to say that debt is a problem for them than retirees. Sixty-five percent of workers say debt is a problem for them, while 35 percent say debt is not a problem. In contrast, just 40 percent of retirees say that debt is a problem for them. Workers are almost twice as likely as retirees to say that debt is a major problem (24 percent vs. 13 percent) (Figure 5).

The RCS has consistently found a relationship between debt levels and retirement confidence. In 2026, 32 percent of workers with a major debt problem say they are very or somewhat confident about having enough money to live comfortably in retirement,

compared with 85 percent of workers who indicate debt is not a problem. Likewise, 30 percent of workers with a major debt problem are not at all confident about having enough money for a financially secure retirement, compared with 5 percent of workers without a debt problem (Figure 6).



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