

Weekly Insight
February 23, 2026

Can Your Retirement Income Survive Increasing Interest Rates?

This Week's Focus

Rates are still elevated, and income choices matter.

Many Kansans are seeing higher rates on CDs and savings again. That can feel like good news, but it can also push people into a fast decision that does not fit their real retirement plan.

This edition of SFL Weekly Insights helps you slow down and choose wisely. You will learn the difference between fixed, indexed, and variable annuities, what can trip people up (fees, limits, and getting locked in), and how to build guaranteed income in retirement that does not depend on guessing what rates do next.

Content Overview



What "higher for longer" rates mean for retirement income



Fixed vs indexed vs variable, explained in plain words



Two traps to avoid: fees and access to your money



A one-page test to decide before you sign



Higher Rates & Hidden Traps What Retirees Must Know

Interest rates are still higher than many people got used to. That is why conversations about guaranteed income are back. But higher rates can create a trap: people chase a rate and forget the fit.

Your goal is *not* to pick the fanciest product. Your goal is to choose an annuity type that matches your retirement needs, your risk comfort, and how soon you may need access to your money. If the type does not match, the annuity can feel like a mistake instead of a solution. Here is the simple tour of the three main annuity types.

FIXED

A fixed annuity is built for stability. The insurance company promises a minimum interest rate, and it is meant to feel steady and predictable. This can fit someone who wants dependable growth and less stress. The tradeoff is that you may give up some upside compared to market-based options.

INDEXED

An indexed annuity ties potential interest to an index, but the results are controlled by rules. Many indexed annuities use limits like caps, participation rates, or spreads. These limits can reduce how much of an index gain you receive. Some contracts can also change these limits over time, which can change your future results. Indexed annuities can be attractive, but you must understand the limits before you decide.

VARIABLE

A variable annuity can rise or fall based on the performance of the investment options inside it. It can offer growth potential, but it also brings market risk and ongoing fees. If market swings will keep you up at night, this type can be a poor fit for your income needs.

THE TWO “REGRET TRIGGERS” TO WATCH

First is access to your money. Many annuities have surrender periods. If you need money early, you may pay a surrender charge. Some contracts allow a limited amount you can take out each year without a surrender charge, but the rules vary.

Second is fees and complexity. Some annuities have layers of fees or “hidden” costs that show up as lower credited interest or limits on gains. More features can also mean more moving parts. If you cannot explain how it works in plain words, you should slow down.

ANSWER THESE 3 QUESTIONS

- 1) What is my main goal: steady income, growth, or both?: _____
- 2) How much market risk can I truly tolerate?: _____
- 3) When might I need this money, and how flexible must it be?: _____

If you are unsure about any answer, that is your signal to schedule a review before you commit. Page 4 will help you compare the pros and cons and map your next steps.



Why Choosing Wrong Costs You *Real* Money



This page helps you decide if the annuity type fits your retirement needs. If you feel unsure, book a no-cost and no-obligation review before you commit.

WHAT YOU HAVE NOW (write what you know)

Annuity company: _____

Annuity type (Fixed / Indexed / Variable): _____

Approximate value: \$ _____

Do you have an income rider? (circle): **Yes / No / Not sure**

Can you explain how it works in plain words? (circle): **Yes / No**

THE 7-QUESTION FIT CHECK (mark Yes or No)

- Yes** **No** I may need more than a small withdrawal in the next 3 years.
- Yes** **No** I do not know when surrender charges end.
- Yes** **No** I would panic if my account value dropped in a bad market year.
- Yes** **No** I do not understand caps, participation rates, or spreads.
- Yes** **No** I do not know the total fees I pay each year.
- Yes** **No** I am buying mainly because rates look high right now.
- Yes** **No** My income plan depends on guessing the next rate change.

YOUR SCORE (count your YES answers)

0-2 YES: You may be stable. Confirm the details before you sign.

3-4 YES: You are at risk. One wrong choice can lock you in.

5+ YES: Urgent. Book a review before you commit.

KNOW THIS BEFORE YOU SIGN (short and important)

Many annuities have surrender periods. They often last 6-10 years, sometimes longer. If you take money out early, you may pay surrender charges.

Some states also give you a short "free look" period to cancel after you receive the contract.

BRING THIS TO YOUR REVIEW (even photos help)

- Your annuity statement (or last annual notice)
- Any rider page (income, bonus, or long-term care)
- The surrender schedule page (end date matters)

THIS IS YOUR NEXT STEP

Book your no-cost Guaranteed Income Review:

Go to www.SolutionsForLifeKS.com/book-appointment

Or call: **785-404-6664**



Quick note: Product rules vary by company and state. Confirm details before you sign.

Mistake 6: Choosing the Wrong Type

Overview: Selecting the wrong annuity type.

Reflection Questions:

Does your current annuity type meet your retirement needs?

Exercise: Evaluate the pros and cons of different annuity types.

Pros and Cons Table:

Annuity Type	Pros	Cons
Fixed Annuity		
Variable Annuity		
Indexed Annuity		

Checklist:

- Annuity aligns with long-term goals
- Payout options match retirement income needs

Action Plan: List the steps to review or switch your annuity type.



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