

Comparison of State Sector Retirement Savings Scheme and KiwiSaver

JULY 2025



Contents

Contents	1
1 Save with SSRSS.....	2
2 Save with SSRSS and KiwiSaver	2
Table 1 Summary of choices for SSRSS members.....	2
3 Transfer from SSRSS to KiwiSaver	3
Table 2 Summary of choices regarding transferring from SSRSS to KiwiSaver	3
4 Changing employment	4
Table 3 Summary of choices when changing employment	4
Table 4 Comparison between SSRSS and KiwiSaver	5
5 Comparison of total contributions to SSRSS and KiwiSaver	8
5.1 SSRSS - Gross base salary	8
5.2 KiwiSaver - Gross pay.....	8
Appendix One Frequently asked questions.....	9

1 Save with SSRSS

The State Sector Retirement Savings Scheme (SSRSS) stopped accepting applications for membership from employees of Public Service and non-Public Service agencies, crown entities and kindergartens on 31 March 2008, and from State and State-integrated schools on 30 September 2008.

You are no longer able to change from your existing SSRSS scheme provider to another SSRSS scheme provider or (if you are a teacher or principal at a school) to transfer to the Teachers' Retirement Savings Scheme.

The SSRSS schemes continue operating for members in the same manner as previously. You can continue to contribute to your SSRSS scheme and (if eligible) you will continue receiving your employer contribution. The SSRSS employer contribution will no longer be payable if you begin receiving an employer contribution (if eligible) to a KiwiSaver scheme.

SSRSS members can choose to transfer to a KiwiSaver scheme at any time.

2 Save with SSRSS and KiwiSaver

You can remain a member of SSRSS and also join and save with KiwiSaver. Your SSRSS accounts will stay within SSRSS and remain subject to the existing SSRSS rules as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1 Summary of choices for SSRSS members

	You can	If you join KiwiSaver as well as SSRSS you will get
SSRSS member is eligible for employer contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Continue regular contributions to SSRSS.Continue to receive your employer contribution, if eligible, (up to 3% after tax of your <i>gross base salary</i>).Suspend regular contributions to SSRSS.Your employer contributions will also stop.Make voluntary contributions to your SSRSS scheme. These payments will not be locked in. You can access your voluntary savings up to twice per scheme year, subject to a minimum withdrawal amount.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Government will contribute 25 cents for every dollar you save up to \$260.72 each year. To receive the maximum Government contribution, you need to contribute at least \$1,042.86 between 1 July to 30 June each year.The employer contribution (if eligible) of 3% before tax of <i>gross pay</i> while you contribute from your salary, rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028.

SSRSS member is not eligible for compulsory employer contribution

Continue or suspend regular voluntary contributions to SSRSS.

The Government will contribute 25 cents for every dollar you save up to \$260.72 each year. To receive the maximum Government contribution, you must have contributed at least \$1,042.86 in the period 1 July to 30 June.

SSRSS member not currently in employment

Continue or suspend any voluntary contributions to SSRSS.

The Government will contribute 25 cents for every dollar you save up to \$260.72 each year. To receive the maximum Government contribution, you need to contribute at least \$1,042.86 between 1 July to 30 June each year.

3 Transfer from SSRSS to KiwiSaver

You can transfer to KiwiSaver at any time and your membership of SSRSS will cease. Your SSRSS account balances will be transferred to KiwiSaver and will become subject to the KiwiSaver scheme rules as described in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Summary of choices regarding transferring from SSRSS to KiwiSaver

	SSRSS	In KiwiSaver you will get
Transfer to KiwiSaver	<p>Your SSRSS account balances will be transferred to your chosen or allocated KiwiSaver scheme.</p> <p>You will not be able to join SSRSS again.</p>	<p>The Government will contribute 25 cents for every dollar you save up to \$260.72 each year. To receive the maximum Government contribution, you need to contribute at least \$1,042.86 between 1 July to 30 June each year.</p> <p>The employer contribution (if eligible) of 3% (rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028) before tax of <i>gross pay</i> while you contribute from your salary.</p> <p>SSRSS account balances added to your KiwiSaver contributions.</p>

4 Changing employment

If you are an SSRSS member and change employers, or otherwise commence new employment, then you will be automatically enrolled in KiwiSaver unless your new employer is exempt from the KiwiSaver automatic enrolment rules. If this occurs, then your options will be as described in Table 3 below.

