

## BEHAVIORAL INSIGHTS STUDY

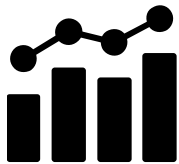
# EMAILS INCREASED RETIREMENT SAVINGS AMONG U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR EMPLOYEES



Roughly **1 in 4** employees of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) contributed less than 5 percent of their salary to the agency's retirement savings program, the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP), in 2015.

Seeking effective ways to improve retirement security for its employees, DOL commissioned a study to determine whether easy-to-implement, low-cost behavioral interventions, such as strategic emails, could increase rates of employee contribution to retirement savings.

## EMAILS RESULTED IN BIG BENEFITS



Two carefully designed emails led to a

**7.5%**

percentage point increase in the share of employees saving at least 5 percent of their salary, thus getting the full employer match.

### STUDY SNAPSHOT

Quick **experiments** (randomized controlled trials) to measure the impacts of emails that included

**4,681**

employees contributing less than 5 percent of their salary in

**2 phases**

during 2015 and 2016.

**Administrative data** on participation in the TSP was used to measure impacts.

## EMAILS ADDRESSED BEHAVIORAL BARRIERS TO ENCOURAGE SAVING

The study team identified the following behavioral factors that may affect DOL employees' decisions about contributing to the TSP and designed emails with features to address them:



Not paying **attention** to or **understanding** the importance and ease of saving now



Choosing to **spend money now**, rather than spend money later



Being presented with **too much information**



**Procrastinating** and letting **hassle factors** get in the way

Learn more about this study at <http://www.dol.gov/asp/evaluation/BIStudy/>