



## 2025 NAGDCA Leadership Award Submission: National Retirement Security Month

### SUMMARY

#### Plan Profile

The MO Deferred Comp Plan, formally known as the State of Missouri Deferred Compensation Plan, is a 457(b) retirement savings plan for state of Missouri employees. As of March 2024, the plan serves nearly 75,000 employees and boasts a high participation rate of 82%. The plan has over \$3 billion in assets and the average contribution rate per employee is roughly 4.7% or \$196 per month. The plan is currently administered by the Missouri State Employees' Retirement System and record kept by MissionSquare Retirement.

#### Background Information

To help bring awareness to National Retirement Security Month and encourage state of Missouri employees to save for retirement, the deferred comp team created the **Scary-Smart Retirement Savings campaign**. This campaign ran during October 2024. Each week throughout the month, the team highlighted different savings tools or features and encouraged employees to take control of their financial situation, no matter how scary it may be. Weekly topics included compounding interest, automatic increase, percent-based contributions, setting retirement goals, and plan resources. The most memorable piece of the campaign was a Monster Mash parody that had state employees singing about the state match. The campaign utilized several marketing avenues, but heavily relied on videos and email to reach participants.

#### Campaign Goals

- Promote plan awareness and highlight retirement savings topics.
- Encourage state employees to save enough to receive the full state match.
- Highlight the importance of saving with percent-based contributions versus a flat-dollar amount.
- Demonstrate the power of using the automatic increase tool.
- Encourage participants to meet with a MO Deferred Comp financial education professional.
- Build rapport with state employees and solidify the plan is a trusted financial resource.

#### Project Highlights

- Campaign videos were viewed 2,440 times and the average viewer retention rate for the campaign was 78%.
- **1,224 participants increased their contributions after viewing the campaign materials, 54 employees enrolled in the deferred comp plan, and 126 elected to use the automatic increase tool.**
- Compared to the prior month, the plan saw a 36.5% increase in participants logging in to their account.
- MO Deferred Comp's social media followers increased by 58 people after the campaign.

# WRITTEN JUSTIFICATION

## Project Details & Context

October is a big month for both the young and old. For adults, it's a time to focus on benefits – like retirement savings and health enrollment. For children, October is centered around Halloween, dressing up, and candy. This year during National Retirement Security Month, MO Deferred Comp merged these two ideas together to create a campaign that state employees and their families would enjoy. The campaign was called **Scary-Smart Retirement Savings** and focused on “terrifying” retirement savings lessons. The topics included compounding interest, automatic increase, percent-based contributions, setting retirement goals, and plan resources. Plan videos were shot in black and white and embellished with spider webs and spooky props. In addition, MO Deferred Comp created a fun parody about the state match. The parody was called Monster Match and followed in tune to the ever-popular Monster Mash song. The campaign utilized videos, social media, emails, text message outreach, a podcast, central website landing page, and in-person communication.

### **Prior to NRSM: Campaign Teaser**

The last week of September the plan released a 16-second NRSM teaser video. This video introduced participants to the campaign theme and what was in store for the month.

### **Week 1: Creating a Spellbinding Retirement**

During the first week of NRSM, the plan focused on compounding interest. In addition to explaining the concept in an easy to understand manner, the team also gave short examples and encouraged employees to take advantage of this powerful financial “magic” to have a “spellbinding retirement”.

“MO Deferred Comp’s 2024 NRSM campaign – *Scary-Smart Retirement Savings* – put a fun twist on using marketing ‘scare’ tactics and participants loved it, especially the Monster MATCH parody. It’s a must-see video!”

**Brooke Rowden**  
DC Plans Education & Marketing Coordinator

## 1,224 participants

increased their retirement savings contributions after reviewing the 2024 NRSM campaign.

### **Week 2: BOOst Your Contributions**

Week two of NRSM highlighted the automatic increase tool. The video – which used no words – gave a quick time value of money example. In 35-seconds, it compared a participant who did NOT use automatic increase to a participant who did. The visual was simple, yet powerful. Similar social media tips were shared to support the weekly topic.

### **Week 3: Trick & Treat Yourself with Percent-Base Contribution**

While flat-dollar contributions are easier for participants to understand, percent-based contributions can help them save more overtime. The third week of NRSM focused on saving with a percentage versus a flat-dollar amount. The video did a side-by-side comparison of the two contribution types and urged savers to make the switch to a percent deferral. Additional supportive savings tips were shared on social media.

