

At a Glance | March 28, 2019

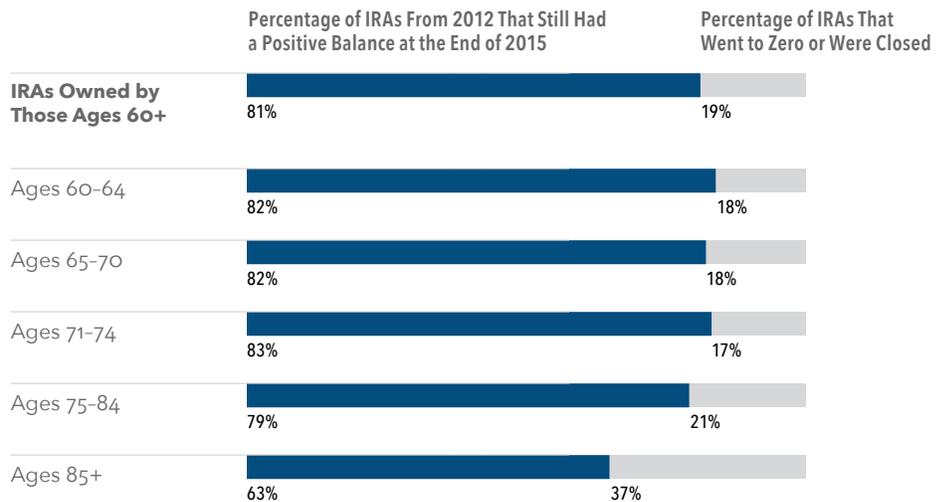
# Individual Retirement Accounts: Changes in IRA Balances of Older Owners Over Time

## EVIDENCE THAT OLDER IRA OWNERS MAINTAIN BALANCES OVER TIME

Of the IRAs owned by those ages 60 or older, slightly over 80 percent still had positive balances after three years.<sup>1</sup> They weren't closed or depleted.

Of the IRAs owned by those ages 60 to 84 in 2012, approximately 80 percent still had positive balances three years later. Only when owners reached ages 85 or older did a significantly higher percentage of accounts fail to have a positive balance after three years.<sup>1</sup>

## The Share of IRAs Going to Zero or Being Closed Sharply Increases for Those With Owners Ages 85 or Older<sup>1</sup>



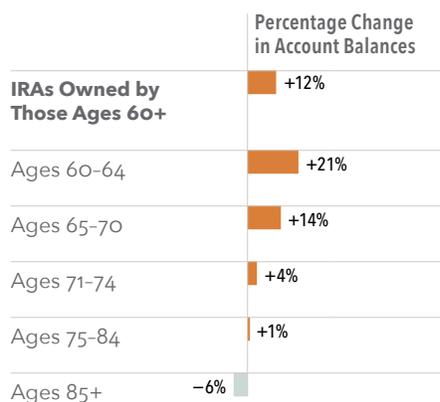
## OLDER OWNERS GROW ASSETS UNTIL REACHING AGE 85

Two-thirds of older IRA owners with open accounts actually grew their balances between 2012 and 2015: the median three-year balance change was 12 percent.

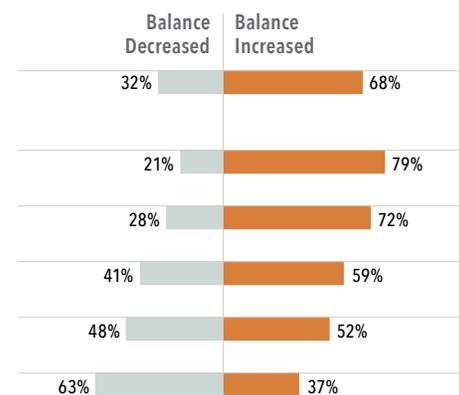
The opposite was true for accounts of IRA owners ages 85 or older: two-thirds were depleted over the period, at a median rate of -6 percent.

By 2015, the proportion of IRAs that were still open that had a balance below their 2012 amount was just under a third. More than two-thirds of these had increases in their balances.

## Median Percentage Change in Account Balances



## A Majority of IRAs Owned by Those Ages 60 to 84 Had Balance Increases



SOURCE: Craig Copeland. "Individual Retirement Accounts: How Balances of Older Account Owners Change Over Time." EBRI Issue Brief, no. 477 (Employee Benefit Research Institute, March 21, 2019).  
1. 2012 to 2015.