

PLAN YOUR *Future*



2023

SHELBYVILLE
TIMES-GAZETTE



From left, Christian Cavender, Charlie Williams and Mike Cavender of Edward Jones.

Should investors go it alone?

If you're going to enjoy a comfortable retirement, you should know, among other things, how much money you'll need. And you may have a much better chance of knowing this if you get some professional help.

Consider these findings from a 2021 study by Dalbar, a financial services market research firm:

- Investors who worked with a financial advisor were three times more likely to estimate what they would have saved at retirement than “do-it-yourself” investors.
- More than two-thirds of investors with a financial advisor were satisfied with the amount they would have saved at retirement, compared to about 27% of the do-it-yourselfers.

How do financial professionals help their clients in these ways?

First, consider the issue of determining

how much money will be needed for retirement. It's not always easy for individuals to estimate this amount. But financial professionals can help clients like you arrive at this figure by exploring your hopes and goals. How long do you plan to work? What kind of lifestyle do you anticipate enjoying in retirement? Where would you like to live? How much would you like to travel? Are you open to pursuing earned income opportunities, such as consulting or working part time?

Next comes the other key question: How much money will be available for retirement? This big question leads to many others: How much do you need to save and invest each year until you retire? About what sort of investment return will you need to reach your retirement income goals? What level of risk are you willing to take to achieve that return? What is the

role of other income sources such as Social Security or any pensions you might have?

Having a financial professional help you gain a clear idea of your retirement income picture can certainly be reassuring. But there may be other reasons why “going it alone” as an investor might not be desirable. For example, when the financial markets are down, as was the case for much of 2022, some investors make decisions based on short-term volatility, such as selling investments to “cut their losses,” even if these same investments still have solid business fundamentals and good prospects for growth.

But if you work with a financial professional, you might decide to stick with these investments, especially if they're still appropriate for your long-term strategy. Other times, of course, the advice may be different — but it will always be advice

based on your goals, needs and time horizon.

Furthermore, if you're investing on your own, you may always be measuring your results against the major market indexes, such as the S&P 500 or the Dow Jones Industrial Average. But in reality, your portfolio should contain a wide range of investments, some of which aren't contained in these indexes, so you might not be assessing your performance appropriately.

A financial professional can help you develop your own, more meaningful benchmarks that can show the progress you're actually making toward your goals. In some areas of life, going it alone can be exciting—but when it comes to investing for your future, you may benefit from some company on the journey.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Edward Jones[®]> [edwardjones.com](https://www.edwardjones.com) | Member SIPC

New job, new retirement account options

Changing jobs? Consider these 401(k) options:

- Leave the money in your previous employer's plan
- Move it to your new employer's plan
- Roll it over to an Individual Retirement Account (IRA)
- Cash out the account subject to early withdrawal penalties



We can talk through your financial goals and find the option that works best for you.

Charlie Williams, CRPC[™]

Financial Advisor

1608 N Main Street
Suite D
Shelbyville, TN 37160
931-684-4972

Mike Cavender, CFP[®], AAMS[™]

Financial Advisor

609 North Main Street
Shelbyville, TN 37160
931-684-4373

Christian Cavender

Financial Advisor

609 North Main Street
Shelbyville, TN 37160
931-684-4373

Review your insurance after life changes

Big life changes don't happen often, but when they do, Shelter Insurance Agent Maleah Claxton would like to meet with you for a personal insurance review, especially if any of the following have occurred:

- Your marital status changed. If you recently married or divorced, you might need to add or remove names from auto and life policies.
- You bought a new house. If you built or bought a home last year, you will need a policy for that home. You may also want to increase your life insurance coverage so your family can pay the mortgage payments if something happens to you.
- You became a parent. When a child comes into your life, you should increase your life insurance coverage to provide income for them if something happens to you.
- You purchased a car. If you purchased a different car, you need to make sure anyone who drives it is covered. In addition, if you have a lender, they may

require coverage you don't currently have.

- You remodeled your home. Did you add on to or update your house? If so, you may need to increase your homeowner's coverage.

- You acquired valuable new items. If you now own items such as jewelry or art, help protect them with a personal articles policy.

- You rented your first place. Renters' insurance is a great idea if you live in an apartment or condo. Your landlord may have insurance, but it will not cover your belongings or provide you with liability protection.

