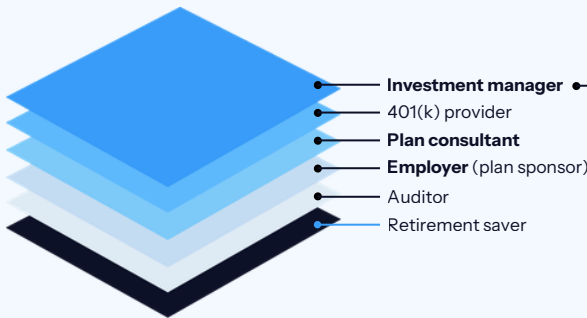


401(k) savers are protected through multiple layers of oversight

Workers are not navigating investments alone — sophisticated fiduciaries and regulated institutions stand between them and the market.

The 401(k) system



For example, sophisticated investment managers oversee the 401(k) system

Seven prominent target-date fund providers managed 92% of target-date fund assets in 2023.

These institutions operate under strict regulation and fiduciary duties, providing strong protections for retirement savers.

* **Bold** = fiduciary duty

	Role in 401(k) system	How they protect retirement savers	Examples
Investment manager	Designs and manages pooled investment funds used in 401(k) plans, including target-date funds and diversified portfolios.	Operates under strict fiduciary and regulatory obligations to manage investments prudently, diversify portfolios, and pursue long-term returns that help workers grow their retirement savings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vanguard • T. Rowe Price • State Street • Blackrock
401(k) provider	Operates the platform that offers investment options to employers and plan participants. Provides recordkeeping, reporting, compliance, and participant disclosures.	Ensures plans comply with ERISA and tax rules, provides transparency and disclosures for participants, and maintains the operational infrastructure that allows workers to save and invest safely for retirement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empower • Alight • Principal
Plan consultant	Advises employers on selecting and monitoring investment options and service providers for the plan.	Serves as an independent fiduciary advisor to the employer, helping evaluate investment performance, fees, and risk to ensure workers have access to appropriate, well-managed retirement investments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Morgan Stanley • SageView • CAPTRUST
Employer (plan sponsor)	Selects which investment options will be offered to employees in the company's 401(k) plan.	Has a fiduciary duty under ERISA to act in workers' best interests by offering prudent investment options, monitoring fees, and ensuring the plan is operated responsibly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boeing • John Deere • General Electric • Ford • IBM
Auditor	Conducts independent audits of larger ERISA plans and files audit reports with the Department of Labor.	Provides independent oversight of plan finances and operations, helping ensure assets are properly managed and retirement savings are protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EY • PWC • Deloitte • KPMG
Retirement saver	Chooses how to invest their retirement contributions from a limited menu of professionally-managed options selected and overseen by the sophisticated fiduciaries and regulated institutions in the 401(k) system.		