

FINANCIAL RESOURCES DURING DIFFICULT TIMES

During times of financial stress such as government shutdowns, furloughs, layoffs, or health-related absences, you may need to survive without your regular income. Your immediate action will help minimize the financial impact you experience.

Military & Family Readiness Center (M&FRC)

The Military & Family Readiness Center provides one-on-one financial counseling to include budgets, credit and debt management and credit report pulls for our military, retirees, and dependents. Additionally, they can direct you to other resources such as the ones below.

Location:

5837 D Avenue, Hill AFB, Utah 84056
801-777-4681

Air Force Aid Society (AFAS)

The Air Force Aid Society's mission is to support Airmen and enhance the Air Force mission by relieving emergency financial distress, helping Airmen's families achieve their educational goals, and improving their quality of life through proactive programs.

Those eligible for AFAS Assistance include:

- Active duty Air Force members, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve personnel
- Retired Air Force members (including Temporary Disability Retired List, [TDRL])
- Spouse of Air Force member who is enrolled in DEERS and holds valid military dependent ID card (with Power of Attorney)
- Dependent family members enrolled in DEERS holding valid military dependent ID card
- Dependents of deceased Air Force members enrolled in DEERS and holding valid military dependent ID card (Widows)

Apply online at <https://afas.org/emergencyassistance/>

**Army and Navy and Marine Relief Societies have their own respective guidance.*

Military OneSource

Managing money and legal affairs are part of mission readiness. Military OneSource provides strategies on consolidating and paying down debt, saving for retirement or college, and creating a financial plan that will lead to financial security. Link to installation legal services that protect you and your family from mishaps. Also, discover how Military OneSource MilTax free tax filing services can make quick work out of tax return preparation and filing. Set financial goals for your future by tapping into the information and resources available through Military OneSource.

Call Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 or live chat to schedule a free appointment with a MilTax consultant or a financial counselor.

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/>

Utah National Guard Charitable Trust

Members of the *National Guard* must apply for emergency assistance online. Assistance categories of need include rent/mortgage, car payment/insurance, utilities, gas or food. Please be sure to provide a detailed statement of the emergency need with valid justification. Gift cards are on hand and available through the Military & Family Readiness Program Manager or your Command First Sergeant.

*Please note that all local grocery stores are currently facing shortage of supplies and these gift cards may limit your purchasing capacity as a result.

<https://utahguard.org/aid> - application page

Employment Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP is your primary resource for financial resources our civilian workforce.
(*Staffing here may get affected by a full government shutdown...*)

The Primary website for the EAP is: afpc.af.mil/EAP

The EAP Financial Brochure can be located at:

<https://www.magellanassist.com/mem/library/ContentDB.Image?id=6738>

(Explains the EAP role in regards to financial services provided)

The EAP financial resources guide can be located at:

<https://www.magellanassist.com/mem/library/contentDB.image?id=6808>

(Lists various financial resource websites available for federal employees)

The EAP is your primary resource for financial resources. You may call 866-580-9078 anytime 24/7 to schedule a consult with a financial counselor. Appointments are normally scheduled during regular business hours from 0800-1900 CST. These services are confidential and can include developing plans to cope with your financial stress and address financial concerns you may have. Counseling is provided through multiple formats and covers numerous topics including:

- Finance support via phone consults. Basic consults are free (usually limited to 30 minutes and good for answering questions on credit cards, mortgages, budgeting, etc). Specific examples of finance topics EAP can support over the phone or with brochures:
 - Deciding whether to buy or lease your next car
 - Selecting which credit card to pay off first
 - Family budgeting
 - College budgeting
 - Buying a home
 - Setting your financial goals
 - Debt consolidation
 - Savings and investment strategies
 - Determining how much you will need to save to retire comfortably

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- Finding a financial planner in your community
- EAP can help refer to a credit counseling agency or attorney (1 free hour, then discounted rate depending on financial advisor or attorney rates...usually 25%)
- Employees can ASK if there are attorneys/advisors that will work pro-bono or provide an additional discount, but employees must ASK for pro-bono support specifically
- Identity theft and fraud support is unlimited and free
- There are numerous brochures/papers on individual topics on the web site

Additional Financial Resources:

Credit Counseling can be obtained through most banks and credit unions if you are a member. You may contact your bank directly to seek information and resources available where possible.

During Government Shutdowns or Furloughs, several banks offer loan services. Please contact your bank to see what services are available. For example, before a shutdown, USAA and Navy Federal Credit Union typically announce to their members resources.

USAA: Members may apply for a one-time, no-interest loan equal to the amount of your net pay, from \$500 to \$6,000, designed to help with an affected payment disruption. The loan has an annual percentage rate of 0% and must be repaid within 3 months of funding. Your payments will be split into two equal installments, with the first payment due in about 60 days and the second due in about 90 days.