Table 3 Summary of choices when changing employment

	SSRSS	In KiwiSaver you will get
Remain in KiwiSaver	If your new employer is a participating employer and you continue your SSRSS regular contributions you will continue to receive the SSRSS employer contribution (if eligible). If your new employer is not a participating employer, your SSRSS employer contribution will cease. You may make ongoing voluntary contributions.	The Government will contribute 25 cents for every dollar you save up to \$260.72 each year. To receive the maximum Government contribution, you need to contribute at least \$1,042.86 between 1 July to 30 June each year. If you are ineligible for the SSRSS employer subsidy, or you choose to receive KiwiSaver employer contributions (if eligible) instead of SSRSS employer contributions, a employer contribution (if eligible) of 3% before tax of <i>gross pay</i> while you contribute from your salary, rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028.
Opt out of KiwiSaver during weeks 2 to 8 of your new job	Tell your new employer you want to opt out of KiwiSaver. If your new employer is a participating employer and you continue your contributions to SSRSS, then your employer contribution (if eligible) will continue unchanged. If your new employer is not a participating employer your SSRSS employer contribution (if you had been eligible previously) will cease. You may make ongoing voluntary contributions.	Nothing

You should consider your options carefully before making any changes to your superannuation arrangements. We suggest you check out the section on comparison between SSRSS and KiwiSaver

(and Table 4 below), relevant investment statements and talk to a financial advisor, before you make any decisions.

Table 4 Comparison between SSRSS and KiwiSaver

	SSRSS	KiwiSaver
Eligibility to join	Effective 1 October 2008, the SSRSS closed to new members. Existing members can continue to save in the SSRSS.	<p>You can join KiwiSaver if you are living in (or normally live in) and are entitled to reside permanently in New Zealand.</p> <p>If you are under 18 and want to join KiwiSaver you must contract directly with a scheme provider. If you are aged 16 to 17 years old you can join KiwiSaver from 1 April 2026 and you will be eligible for mandatory employer KiwiSaver contributions. Other employees may opt in through their employer.</p> <p>You can join KiwiSaver in addition to any other superannuation scheme of which you are a member.</p>
Employee contribution amounts	The minimum employee contribution rate, while you are employed by a participating employer is 1.5% of <i>gross base salary</i> .	The minimum employee contribution rate is 3% of <i>gross pay</i> (rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028) and employed members can contribute 3%, 4%, 6%, 8% or 10%.
Employer contribution amounts	<p>If eligible, your contributions are “matched” by your employer up to a maximum of 3% (after deducting contribution tax) of your <i>gross base salary</i>.</p> <p>Employers continue compulsory employer contributions if the member is eligible (regardless of age).</p> <p>SSRSS employer contributions count towards the KiwiSaver employer contributions (if eligible).</p> <p>If you are a member of both SSRSS and a KiwiSaver scheme you will not receive employer contributions (if eligible) to both schemes.</p>	<p>If eligible, you will receive employer contributions at a rate of 3% (before deducting contribution tax) of <i>gross pay</i>, rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028.</p> <p>Employers are not required to continue employer contributions once a member reaches the age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation (currently age 65).</p>

Government contribution

There is no Government contribution in the SSRSS.

For periods during which you reside mainly in NZ and are between 18 and your KiwiSaver end payment date, and you contribute at least \$1,042.86, each year a Government contribution matching your contributions up to a maximum of \$260.72 a year (which equals \$5 per week) will be made to your account each year. You can withdraw these amounts when you are the age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation (currently age 65) or earlier in limited circumstances.

Parental leave

You can backdate your contributions for all or part of the time you are on parental leave. If you make up these contributions within 7 months of returning to work you will be eligible to receive the employer contribution (if eligible).

From 1 July 2024, new parents will also receive a 3% Government contribution to their KiwiSaver while on paid parental leave, provided they continue their own KiwiSaver contributions from their paid parental leave payments. The Government contribution will increase to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and to 4% on 1 April 2028.

