

2026-27 per-diem rates

The IRS announced the per-diem rates for travel expenses effective Oct. 1, 2026 through Sept. 30, 2027. Tucson in winter months was added to the list of "high-cost localities" while Phoenix/Scottsdale and Sedona were already listed.

The basic rate for travel within the continental U.S. is now \$230 per day or \$329 per day in high-cost locations. The meals-only per-diem is \$74, or \$86 in high-cost cities.

Business travelers may use the per-diem rate instead of actual expenses (receipts) to deduct lodging, meals and transportation expenses while traveling away from home.

"Away from home" is generally considered as more than 50 miles away from your home base.



A Radish for you?

The "Father of the 401(k)" has developed a new kind of savings plan for employees. Ted Benna, a creator of the 401(k) framework in the 1970's, calls the new structure Radish.

"We've reached a point now where many middle- and low-income employees can't afford to have money taken out of their paycheck," Benna said.

Radish is an employer-funded incentive program that lets companies deposit money into an account for workers who hit their performance goals on a yearly, monthly, or even weekly basis.

"Employees will receive contributions without having to have money deducted out of their paycheck," he said. "Rather than focusing on 20 or 30 years, to build for your retirement, I want it to be more of

an emergency savings type of thing where they could dip into it and access it when they had shorter-term financial needs."

By paying performance based bonuses into a qualified retirement plan, employer contributions are exempt from FICA, unemployment, and workers' compensation taxes — saving approximately 7.65% plus unemployment and workers' comp rates. So, companies save on payroll taxes.

Employers with less than 100 employees who don't already have qualified plans can qualify for tax credits, including up to \$1,000 per employee.

Since the premise is based on performance compensation, the intent is that

being rewarded regularly would be a motivator for employee retention.

Like a 401(k), withdrawals are taxable, and subject to 10% early withdrawal penalty under age 59½. However, the Radish works with the exceptions to the penalty, such as for up to \$10,000 for a first-time home purchase. Benna envisions the Radish as a path to home ownership for modest income workers.

Winning the lottery

Winning the Powerball is a dream for many people. Often it isn't the solution to life's problems that it seems.

A Kentucky man has been arrested five times since winning a \$167.3 million Powerball last year, for assault, burglary, public drunkenness and other charges.

Meanwhile, the winner of a \$2 billion jackpot in California lost his \$3.85 million Malibu home with ocean views in the 2025 Palisades fire.