These are just a few examples of when an insurance review is helpful, but we are always happy to help you review your coverage any time your needs change and let you know if you qualify for any discounts.

Shelter Insurance® agent Maleah Claxton is located at 1301 North Main St. and can be reached at 931-680-0064.



Maleah Claxton

Enjoy the Ride!





With Shelter's great rates and personal service, you can sit back and enjoy the ride!

Maleah Claxton
1301 N. Main St., Ste. A, Shelbyville, TN 37160
931-680-0064
MClaxton@ShelterInsurance.com



We're your Shield. We're your Shelter.
ShelterInsurance.com



Financial planning at First Community Bank



First Community Bank's Universal Bankers are, from left, Angie Brown, Denise Dickens, Crystal Lorberbaum, Brenda Douglas, Cinnamon Turrentine, Yessica Hernandez Perez, Janet Zamora Aj, Desiree Floyd. Not pictured: Sherry Schuchman and Kayla Clanton.

Investing in our community is a core belief at First Community Bank and vital to the financial well-being of our future generations. A key part of our mission is helping our customers meet their financial needs.

Using sound judgment and developing plans of action is an important part of life. Financial planning is the process of setting goals and taking steps to achieve our financial goals. It involves analyzing our current financial situation, setting financial goals, and making a plan to reach them. Financial planning is a critical step in managing our finances and planning for the future. It allows us to make informed decisions about how to spend and save our money.

Financial planning is an essential part of a successful financial life. It can help prepare for retirement, save for college, purchase a car or a home, and build a secure financial future. We believe that a part of investing in our community is helping our youth develop good financial habits. Laying the foundation for financial success requires committing and investing in our younger generations. Every year we visit our local schools and educate the

students on the importance of financial planning, saving, and financial literacy. We believe that with the right tools and information each individual can develop the right habits and behaviors that will create a strong foundation for financial success.

If you would like help with your savings goals, retirement accounts, or find yourself in the market for a business or personal loan, please consider First Community Bank. Our tellers, universal bankers, and lenders are equipped and ready to assist you in any way possible.

April 2023 will mark First Community Bank's 35th anniversary. We are excited to celebrate that milestone with you as we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to contribute to the growth of our community for many years ahead. We thank you for your continued support and are proud to serve you and our community. Our focus remains to be the best locally owned bank in our county, state, and country. You are the reason for our success. From your oldest, locally owned bank- thank you!

Proud member of the FDIC and an Equal Housing Lender

FIRST COMMUNITY BANK OF TENNESSEE

SHRED DAY 2023

SATURDAY, MAY 6TH
8:30AM -10:30AM

MAIN OFFICE PARKING LOT
207 ELM STREET

LIMIT TO 2 BOXES OR GARBAGE BAGS

ON-SITE DOCUMENT SHREDDING AND MATERIALS DESTRUCTION
www.maxshred.com

BANK LOCAL GET MORE



FirstBank is passionate about the communities we serve. The investment we are most proud of is giving our time, resources and talents to improving life in our communities. It's who we are. We're a community bank by choice—a community bank that goes the distance for our customers. And that sets us miles apart.


FirstBank

FirstBankOnline.com

Member
FDIC



Brent Canady
Market President

508 Madison Street, Shelbyville, TN
931-680-7580

New year, new financially ready you!

Hello 2023! The new year is a great time to reflect and reset for the upcoming year. Be sure to consider your financial goals as part of your focus for the months ahead.

1. Create goals

The author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* wrote, “begin with the end in mind.” Are you saving for a trip? A home remodel? More money in your 401(k)? Write down your financial goals so you can reference them when you need some motivation. Make achievable, measurable, yet challenging goals. If the task seems daunting, start small. Make goals per day, week or month.

2. Budget

After making your financial goals, understand where your money goes. Start by tracking your sources of income and daily spending. This can be as simple as an excel spreadsheet or paper. If you are paid twice a month, break your budget down by check so you can account for every penny.

