



# WHAT DO AMERICANS THINK ABOUT PENSIONS FOR PUBLIC EMPLOYEES?

October 2024



As of September 2024, state and local governments employ about 20.4 million workers, or about 13% of the U.S. workforce, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. This includes professionals who deliver essential taxpayer services – from public safety employees to educators.

The vast majority of state and local government employees have a defined benefit pension as part of their compensation. These retirement benefits help attract and retain employees for a public service career. Typically, public employees contribute to their pension benefits from each paycheck throughout their career.

This infographic presents Americans' views of pensions earned by state and local government employees based upon the National Institute on Retirement Security's nationwide public opinion survey of retirement issues.

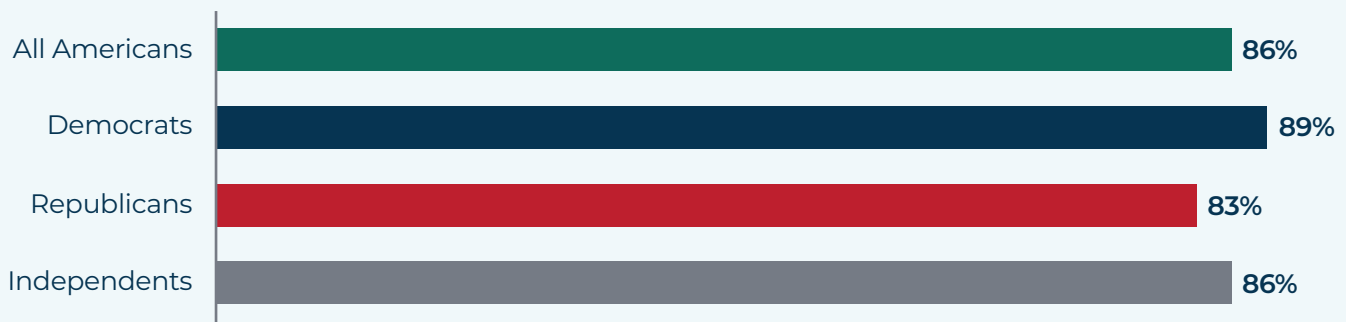
## Americans Are Highly Supportive Of Pensions For All Workers, Beyond Public Employees

**86%**

of Americans say all workers, not just those employed by state and local governments, should have a pension.



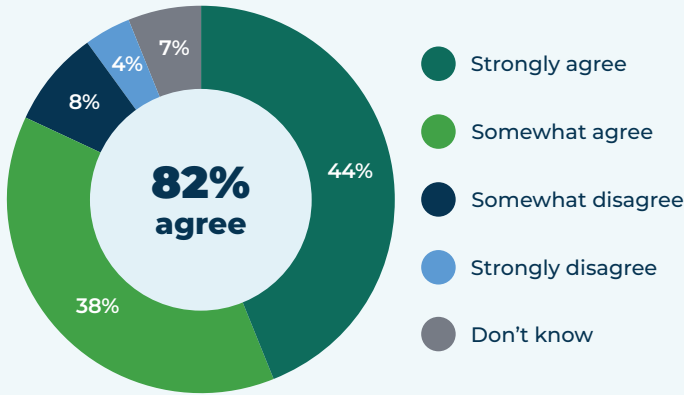
This sentiment holds steady across party lines.



# Americans See Public Pensions As An Effective Recruitment And Retention Tool



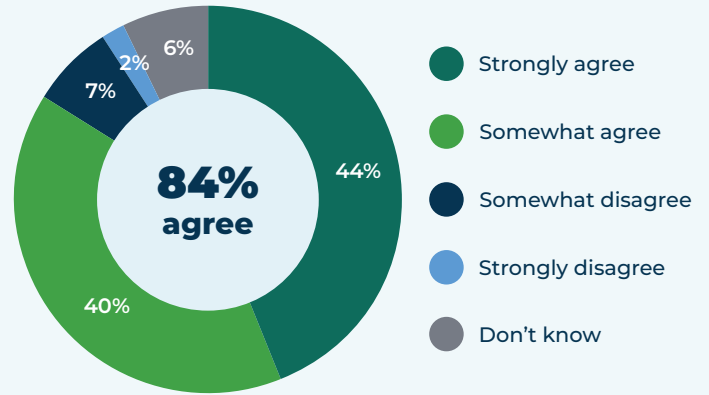
82% of Americans agree that pensions are a good way to recruit and retain qualified teachers.



\*The figures may not add to 100% due to rounding



84% of Americans agree that pensions are a good way to recruit and retain qualified public safety employees.

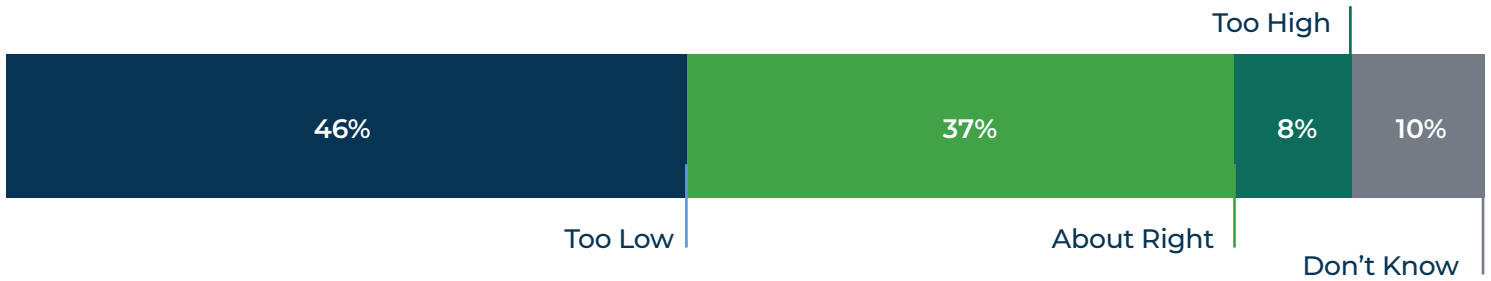


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## Most Americans See Public Pension Benefit Levels As Too Low Or About Right

The average retirement benefit for public workers is about \$2,428 a month, though some employees receive more or less depending on their local cost of living.

