401(k) Rollover Decision Worksheet

Use this worksheet to compare an old 401(k), a new employer plan, and an IRA before moving money.

Goal: check the access, protection, tax, and special-case issues first. Compare fees only after those gates are clear.

1) Your rollover situation

Fill in the basic facts first. Keep this worksheet with the documents you used.

Your name _____

Date you reviewed this _____

Former employer / old 401(k) plan _____

New employer plan (if any) _____

Candidate IRA provider _____

2) Compare the three possible destinations

Do not assume the IRA is the default answer. Check whether each path is actually available.

Destination	Still in the running?	Notes
Old 401(k) / former plan	■ Yes ■ No	
New employer plan	■ Yes ■ No	
IRA	■ Yes ■ No	

3) Decision gates: check these before fees

Before fees, verify destination availability and resolve access, protection, tax and special-case questions.

Can the new employer plan accept the rollover?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify
Could keeping money in this 401(k) preserve a Rule-of-55 access route you may need?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify

Is creditor or legal-protection context important in your case?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify
Could adding a rollover IRA affect later Form 8606 / backdoor Roth math?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify
Does the account hold after-tax money?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify
Does the account hold designated Roth money?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify
Does the account hold employer stock that may need NUA review?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify
Is there an outstanding plan loan or loan offset question?	■ Yes	■ No	■ Need to verify

RMD due this year? Exclude it from the rollover and confirm the payout order.

4) Document checklist

Use real documents, not memory. You do not need every page in front of you, but you should know which source you relied on.

■ Old plan summary plan description (SPD) _____

■ Old plan participant fee disclosure _____

■ Old plan investment menu / expense information _____

■ New plan rollover acceptance rules _____

■ New plan fee disclosure _____

■ IRA full fee schedule _____

■ Tax breakdown showing pretax / after-tax / Roth amounts _____

■ Any employer stock detail _____

■ Any plan loan or loan offset detail _____

5) Fee comparison

Only do this after the gates above are reasonably clear. Compare recurring all-in annual cost, not just the fund expense ratio.

Destination	All-in annual cost	Source / page used
Old 401(k)		
New employer plan		
IRA		

Fee note: if one option looks cheaper, write the estimated difference and why it matters only after the non-fee gates are clear.

6) Receiving account and transfer method

If a rollover is still the best path, write down the receiving account details and use the direct route unless a documented exception applies.

Chosen destination _____

Receiving institution / account number _____

■ Direct rollover confirmed _____

■ If not direct, 60-day issue reviewed _____

Transfer instructions / administrator notes

7) Final decision record

Write the reason for your final choice in one plain-English sentence, then list what still needs follow-up.

Why I chose this destination

Open questions / specialist follow-up

Decision date _____

When I will recheck this _____

This worksheet is educational. It does not determine state creditor law, plan-specific eligibility, NUA treatment, or your personal tax result.

RMD / payout-order confirmation

RMD amount, completion status and administrator confirmation:

_____

_____

Revised October 18, 2026: access wording clarified; explicit RMD check added.