3. Commit to small changes

By committing to a few small changes, funds can add up quicker than you think. Don't forget to rely on your written goals. If you know you are saving up for a new computer, packing your lunch a couple of times a week won't seem like such a sacrifice. If you get an annual salary increase, consider auto drafting the increase into a savings account. If you were able to make ends meet prior to receiving the additional funds, you might not miss

spending them. Or increase your 401(k) contributions by 1%. Anything you can do to pay yourself first puts you much closer to achieving your financial goals!

4. Stick to it

This can be the hardest part of all. Be patient and celebrate the victories – even little ones. It won't always be easy. Commit to your goals and stay on track. Even if there are setbacks along the way, keep moving forward and don't look back. Your reward will be worth it.

The most important step of all – just start! No matter how big or small, beginning the process gets you one step closer. Make 2022 the year you recommit to making good financial decisions.

FirstBank is more than a community bank. We're your neighbors, family, and friends. More than a business model, community banking is our way of life. To experience the FirstBank difference, stop by to see your local bankers at 508 Madison Street or call 931-680-7580.

Nashville-based FirstBank, a wholly owned subsidiary of FB Financial Corporation (NYSE: FBK), is the third largest Tennessee headquartered bank, with 82 full-service bank branches across Tennessee, South Central Kentucky, Alabama and North Georgia, and has mortgage operations across the Southeast. The bank serves five of the major metropolitan markets in Tennessee and, with approximately \$12 billion in total assets, has the resources to provide a comprehensive variety of financial services and products. Member FDIC, Equal Housing Lender.

PLAN
for the future.

Plan final arrangements in advance, for peace of mind

Even people who have an eye to the future and who plan out their financial affairs sometimes put off one very important task: preplanning their funeral.

It can be an uncomfortable thought, but like any other business decision, forethought is critical. Why put the burden of so many details and financial decisions on your loved ones during a time of shock, mourning and trauma? The stress will often lead to impulsive and unnecessary financial burden and worry on your loved ones on the part of, "Did I do what they would have wanted?"

No matter if it's just detailed planning, funding, or both. Doak-Howell Funeral Home can make the process easier with advice and a friendly face to ease any discomfort. Many do not realize it, but interest-bearing policies are available. One major goal with interest-bearing policies is to cover any inflation.

In many cases, the beneficiary receives a refund of a pre-funded funeral. Did you know that under Tennessee law, up to \$25,000 invested in a burial policy is a protected asset and can't be available to creditors? Also, preplanned arrangements

to other funeral homes, for example, if the client moves to a different city.

Doak-Howell Funeral Home has a preplanning guide which helps customers account for their wishes and which provides a place to record important information, including assets, liabilities, account numbers, monthly payments, Veterans benefits, Social Security, and the locations where important records like birth certificates are kept.

The guide also provides spaces for the customer to specify what type of service is desired, to list friends and relatives who need to be notified, etc. The guide helps as an outline to keep everything organized in one place, accessible for your loved ones in the time of need and acts as a great reminder of details that may be otherwise overlooked.

A few other areas that relate to the issue and can be overlooked are having the correct legal information accessible. It may be necessary for a death certificate to be issued in a timely manner and a death certificate may be necessary for things as simple as having utilities disconnected. Make sure beneficiaries are up to date on insurance policies. Appoint an executor or

executrix and a durable power of attorney.

Families need to understand the law and how it applies to any given situation. For example, a family member who has a living relative's power of attorney may discover that power doesn't always continue after death. In order for the family member to make decisions after their relative passes away, they may need to be named executor of the estate. Proper advance planning and research helps avoid adding confusion and delays to an already stressful and emotional time.

The friendly and familiar faces at Doak-Howell are here to serve you. Feel free to contact us for a consultation on preplanning anytime. Micah Doak Wilson and Matt Doak are the pre-need counselors. Call 931-684-5011 or stop by 739 North Main St.



Micah Doak Wilson



DOAK - HOWELL FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION SERVICES



www.doakhowellfuneralhome.com

Matt Doak - Owner,
Funeral Director and Insurance
Pre-Need Counselor

Ephraim Doak - Manager,
Funeral Director and Embalmer

Micah Doak Wilson,
Insurance Pre-Need Counselor

"Family Serving Families"

**739 N. Main St.
Shelbyville, TN**

931-684-5011

Something different happens here.

