

Worked in South Korea, living in the United States

A one page note from PensionHunter for consular staff and the people they serve.

Where the pension record sits in South Korea

National Pension Service (NPS)

Source: nps.or.kr, verified 7 June 2026. <https://www.nps.or.kr/>

The route from abroad

The wall is nationality. NPS pays a lump sum refund only where your country grants Korean nationals an equivalent benefit, or an agreement covering lump sum refunds exists, or you held an E-8, E-9 or H-2 visa. Contributions-only agreements fail all three. NPS states plainly that a Korean lump sum refund is not paid to nationals of the United Kingdom, and not payable to Chinese nationals, and it permits none for Ireland, Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Finland or New Zealand. Those same conventions provide no totalisation of coverage periods, so Korean months do not count toward entitlement in either country. Application is in person by default, and documents signed abroad need notarisation plus Korean consular attestation. Source: nps.or.kr, read 4 October 2026.

A deadline we hold for South Korea

An entitled foreigner must apply for the National Pension lump sum refund within five years of becoming entitled, normally the date of departure.

Source: nps.or.kr, read 4 October 2026. <https://www.nps.or.kr>

Every deadline we hold for South Korea: <https://pensionhunter.ai/deadlines/south-korea>

Check your own working life for free

Tell us where you worked. The free check shows which countries may hold a pension for you, and which can be ruled out and why. No sign in, no charge.

Run the free check:

https://pensionhunter.ai/pension-checker?country=south-korea&utm_source=consulate&utm_medium=print&utm_campaign=kr-us

No. We identify where a pension is likely held and the official route to it, and we name each source with the date we read it. We do not give financial, tax or legal advice.

Made from our own data, as read up to 4 October 2026. The PensionHunter Team, hello@pensionhunter.ai