

Employer Direct Document Service



The Ascensus ERISA 403(b) Plan

Advisor overview

Why ERISA-based 403(b) plans matter

The Ascensus ERISA 403(b) plan is an IRS-approved qualified retirement plan designed for nonprofit organizations, hospitals, schools, and charitable groups. Unlike non-ERISA 403(b) arrangements, ERISA-based plans include formal fiduciary oversight, governance, and investment monitoring.

ERISA 403(b) plans are designed for nonprofits that want clearer governance, employer contributions, and the ability to support employee financial wellness initiatives—while creating opportunities for advisors to deepen relationships and deliver ongoing value.

Key benefits for financial advisors

- Generate a potentially steady stream of recurring investment contributions
- Expand your practice into the nonprofit and institutional retirement plan market
- Strengthen long-term relationships with organizational leadership and plan participants
- Support organizations that value professional guidance under ERISA fiduciary standards
- Create opportunities to discuss related services, such as executive benefits and individual planning

Key benefits for your clients

- Stronger governance and fiduciary oversight than non-ERISA 403(b) arrangements
- Flexible plan features, including employer contributions and automatic enrollment
- Affordable plan establishment and annual document maintenance fees
- A retirement benefit that supports employee recruitment and retention

An ERISA 403(b) plan is available to:

- Private K–12 schools
- Private colleges and universities
- Charitable 501(c)(3) organizations
- Religious organizations (elective participation in ERISA rules)



Establishment and funding

- Plans are established through adoption of a written ERISA-compliant plan document that defines eligibility, contributions, investments, and administrative rules
- Employers enter into a service agreement with a recordkeeper or provider to support plan operations and participant account tracking
- Employers select investment menus—typically including mutual funds and annuity options
- Individual participant accounts are created for each eligible employee
- Fiduciary roles are assigned, with the employer serving as plan fiduciary and the option to engage a 3(21) or 3(38) fiduciary advisor
- Contribution limits are governed by IRS Sections 402(g) and 415(c)


Funding options include:

- Employee pretax or Roth salary deferrals
- Optional employer contributions (matching, non-elective, or discretionary)
- Catch-up contributions for eligible employees

Get expert answers to your ERISA 403(b) plan establishment questions or establish your plans today. We're here to help.

Access our website by clicking the link below or scanning the QR code.



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 dcs.ascensus.com/403b/establish-services

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