We Help When Others Won'tSM

**Heritage
South**
COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

763 North Main Street, Shelbyville
931-680-1400 | heritagesouth.org

Insured by NCUA



Navigating today's rising interest rates

Rising interest rates can be both an opportunity and a challenge for your finances. If you have money in savings and are looking for a better interest rate, you will find rates unheard of just a few years ago. However, if you need to borrow money to purchase a car or home or to get to the end of the month, higher monthly payments may limit what you can borrow. With interest rates continuing to rise, it's worth reviewing how they affect your finances.

Much of the conversation about interest rates has focused on savings and deposits. To be sure, rising interest rates can be excellent if you are nearing retirement. Retirees, or others saving for short-term goals, use certificates to earn interest on their funds. Many financial institutions have recently offered consumers higher rates and specials, and Heritage South Community Credit Union is no exception. "We are monitoring the economy and interest rates daily," reported Heritage South CEO Laura Parham. "We want to ensure we offer a competitive rate to our members, but things are changing very quickly." You might be tempted to move your money to the latest special if you have funds currently in certificates, but before doing so, always check to see if there is a penalty for an early withdrawal from your current account.

But what if you need to borrow money right now? Does this mean you should delay purchasing that new car or home? While today's interest rates are the highest in 20 years, they are not outside historical norms. "Historically low interest rates have spoiled us for many years," Mrs. Parham said. "We don't see rates returning to where they were anytime soon. So members looking to buy a new car shouldn't delay just because of interest rates." Regardless of market conditions, the right time to buy a house or car is when you feel ready and when your credit and financial foundation are healthy.

Buyers, however, will need to consider how much they can afford to borrow. A higher rate means paying more interest over the loan's lifetime and less buying power from the beginning. To put this in perspective, if you can only afford a mortgage payment of \$1,500, the maximum home price you can consider decreases because more of your monthly payment goes towards interest. If you were preapproved for a mortgage several months ago and have yet to find your home,



Tony Hicks is among staff members ready to help you at Heritage South Community Credit Union.

you should contact your lender to see how your situation has changed.

One additional step consumers can take right now is to examine their existing debt payments. Future interest rate hikes won't affect a fixed-rate car loan you may have, and the same goes for fixed-rate mortgages. However, if you carry a balance on a credit card or have another loan with an adjustable rate, the rate you owe on that money will continue to rise. It is best to pay down this debt. If you cannot pay down your debt quickly, consider options for refinancing, such as a debt consolidation loan or transferring a credit card balance to a card with a lower rate.

Heritage South Community Credit Union is a community-chartered credit union headquartered in Shelbyville. Membership is open to anyone who lives, works, worships, or attends school in Bedford, Marshall, Rutherford, Cannon, or Maury counties or the cities of Tullahoma, Manchester, Winchester, Decherd, or Fayetteville. To learn more about Heritage South, visit www.heritagesouth.org or call 931-680-1400. This credit union is federally insured by the NCUA and is an Equal Housing Lender.

Tips to improve financial literacy

Financial planning is a key component of successful money management. When financial plans are established and put in place, individuals are in much better position to achieve both short-term goals, like financing a dream vacation, and long-term aspirations, like retiring with enough money to live your golden years without worry.

No one is born knowing how to handle and manage money. Financial literacy is an acquired skill, which means anyone can learn how to manage money effectively. The following are a handful of ways individuals from all walks of life can improve their financial literacy.

- Crack the books (and magazines). A wealth of resources are available to anyone looking to become better at managing money, and many of those resources are books and magazines. Printed works are available for people with varying levels of financial literacy, so it's unlikely that any single text or magazine will benefit everyone equally. Find a text that speaks to your level of literacy and build from there.

- Pay attention to financial news. The days when financial news was limited to industry insiders or a handful of industry publications are long gone. Various online entities and cable television channels are now exclusively devoted to financial news. Anyone can benefit from paying attention to financial news, which can shed light on investments, real estate and financial industry trends that can help people better understand their portfolios and assets.