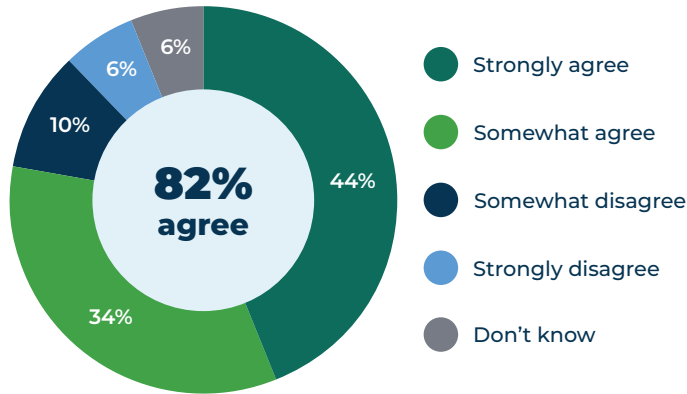
83% of Americans Say Public Pension Benefits are Too Low or Just Right



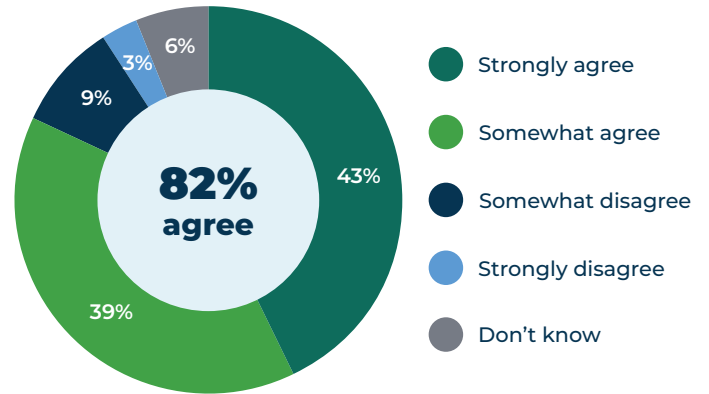
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# There's Agreement Across The Nation That It Makes Sense To Provide Public Employees With Pensions

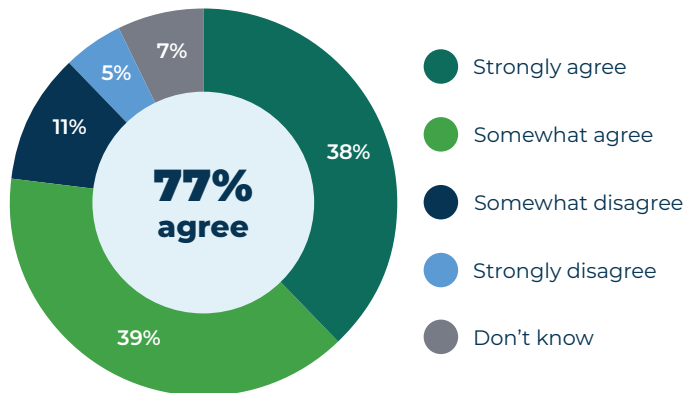
More than three-fourths of Americans say pensions for teachers make sense because these benefits compensate for educators lower pay.



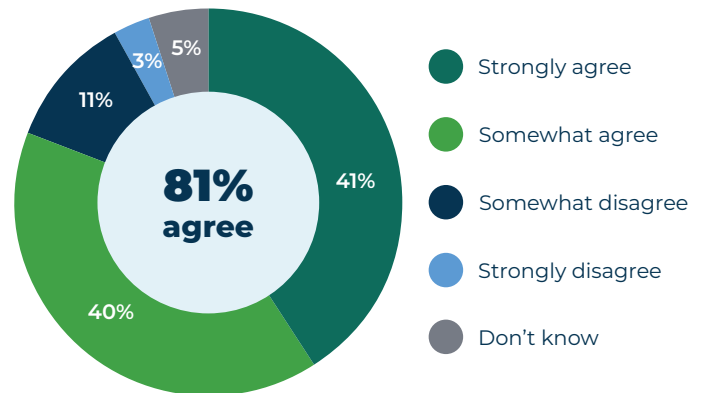
82% of Americans say those who work in public safety have risky jobs, and therefore should have a pension to provide these workers a secure retirement.



More than three-fourths of Americans agree public employees should receive pension benefits because they help finance part of the cost by contributing money out of every paycheck.



81% of Americans say pensions are important for public sector jobs that are physically demanding, which often makes it difficult to keep working later in life.



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This research is based upon a nationwide survey of 1208 individuals working aged 25 and older conducted by Greenwald Research between October 10-25, 2023. The final data were weighted by age, gender, and income to reflect U.S. demographics.