Navy Federal Credit Union: Members are offered a paycheck assistance program, providing an advance on direct deposit for eligible members impacted in the event of a government shutdown. This program is available for all Active Duty servicemembers, Federal government employees and contractors who are paid directly by the Federal government whose pay will be affected by the shutdown, and have direct deposit set up with Navy Federal for their paycheck.

USA Cares

The Emergency Assistance program focuses on cases where the financial stress is related to military service. This program pays immediate, essential bills, including food and utility bills. They also have links to several other agencies that may be able to help with financial assistance. Click on Get Help in the upper right of website <https://usacares.org/programs>

National financial website resources available:

Consumer Federal Protection Bureau

<http://www.consumerfinance.gov/>

Their mission is to make markets for consumer financial products and services work for Americans — whether they are applying for a mortgage, choosing among credit cards, or using any number of other consumer financial products. You can submit a complaint, learn about industry trends, and educate yourself about financial issues that affect all Americans.

National Foundation for Credit Counseling

<http://www.nfcc.org/>

Provides free credit, housing and bankruptcy counseling and education.

Federal Trade Commission

<http://www.ftc.gov/>

Their mission is to prevent business practices that are anticompetitive or deceptive or unfair to consumers; to enhance informed consumer choice and public understanding of the competitive process; and to accomplish this without unduly burdening legitimate business activity.

FINRA: Investor Education Foundation

<https://www.finrafoundation.org/>

(General Information on saving and investing)

AnnualCreditReport.com

<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/cra/index.jsp>

Local Utah financial website resources available:

The below listed local companies offer FREE financial counseling related to debt and money management, credit and budget counseling, bankruptcy, foreclosure, and more. Please contact them directly to inquire about available classes.

2-1-1: Local community resources

<http://www.211.org>

Call 211 or (888) 826-9720

Utah State University – Cooperative Extension

<http://extension.usu.edu/>

(801) 468-2846

Powerpay.org

<https://powerpay.org/>

Utah Saves

<https://americasaves.org/local-campaigns/utah-saves/>

Cottages of Hope

<http://www.cottagesofhope.org/>

2724 Washington Blvd Ogden, UT 84401

(801) 393-4011

Utah Department of Workforce Services

<https://jobs.utah.gov/>

(866) 435-7414

All local banks and credit unions offer various free credit and debt management counseling and may provide additional financial information and resources.

****It is imperative that you contact and coordinate any payment issues with all your creditors directly. Most companies will consider a renewed payment plan, deferred payment option, interest**

rate reduction, or other alternatives.

Other financial websites available include:

AnnualCreditReport.com

<https://www.annualcreditreport.com/index.action>

You should check and monitor your credit report for accuracy and ID theft.

- For military and dependents the M&FRC can pull your credit report with a score and analysis tool.

Thrift Savings Plan

<https://www.tsp.gov>

You should monitor and verify your current TSP plan contributions.

In time of need you may want to evaluate your individual TSP plan contributions. Employees with significant debt due to reduced income may want to consider their options very closely. You may be eligible for a TSP loan and can check eligibility on the TSP website above. Please be mindful of the long term effects of loss interest of the amount of the loan. If drastic measures are required you can change or modify your specific TSP allocations online.

Debt Consolidation/Debt Management:

InCharge Debt Solutions

<http://www.incharge.org/>

800-565-8953

- **Consolidate** credit bills into one easy monthly payment
- **Pay** off your debt faster
- **Lower** your interest rates regardless of credit score
- **Stop** collection calls
- **Eliminate** late fees and over-limit charges
- **Build** a realistic budget and financial plan you can follow

Employees should be prepared to take the steps necessary to ensure financial stability during a difficult time. If you have not recently completed an accurate financial assessment or completed a thorough budget review, it would be in your best interest to do so.

Do not hesitate to contact your creditors immediately if you experience financial difficulty. Communication with them is the first step to ensuring you remain ahead of your financial game plan. Keeping payments on time will also reduce the risk of incurring additional late fees and other penalties.

Local food banks

The local food banks are willing to assist when necessary. Please contact them directly for assistance if needed.