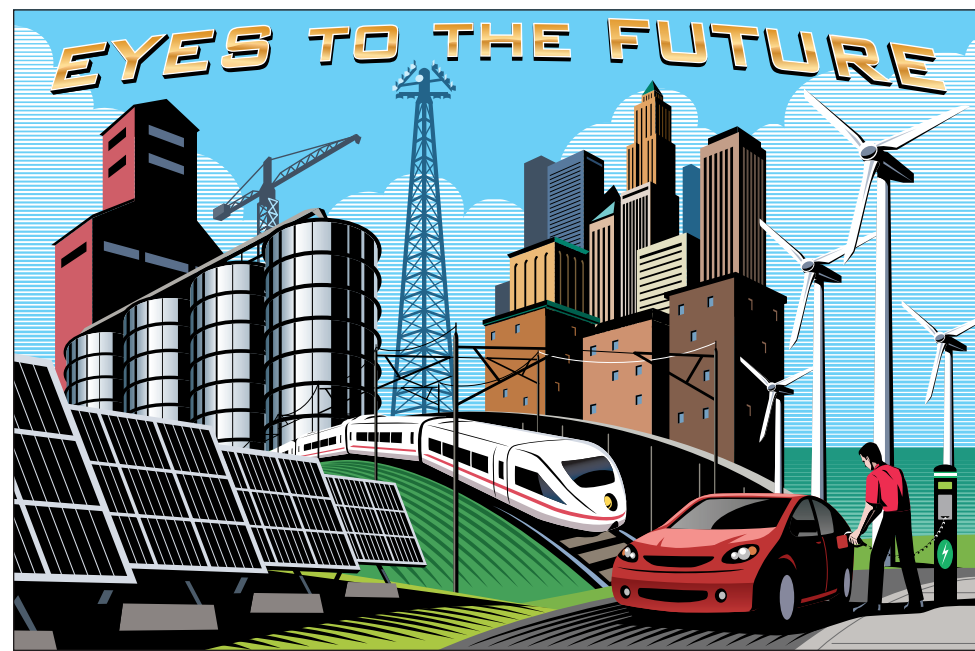
- Read your emails. Adults who already have retirement accounts and other investments may also have an invaluable resource right inside their email inboxes. Investment management firms like The Vanguard Group, Inc., routinely host online information sessions and discussions for investors that are promoted through email and other lines of communication with account holders. When promotional emails announcing these sessions are announced, take note and resolve to participate. Many don't require active participation, but they often provide insight into financial products, markets and strategies to successful investing.



The following are a handful of ways individuals from all walks of life can improve their financial literacy.

- Ask questions. It seems simple, but one of the most effective ways to gain greater financial literacy is to ask questions. If you work with a financial planner or are interviewing professionals to help you manage your money, ask that person to explain their financial strategy and the strategy espoused by their firms. When a new short- or even long-term goal pops up on your radar, ask your financial advisor to explain ways in which you can achieve that goal. Such discussions can reveal strategies that even well-informed individuals may be unaware of.

Financial literacy can help people achieve their life's goals. Various strategies can help people from all walks of life improve their financial knowledge and take greater control of their finances and futures.



How credit scores are evolving to improve access

By **CORA LEWIS**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A low credit score can hurt your ability to take out a loan, secure a good interest rate, or increase the spending limit on your credit card.

Some reasons for a low score are out of your control — such as unexpected medical debt or a lack of credit history.

Credit rating agencies are working to improve access to credit by giving people more time to pay medical bills before the debt appears in reports, and by removing other debt completely. They're also making it easier to count rent, utility payments, and other recurring bills — a boon for those who need credit the most.

Here's what to know:

What is a credit score and why is it important?

Put simply, a credit score is a formula that lenders use to decide how likely you are to pay back a loan. If you're considered a risky bet, you will pay more to borrow or may not be able to borrow at all.

The factors that go into calculating your score are complicated, and advocates say it's a positive that ratings agencies have started making it easier for consumers to prove that they'll be able to pay back money they borrow. It's especially important for so-called "thin file" consumers — those with a lack of extensive credit history, who are often younger or lower income.

"I do see that efforts are being made in order to equalize the credit score," said Rosalyn Glenn, a financial advisor at Prudential who focuses on expanding financial access. "For instance, adding rental payments to credit reports, because there is a segment of the population that rents and does not own. That's exciting — because the score can give them an opportunity for better rates on things like insurance and loans. I do believe progress is being made there."

What's happening with medical debt?

After conducting industry research during the pandemic, the three most-used credit rating agencies found that consumers with medical expenses were just as likely to be creditworthy as those without.

