A retirement-decision checklist for a long aerospace career

A long aerospace career often leaves a stack of decisions, not one account. This checklist helps a household gather the documents and questions before making elections. It is educational. It is not official company guidance and not personal advice.

Independence. Retire With Swan is independent. It is not affiliated with, sponsored by, or endorsed by any aerospace employer or retiree association.

Retirement planning with GRACE - Guaranteed Income - Reserves & Insurance - Asset & Income Growth - Comprehensive Tax Planning - Estate & Legacy - is how we keep the pieces connected. Use the prompts below to assemble your own picture.

"Guaranteed Income" means planning around Social Security, pensions, and other contractually guaranteed income sources-not a guarantee by Retire With Swan.

1. Hire date and plan

Write down:

[ ] Your hire date (and your spouse's, if they also worked in aerospace)

[ ] Which retirement system actually applies to you: a pension plus a workplace savings plan, or a workplace savings plan only

[ ] Whether your work was salaried or represented (plans often differ)

Do not guess from a coworker's story. Your plan documents and hire date control.

2. The official pension estimate (if there is a pension)

[ ] Request a current pension estimate in writing from the plan administrator

[ ] List every payment form the estimate actually offers

[ ] Note the earliest age you can start, and what the estimate says about starting earlier than normal retirement

Do not assume a lump sum is available. Only the forms on your official estimate count. Do not treat a website question about "pension or lump sum" as your plan's menu - your estimate controls.

GRACE: Guaranteed Income

3. If married - the surviving spouse

For each form on the estimate:

[ ] Write down what the surviving spouse would receive if you die first

[ ] Write down what you would receive if your spouse dies first (if both have benefits)

[ ] Note whether a survivor form changes the monthly amount while you are both living

This is a Guaranteed Income and Estate & Legacy question, not only a "biggest monthly check" question.

GRACE: Guaranteed Income - Estate & Legacy

4. Health coverage from the last day of work to Medicare

[ ] What coverage, if any, continues after your last day of work

[ ] Who pays the premium (you, the company, or a mix)

[ ] What ends, and what has to be elected

[ ] How coverage works for a spouse or dependents until each reaches Medicare age

[ ] What changes at age 65 / Medicare enrollment

Eligibility is personal. Company medical is not automatic for every retiree. Confirm with your benefits office and your own Summary Plan Description (SPD).

GRACE: Reserves & Insurance

5. Social Security timing for both spouses

[ ] Ages under consideration for each spouse

[ ] Full retirement age for each

[ ] How a pension start date would sit next to each claiming age

[ ] Survivor Social Security picture if one of you dies first

GRACE: Guaranteed Income - Comprehensive Tax Planning

6. Workplace savings and IRAs

List every account you can find:

[ ] 401(k) / 403(b) / similar workplace plan(s) - balances and contribution types (pre-tax, Roth, after-tax)

[ ] IRAs (traditional, Roth, inherited)

[ ] Whether an in-service withdrawal or a rollover decision is even on the table this year (yes / no / unknown - confirm with the plan)

GRACE: Asset & Income Growth - Comprehensive Tax Planning

7. Stock, deferred compensation, or unvested awards (only if you have them)

[ ] What happens to each award or account at retirement or separation

[ ] When tax is due

[ ] Whether payment can be a lump sum, installments, or both (per your plan documents)

Skip this section if none apply.

GRACE: Asset & Income Growth - Comprehensive Tax Planning

8. The first-year paycheck

Where would monthly spending come from after the last paycheck? Sketch amounts you can document:

Source	Rough monthly amount	Notes / start date
Pension (if any)		
Social Security (you)		
Social Security (spouse)		
Portfolio withdrawals		
Cash reserves		
Other		

This is the GRACE income picture in miniature: Guaranteed Income sources first, then reserves, then what the portfolio is asked to do.

GRACE: Guaranteed Income - Reserves & Insurance - Asset & Income Growth

9. Taxes (prompts only - not tax advice)

[ ] Which accounts would be taxable if used for spending

[ ] Whether a lower-income year before Social Security or required distributions might matter for your household

[ ] Whether a CPA or tax advisor should review the year you stop working

These are questions to bring to a tax professional. This checklist is not tax advice.

GRACE: Comprehensive Tax Planning

10. Questions to bring to a conversation

Write your own questions here before you talk with anyone:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

You can take this list to an advisor you already trust, to your CPA, to an estate attorney - or to a free 20-minute Swan Fit Call if you want a first look at how these pieces connect. The Fit Call is one option, not the only one.

Close

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Documents - not memory - should drive elections. This checklist does not replace your plan's Summary Plan Description (SPD), your official pension estimate, or legal or tax advice.

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