Access to funds and lock-in provisions¹

Employee and employer contributions are locked into the age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation (currently age 65) but can be accessed if you are 50 years of age or over and meet all of the following criteria:

- you are no longer employed by any participating employer, and
- your most recent employer has notified your provider that you have ceased employment with that employer, and
- you have satisfied your provider that you have no intention of being re-employed by any participating employer, either permanently or under a fixed-term agreement.

If you are a teacher or principal and have reached 50 years of age you can

All contributions are locked into your KiwiSaver until you are the age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation (currently age 65).

¹ See also "other withdrawal options" section below.

	<p>withdraw part or all of the balance in your scheme account relating to your own contributions (but not employer contributions or earnings on them), whether or not you have left the teaching profession or your employer.</p> <p>Voluntary contributions (all contributions made by you above 3%, or while you are un-subsidised) can be accessed at any time.</p>	
	Your funds can be accessed by your estate when you die.	Your funds can be accessed by your estate when you die.
Transferring out	You can transfer your SSRSS total credit to a KiwiSaver scheme at any time. Additionally, once you have left Public Service employment you can apply to transfer your SSRSS total credit to an approved locked-in superannuation scheme, in NZ or overseas.	You can apply to transfer to another KiwiSaver scheme or, if permanently emigrating, to an approved overseas superannuation scheme.
Other withdrawal options	<p>You may be eligible for early access to some or all funds in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permanent emigration² • serious illness/total and permanent disablement • first home deposit (if eligible) • significant financial hardship. 	<p>You can have early access to some or all funds in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permanent emigration³ • health reasons (serious illness or a life shortening congenital condition) • first home deposit (if eligible) • significant financial hardship • bankruptcy (when your KiwiSaver account is an asset) • division of relationship property where your

² To be eligible for a withdrawal based on emigration you must be able to prove you have emigrated and have resided overseas for at least 12 months.

³As in footnote 2 above. For KiwiSaver the total amount of member Government contribution will be repaid to the Crown if your withdrawal is based on emigration. From 1 January 2010 a KiwiSaver scheme member who permanently emigrates to Australia is prohibited from making a cash withdrawal based on emigration but permitted to transfer their full KiwiSaver entitlement (including member Government contribution) to an approved Australian superannuation scheme.

- KiwiSaver account is considered a joint asset where funds from a foreign superannuation fund have been transferred to your KiwiSaver account these funds may be able to be used to repay a foreign student loan.

5 Comparison of total contributions to SSRSS and KiwiSaver

If you are an SSRSS member eligible for SSRSS employer contributions, the total amount contributed to SSRSS each year will be the total of your regular contributions and your employer contributions. SSRSS members' contributions are calculated using your *gross base salary*.

If you are a KiwiSaver member eligible for KiwiSaver employer contributions, the total amount contributed to KiwiSaver each year will be the total of your regular contributions, your employer contributions and the member Government contribution (matching 25% of your contributions up to \$260.72). The default KiwiSaver member contribution is 3 percent of *gross pay* and the employer contribution (if eligible) is 3 percent (before ESCT) , rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028.

5.1 SSRSS - Gross base salary

For most SSRSS members *gross base salary* means your annual before-tax amount of base salary or wages:

- a teacher at a school – the sum of the annual before-tax amount of *base salary or wages* plus permanently allocated salary units
- a principal of a school – the sum of the annual before-tax amount of *base salary* (including supplementary component) plus decile funding.

This excludes any fixed-term salary unit and any other allowance or remuneration allocated either through an employer's payroll facility or otherwise.

5.2 KiwiSaver - Gross pay

KiwiSaver members' contributions are calculated using *gross pay* which may be more than your gross base salary. Your *gross pay* is (with some exceptions) your total salary, including bonuses, overtime or any other kind of remuneration, before tax and other deductions like student loan repayments and child support.

Appendix One Frequently asked questions

Will the SSRSS continue?

SSRSS continues for existing members although the scheme was closed to new members effective 1 October 2008.

Contributions – how much do I have to contribute?

The minimum contribution rate in SSRSS, while you are employed by a participating employer is 1.5 percent of *gross base salary* (excluding all allowances, overtime and bonuses). There's no maximum contribution rate - you can save as much as you like.