Effective July of last year, paid medical collection debt is no longer included on consumer credit reports, and the time



period before unpaid medical collection debt appears is now a year, up from six months. That gives people more time to work with insurance and healthcare providers to pay off the debt.

In the first half of 2023, Equifax, Experian and TransUnion will also remove medical collection debt under \$500 from credit reports.

When Jonathan Alvarado, 25, was in a car accident this past year, he knew health expenses wouldn't be the only hit to his finances. A landscaping contractor in Plainfield, New Jersey, who prides himself on careful financial behavior, Alvarado faced knee surgery at the beginning of his busiest work season, which hurt his productivity.

Alvarado said he only realized in retrospect the consequences for his access to credit. Even after insurance, Alvarado still owed in the vicinity of \$1,200, which he took several months to pay off. During that time, his credit score dropped to 680, still considered good, but lower than it had been. When he finished paying the debt, it jumped to 775, the highest it had ever been.

It was only when Alvarado looked into what caused the decline and rebound that he learned the lingering medical debt had been responsible.

"A difference of almost a hundred points," Alvarado said. "I would have paid it off sooner, if I had known."

David Anthony, 43, who drives a service truck in Baltimore, only learned that medical debt was dragging his credit down when an employer pointed out the high interest rate he was paying on an auto

loan. After looking into his score, Anthony disputed certain medical bills, some of which had been paid, eventually bringing his score up from the 500s to above 700.

"I got a great loan on the cars that I have now," he said. "That first car — it was a 17 percent interest rate. That's what raised the red flag to my employer."

Anthony is now down to a single-digit interest loan.

How else can I increase my credit score?

Although consumers have long been able to add rent and utility bill payments to their credit files, the bureaus have made these additions easier and less costly in recent years.

Experian, for example, has an option for consumers to opt into a service, "Experian Boost," that counts these kinds of payments without charging a fee. (In some other cases, companies may charge the renter or landlord for the trouble of filing the additional information in credit reports, since it isn't automatically included as a matter of course. Those who use the program often see an increase in their scores.

"You're making a payment once a month for a service you receive — very much like getting a loan," said Rod Griffin, financial health advocate at Experian. "What we found in our research was that those kinds of pieces of information do indicate that a person may be a better credit risk than their report might show if they have very little credit."

For people with thin credit files or scores below 680, Experian sees an average increase in the neighborhood of 19 points, according to Griffin. Others might see their scores increase 12 or 13 points. About two-thirds of people see an improvement in their scores, but the tool helps even those who don't build a longer credit history, Griffin said.

To use the tool, you give Experian permission to capture your monthly payment history and bank information — whether that's a cellphone plan, water bill, streaming service subscription, or rent.

For Brandon Reese, 41, a financial planner in Dallas, Texas, it made sense for him to help his 20-year-old daughter, a nursing student in San Antonio, opt in.

"When she first opened a line of credit, her score dropped," he said. "But with this, we were able to get it about 15 percent higher."

Reese said he also advises his retired clients to use the programs.

"For older people, they have low credit scores, too, because they've paid everything off," he said. "So their credit goes down. But now — Verizon, AT&T, Hulu, the Disney bundle, Netflix, your gas bill — fintech companies can justify those as payment histories."

Tech companies that provide similar services to Experian Boost, either at low or no cost, have proliferated.

"That is now one of the number one things we encourage people to do," said Silvio Tavares, CEO of VantageScore, another provider of national consumer credit scores. Like FICO, VantageScore uses the credit reports compiled by Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion to calculate a rating of credit-worthiness using its own algorithm. "If you're engaging in credit-worthy behavior — like paying rent and utilities on time, you want to include that."

How do I opt in?

To include alternative credit information on your report, you have several options. One is to opt-in to ExperianBoost or Ultra FICO by going to the companies' websites and granting permission for them to access your checking, savings, or money market accounts. This will allow the credit bureau or scoring company to analyze your spending, saving, and consistent payment histories. While other financial tech platforms provide similar services, these two options do not charge fees.

Four things to know about group life insurance

Group life insurance is typically offered through an employer or other group, such as a labor organization. It can provide financial security for surviving family members in the event of the death of someone covered by the group policy. The most common type of group life is term insurance. This is different from an individual term life policy, or a permanent life insurance policy, such as universal life insurance or whole life insurance.

