



*Prof and Tech contracts expire 2026*

## The time to start saving is NOW – Part 3

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**Step 1 - Change 401(k) contributions to After-Tax:** In the April, the SPEEA Spotlight featured an article about a possible “first step” in creating an emergency fund by contributing 8% to the Boeing After-Tax 401(k).

While the primary purpose of the Boeing 401(k) is to save for retirement, the After-Tax 401(k) has an “in-service” withdrawal option. In the event of a financial emergency, your After-Tax contributions can be withdrawn to meet your imminent financial obligations.

The gains created by the contributions must roll out at the same time but can be rolled over to a tax-deferred IRA. If started in April 2024, individuals can make enough contributions in the After-Tax 401(k) to sustain themselves for 75 days in the event of a strike if needed after Prof and Tech contracts expire in October 2026.

**Step 2 - Direct Roth contributions:** In May, the SPEEA Spotlight featured the next article in the series on a possible “second step” in creating an emergency fund by making a direct Roth IRA contribution if eligible. As a reminder, not everyone is eligible to make a direct Roth IRA contribution, but if eligible, direct Roth IRA contributions may be withdrawn at any time for any reason.

**Step 3 - If enrolled in the Advantage+ plan and HSA eligible, maximize your HSA contribution.**

After putting 8% into the after-tax 401k and after making direct Roth IRA contributions, the next step to prepare for an unknown future emergency is to maximize your Health Savings Account (HSA).

The Advantage+ plan is an IRS Qualified High

### Health Savings Account maximum contributions

Year	Covering Just Yourself	Covering yourself and anyone else
2024	\$4,150	\$8,300
2025	\$4,300	\$8,550

Deductible Health Plan (HDHP). Generally speaking, employees enrolled in the Advantage+ plan and not covered by disqualifying (non-HDHP) coverage are eligible to make HSA contributions that are triple tax-advantaged.

The contributions are pre-tax, the contributions can be invested in the growth, are tax deferred, and qualified withdrawals are completely income-tax free. The IRS establishes the maximum HSA contribution, which varies based on who you are covering with the medical plan.

Most often, qualified HSA withdrawals are made to cover expenses that were incurred while individuals and families meet their “high deductible.” A lesser-known IRS-qualified use of HSA funds is to pay for COBRA continuation coverage.

#### Help with COBRA

In the unlikely event that SPEEA were to go on strike in October 2026, Boeing would have the option to cancel your medical coverage effective Nov. 1, 2026. Boeing is required to offer COBRA continuation coverage and individuals have 60 days from the COBRA-qualifying event to enroll in COBRA.

An individual can wait until the 59<sup>th</sup> day to enroll in COBRA, and when enrolled, COBRA would be retroactive to the first of the month after coverage was lost, which would also require retroactive COBRA premiums. Using your HSA to pay the COBRA premiums enables you to pay the COBRA

premiums with income-tax free money.

SPEEA represents more than 8,200 Boeing employees enrolled in the Advantage+ Plan, potentially making them eligible to max out their Health Savings Account and pay for COBRA premiums with income tax-free money.

#### Would SPEEA go on strike?

The demands of the SPEEA negotiation teams have not yet been determined, no one knows what Boeing’s contract offers will include, and it’s difficult to predict Boeing’s financial position 30 months from now.

The tenor of the negotiations along with any decision on calling for a strike authorization vote is yet to be determined.

However, what is known is if a strike vote authorization by all bargaining unit members is called, it is best for members to vote to approve the strike authorization to show strength and unity.

The decision to seek a strike authorization vote of the membership is made by negotiating teams and is not taken lightly. It is extremely premature to discuss a strike on the merits of any contract offer, but it is never too early to prepare.

SPEEA does not have a strike fund.

If a strike is called, you will need to support yourself with your own emergency funds.