## Week 4: Monster MATCH Your Savings

In our opinion (and by the campaign statistics), week four of NRSM was the best week of the project. During this week the plan focused on the state match and stressed the importance of saving enough to receive the full matching incentive. The video for this week was a song and music video parody about the match. The tune and words imitated the song, Monster Match, and it was a hit with participants. This video was viewed over 1,000 times! Like previous weeks, the plan also created social media posts to support the videos.

## Week 5: Setting Retirement Ghouls

To close out NRSM, the plan highlighted its vast array of resources that can help savers reach their retirement ~~goals~~ **ghouls** goals! This includes deferred comp's team of financial education professionals who are located around the state and available to help employees and retirees along their financial journey. An email was sent this week to plan participants recapping the NRSM campaign.

## Outcomes & Measurable Results

This year's National Retirement Security Month Campaign – “Scary-Smart Retirement Savings” – campaign was a successful project and sparked a lot of action amongst state of Missouri employees.

- **1,224 participants increased their contributions after viewing the campaign materials, 54 employees enrolled in the deferred comp plan, and 126 elected to use the automatic increase tool.**
- The six campaign videos were viewed 2,440 times with the average retention rate for the campaign being 78%. **That's twice as many views as the 2023 campaign and the highest video retention rate in the history of the plan.**
- The plan's **social media followers increased by 58 people** after the campaign.
- The plan used two emails to distribute the NRSM campaign. The first email had a unique open rate of 26.6% and 3.2% click through rate. The second email was sent to participants who did not open the initial campaign email. This email had a 9.3% open rate and a 6.5% click through rate. For reference, the industry average open rate is 18.9% and the industry average click through rate is 2.69%.
- 4,342 state employees received text message communication about the campaign. Of this group, **146 (3.4%) participants clicked the link and reviewed the campaign materials.**



While the following statistics cannot be directly correlated with deferred comp's NRSM campaign, these numbers are higher than most months. We believe that the campaign can be attributed to the increase in the statistics.

- Compared to the prior month, **the plan saw a 36.5% increase in participants logging in to their account.** To be more specific, 12,868 participants logged in to their deferred comp account in October of 2024.
- 1-on-1 meetings with deferred comp's team of financial education professionals drastically increased by 62.85% compared to the previous month.
- The Grow Your Retirement Savings Calculator – which was promoted throughout the month – was used 3,390 times during October.
- **Website engagement was up 12.45%** compared to October 2023.

## Feasibility of Use

The MO Deferred Comp Plan has been producing informational videos for over 10 years now, so video filming and production tools were readily available during the campaign. Emails to State of Missouri employees were distributed using the plan's email marketing software, which cost approximately \$86/month and is also used for other various marketing efforts. The actors asked to participate in the campaign were either current employees of the deferred comp plan or graciously volunteered their time to do so. The filming location and cost for distributing the video on deferred comp's social media channels were both free. Government plans of all sizes could benefit from integrating short videos into their education campaigns.

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The *Scary-Smart Retirement Savings* campaign stressed the importance of saving for retirement and encouraged employees to take control of their financial situation, no matter how scary it may be.

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## CAMPAIGN VIDEOS



### Scary-Smart Retirement Savings

<https://youtu.be/rj06nT5wYwM>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA POST

October is National Retirement Security Month! Join us all month long to learn some Scary-Smart Retirement Savings lessons to help you financially prepare for retirement. #NRSM24



### Creating a Spellbinding Retirement

[https://youtu.be/gTVp1DHS6\\_k](https://youtu.be/gTVp1DHS6_k)

#### SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Ready to see some financial magic? Watch this week's 'Scary-Smart Retirement Savings' video to learn how compounding interest can help you create a spellbinding retirement. #NRSM24 #CompoundingInterest



## CAMPAIGN VIDEOS CONTINUED

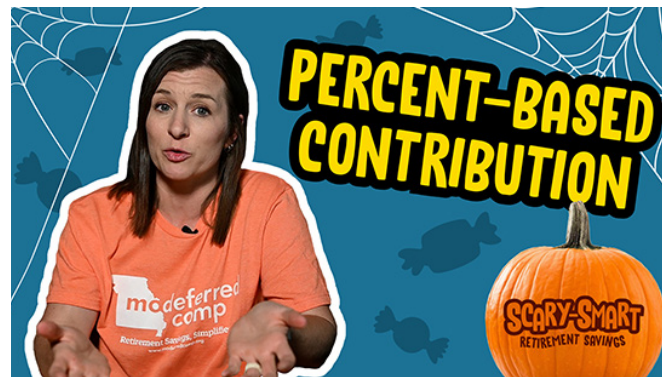


### BOOst Your Contributions

<https://youtu.be/yyAid0Uwa6Y>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA POST