The minimum contribution rate in KiwiSaver for employees is 3 percent of *gross pay*, rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028 (refer to KiwiSaver contributions on the KiwiSaver website). You can choose to contribute 3 %, 4 %, 6%, 8% or 10 %. You can also make voluntary contributions to your KiwiSaver scheme. You can apply for a savings suspension after 12 months of saving to KiwiSaver.

I can't afford to contribute to both SSRSS and KiwiSaver – what can I do?

If you are a member of SSRSS and of KiwiSaver you can contribute to one or to both schemes if you want. Contribute to the scheme that in your view best suits your needs – the main thing is to continue saving for your future.

What do I get for being an SSRSS or KiwiSaver member?

If you are an SSRSS member employed by a participating employer, SSRSS provides a matching employer contribution of up to 3 percent (after deducting contribution tax) of gross base salary, if you are eligible.

Member contributions to KiwiSaver schemes are currently matched by a Government contribution each year of up to \$260.72 a year (which equals \$5 a week) if you contribute at least \$1,042.86 between 1 July to 30 June each year while you are aged between 16 and the age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation (currently age 65). Employer contributions (if eligible) are payable to KiwiSaver schemes at a rate of 3%, rising to 3.5% on 1 April 2026 and rising to 4% on 1 April 2028 (before deducting contribution tax) of *gross pay* while you are aged between 16 and the age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation (currently age 65).

Can I receive SSRSS employer contribution (if eligible) and the KiwiSaver employer contribution (if eligible)?

You can be a member of both schemes but the SSRSS employer contribution (if eligible) and the KiwiSaver employer contribution (if eligible) are payable as alternatives so you will not be eligible to receive an employer contribution into both schemes.

Can I get the 3 percent SSRSS contribution paid to KiwiSaver instead of to SSRSS?

No. In order to get the Government contribution you must be contributing to a KiwiSaver scheme or (on a KiwiSaver equivalent basis) a complying superannuation fund. The SSRSS is not a KiwiSaver scheme or a complying superannuation fund.

Member Government contributions are locked-in contributions, treated in the same manner as other contributions to the relevant KiwiSaver scheme (though with greater restrictions on early withdrawal).

Withdrawal benefits – when can I get my savings from a KiwiSaver scheme?

Existing benefit withdrawals available from KiwiSaver:

- on reaching your age of entitlement to NZ Superannuation (currently age 65)
- significant financial hardship
- serious illness (as defined in the KiwiSaver Act 2006) or total and permanent disablement or death
- permanent emigration (other than to Australia) – you need to have permanently emigrated and resided overseas for at least 12 months before you can apply for this withdrawal benefit
- life shortening congenital condition
- home purchase deposit – you can withdraw all of your account balance, apart from \$1,000, for use towards a first home A withdrawal can be used for a deposit on a subsequent house in certain circumstances
- bankruptcy (when your KiwiSaver account is an asset)
- division of relationship property where your KiwiSaver account is considered a joint asset
- where funds from a foreign superannuation fund have been transferred to your KiwiSaver account these funds may be able to be used to repay a foreign student loan.

Withdrawal benefits – when can I get my savings from a SSRSS scheme?

Existing benefit withdrawals are available from SSRS in all of the above circumstances and in the below circumstances:

- in the 10 years prior to NZ Superannuation age (currently age 65), on full/partial retirement
- from age 50 years on leaving Public Service employment permanently
- transfer to another similarly locked-in superannuation scheme (in NZ or overseas) on leaving Public Service employment
- transfer to a KiwiSaver scheme at any time
- deposit for the purchase of a home – SSRS members may be eligible to withdraw funds for the Kiwi First Home Grant if you have saved for at least three years from 1 July 2023 and meet the KiwiSaver First Home Grant criteria. See <https://kaingaora.govt.nz/home-ownership/> for details.

Note that on transferring to another locked-in scheme or to KiwiSaver, the rules on when you can access your savings will change.

Transfers – can I transfer to a KiwiSaver scheme?

All KiwiSaver schemes have been approved as transferee schemes due to the stronger lock-in provisions. You can apply to transfer your savings to a KiwiSaver scheme at any time and cease your SSRSS membership. Please note that on transferring to KiwiSaver, the rules on when you can access your savings will change.