

Poll finds workers fear retirement

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Fewer than 20 percent of New Jersey workers say they are financially ready for retirement, according to a poll released Friday.

That's partly because people sense they're not prepared for decades of retirement, said Susan P. Ascher, president and CEO of the Roseland-based Ascher Group, which conducted the poll.

"They're looking into the future and saying, I am going to live longer," she said. "Maybe

this is not just for the next 10 or 15 years, maybe this is for the next 30 years."

Another reason is because pensions are disappearing or shrinking, she said.

Ascher couldn't quantify "financially ready" with a dollar figure, but said it means sufficient resources to maintain a style of living that allows retirees to travel, eat and "still have a nice life," she said.

Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind Poll conducted the survey with the Ascher Group, interviewing a random sample of 600 New Jersey resi-

dents age 18 and older by telephone from Nov. 15 to 20. The sampling error margin is plus or minus 4 percentage points.

Of the respondents age 65 and older who are still working, 36.9 percent said they are not financially ready to retire. Of those 65 and older who have already retired, nearly one-third said they were not ready at retirement.

Jane Margesson, a spokeswoman for AARP New Jersey, cited escalating property taxes and prescription drug costs as key factors preventing New Jerseyans from being able to save enough for retirement.