It's time to BOOst your contributions for a frighteningly fantastic retirement! Learn how the automatic increase tool can help grow your savings! #NRS2024 #ScarySmartRetirementSavings #AutomaticIncrease



### Trick & Treat Yourself with Percent-Base Contributions

<https://youtu.be/tVLxmM2NaEo>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA POST

If the thought of saving with a percent-based contribution frightens you, we're here to show you that there's nothing to fear, and help you save more in the long-run! #NRS24 #ScarySmartRetirementSavings #PercentBasedContribution



### Monster Match (Monster Mash Parody)

<https://youtu.be/yZsw-NsEvj0>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Enjoy this Halloween classic with a "match" twist! #NRS24 #MonsterMatch #parody



### Retirement Ghouls

<https://youtu.be/7omo9VuiHqM>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Need some help reaching your "retirement ghouls"? The MO Deferred Comp Plan is here to help you reach them financially! #NRS24 #RetirementGhouls #FinancialEducationProfessionals

# CAMPAIGN SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS & EMAIL



2024 NRS24 Email  
<https://zc.vg/5GAQ0?m=0>

What's scarier than ghosts, goblins, and ghouls?

Running out of money in retirement! Join us for **National Retirement Security Month** as we discuss *Scary-Smart Retirement Savings* strategies, tips, and tricks.

**No sorcery or hocus-pocus.**  
 ↓Just short (spooky) educational videos. ↓

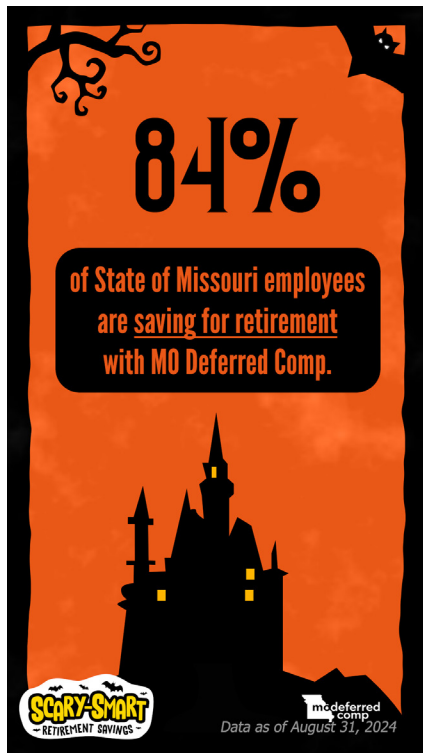
Watch MORE Scary-Smart Videos

National Retirement Security Month is a national effort to raise awareness about the importance of saving for retirement.

Below are 3 takeaways



## CAMPAIGN SOCIAL MEDIA REELS



[www.youtube.com/shorts/fSXyOalTsOE](https://www.youtube.com/shorts/fSXyOalTsOE)



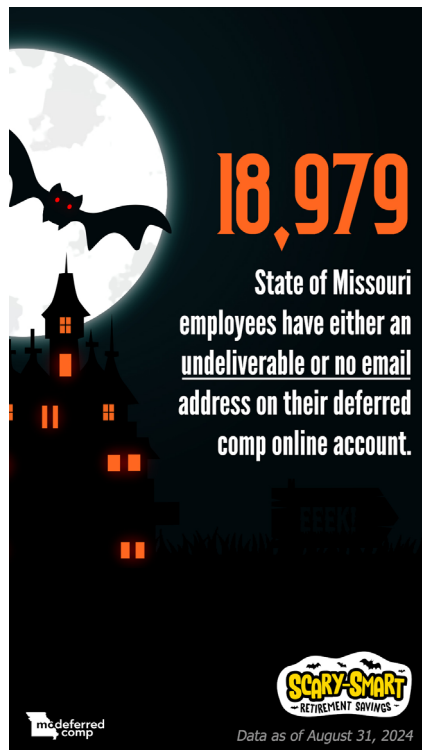
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