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Catholic Community Services Food Bank

www.ccsutah.org/

2504 F Ave

Ogden, UT 84401

(801) 394-5944

Open Doors

www.opendoorsutah.org

875 E Hwy. 193, Layton, UT 84041

(801) 771-4642

Utah Food Bank

www.utahfoodbank.org

3150 S 900 W, Salt Lake City Utah 84119

(801) 978-2452

Family Connection Center Food Bank

https://foodpantries.org/li/family_connection_center_food_bank

875 E Hwy. 193, Layton, UT 84041

(801) 771-4642

Financial Assistance

Federal Employee Education & Assistance Fund

<http://www.feea.org>

3333 S. Wadsworth Blvd., Suite 300

Lakewood, CO 80227

(303) 933-7580

****Federal employees are eligible to apply for emergency financial assistance through this organization. Applications can be printed from online and must be faxed with all supporting documentation for review. Be sure to read the entire application and include all supporting documentation when submitting your request.**

FEEA may provide assistance up to the amount of the pay shortage for one pay period (not to exceed \$1,500). No-interest loans of up to \$1,500 are available to assist with individual emergency situations. Employees should complete the emergency assistance application and follow the instructions for either mailing or faxing the application and all supporting information. Loans are generally repaid within a year.

Assistance is generally available for the following types of hardships:

- Death in the employee's immediate family
- Loss of income
- LWOP due to severe illness or family-member illness. **Employee must be back at work.**
- Family breakup, separation, or divorce
- Critical illness in the employee's immediate family
- Major loss of property due to natural disaster such as: fire, flood, hurricane

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- Government pay error in cases where the pay shortage was caused by governmental error (e.g., an administrative or disbursing mistake, computer problem, or check lost in the mail)

Please note: in order to receive a loan, applicant must have been employed with the federal government for 1 year or longer. Visit the link for additional details.

<http://www.feea.org/programs/emergency-assistance/emergency-assistance-faq>

Utility Assistance Programs

If you have been living in your residence for over 1 year, you may contact your power and gas utility to inquire if you meet eligibility requirements for the Equal Payment Plan. This plan will average your utility costs over the entire year and provide a average monthly billing.

Rocky Mountain Power

<http://www.rockymountainpower.net/res/po.html>

(888) 221-7070

Dominion Energy

www.dominionenergy.com/utah

(800) 323-5517

City and local utility companies should be contacted directly to inquire about any further assistance available.

Legal Assistance

For complex or serious issues, consult an attorney or a lawyer. Several free clinics are located throughout Utah. Pro bono services offered at legal clinics may include legal advice for civil legal issues, help answering papers, summons, and more information. Services provided may be dependent on income.

www.utahlegalhelp.org/utah-state-bar-pro-bono (801) 297-7049

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross works in partnership with military aid societies to provide quality, reliable financial assistance to eligible applicants 24/7/365. Assistance can include funds for emergency travel, burial of a loved one, emergency food and shelter, etc. For more information, please visit <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/military-families/financial-assistance.html>.

If your family needs emergency assistance, you can submit a request online at <https://saf.redcross.org/css> or call the American Red Cross at 1-877-272-7337

Who is Eligible for Financial Assistance?

Call the American Red Cross Hero Care Center at 1-877-272-7337 (toll-free) if you are:

- An active duty service member

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- A member of an activated National Guard or Reserve unit
- An immediate family member of a service member in the above two categories
- A military retiree or spouse/widow(er) of a retiree

Information to Have Ready:

When calling the Red Cross, please provide as much of the following information about the service member as is known:

- Full legal name
- Rank/rating
- Branch of service (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard) Social Security number
- Date of birth
- Military unit address
- Information about the deployed unit and home base unit (for deployed service members only)

Hope for Homeowners (H4H)

Supports home preservation activities to assist struggling homeowners.

<https://www.benefits.gov/benefit/4589>

1-800-225-5342

This is a program for people at risk of losing their home due to default and foreclosure. If you are having difficulty paying your mortgage, you may be eligible to refinance into a mortgage that you can afford. Participation in the Hope for Homeowners (H4H) program is voluntary, and both lender and borrower must agree to participate.

Homeowners Assistance Program (HAP)

Provides financial assistance to those who suffer financial loss on the sale of their primary residence.

1) Members of the Armed Forces (30% or greater disability) who incur a wound, injury, or illness in the line of duty during a deployment in support of the Armed Forces on or after September 11, 2001;

2) Wounded DoD and Coast Guard civilian homeowners reassigned in furtherance of medical treatment or rehabilitation or due to medical retirement in connection with a disability incurred in the performance of his or her duties during a forward deployment occurring on or after September 11, 2001 in support of the Armed Forces; and

3) Surviving spouses of fallen warriors who move within 2 years of the death of such employee or member.

<https://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/Military-Missions/Real-Estate/HAP/>

800-861-8144

Financial tips and tricks to save money

- Track your monthly and daily spending
- Prioritize your needs and your wants

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- Elect automatic payment plans for mandatory expenses to help alleviate stress
- Be a conservative and well informed shopper
- Take advantage of sales and coupons
- Shop at thrift stores
- Pay your bills on time to reduce the risk of penalties and fees and contact lender if required.
(Often fees can be waived)