FIND THE HIDDEN COSTS

How to read your statement and find what you are paying

Educators are often sold plans where the fees are easy to miss, because they are spread across line items and percentages instead of shown as one clear number. Here is where to look.

WHERE THE COSTS HIDE

- The **expense ratio** of each fund, often the largest cost and easy to overlook in some 403(b) plans.
- **Administrative or recordkeeping** fees, flat or as a percentage.
- **Separate advisory or management** fees, if you have a financial advisor.
- On variable annuities, **mortality and expense** charges, rider fees, and a surrender schedule.
- **Indexed annuities** often have no visible fee. Instead, a formula controlled by the insurance company limits how much of the market's growth reaches your account. Over a full career, that capped growth can end up costing more than a visible fee ever would, because the cost is the growth you never receive.

TURN THE PERCENTAGES INTO DOLLARS

A percentage feels small until you size it. Multiply your balance by the all-in percentage to see the yearly cost in dollars. An all-in cost of 1.60% on a $50,000 balance is about **$800 that year**. And the percentage is charged every single year, in good markets and bad.

RED FLAGS WORTH CIRCLING

Watch for a surrender period that charges you to move your own money, mortality and expense charges that signal an annuity wrapper, commissions or sales charges of any kind, and any all-in cost that seems high. Ask what you are paying for and whether a lower-cost option covers the same ground.

THE FASTEST WAY TO KNOW

Bring your most recent statement to a short call. We will help you find every cost on it and show you the all-in number in plain dollars.

Want a second set of eyes?

Bring your questions to a short call at **(916) 235-9800**, or **pick a time to talk to an advisor**. When you are ready, enroll at **enroll.ctaretirementplan.org**.

For educational purposes only and not individualized investment, tax, or legal advice. Cost figures are illustrative and general; your plan's documents govern its actual fees. The 1.60% figure is based on data self-reported by 33 providers to 403bcompare.com as of September 1, 2026, assumes a hypothetical balance of $50,000 for the 403(b) account, and is a simple average of all 33 providers in the study. Figures are assumed to be accurate but have not been independently verified. The CTA 403(b) Plan is officially named the CTA Retirement Savings Plan. Advisory services are provided by Prudent Investor Advisors, an SEC-registered investment adviser. Registration does not imply a certain level of skill or training. © 2026 CTA Voluntary Retirement Plans for Educators, LLC. All rights reserved.