If you're covered by a group life insurance policy or thinking of electing coverage, here are four things you should know about group life insurance:

It's typically offered through an employer

Group life insurance is usually offered through an employer and can be part of a complete benefits package for employees. Typically, employees can elect coverage during open enrollment. When electing benefits, you can designate one or more beneficiaries. Group life is often offered at little or no cost to employees. Your portion of the premium will be deducted from your paycheck. Unlike health or dental insurance, group life insurance premiums are typically not tax-deductible.

You may be able to purchase additional coverage

Depending on the employer's plan, you may be able to opt for additional coverage at a cost. This change can usually be made during open enrollment. If you're wondering how much coverage you need, you may want to think about your current life

insurance needs as well as any life changes you're expecting—such as getting married or having a child.

Coverage usually ends when you leave your job

For group life insurance, coverage is valid as long as you're part of the covered group. In many cases, the group is the company you work for. This means coverage typically ends when you leave your job—whether through resigning, being terminated, retirement, or some other means. Some employers may offer the option to convert to an individual policy. To see if this is an option, check with your human resources department.

It typically doesn't require a medical exam

While some life insurance policies still require a medical exam and/or medical questionnaire, group life insurance typically does not. Coverage is often guaranteed to all group members. This can be beneficial if you have a pre-existing condition, such as diabetes, that would make it difficult to qualify for an individual policy.

Is group life insurance enough?

The answer to this question can depend on your particular policy, how much coverage you have, your dependents, and your overall financial situation. Group life death benefits are often limited, smaller than an individual life insurance policy, and many people opt for additional coverage. If your group life insurance doesn't meet your needs, you may want to consider supplementing with an

Four ways to build your savings

Just because inflation is high and the economy is cloudy doesn't mean that you have to let this negatively impact your financial well being. Here are four great ways that you can build up your savings and grow your way to financial independence.

Automate your contributions

Pre arranging a portion of your income to be contributed into a special savings account is one of the easiest and surest ways to save more over time. For many working Americans, this can easily be accomplished by enrolling in a workplace retirement plan such as a 401(k), 403(b), or 457. Contributions will be deducted before you ever receive your paycheck, so you won't even know that they're missing. Additionally, many people will also have the option to set up an IRA (individual retirement account) where pre scheduled contributions can also be arranged.

Invest for growth

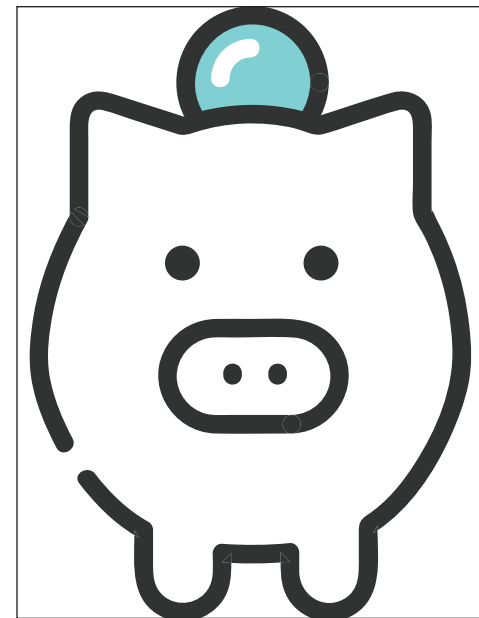
Setting money aside is a good start, but savers need growth if they want to see their account balances grow substantially or even keep up with inflation. This can be done by putting your money to work in accounts where it has the potential to earn a reasonable rate of return.

For money that you won't need until you're done working, your retirement plans are a great place to invest. A well diversified portfolio of funds focusing on high quality stocks and bonds will classically compound to several times its original value over time.

For savings that you may need to access in the short term such as emergencies or major upcoming purchases (like a down payment on a house), utilize high interest savings accounts. Many now pay interest rates above three percent.

Get a life insurance policy

Many people don't realize it, but permanent life insurance options offer both a death benefit as well as a savings component. These policies last your entire lifetime and also have cash value, which builds value over time within the insurance



policy. Policyholders are allowed to borrow against their cash value after a certain point, and this could give them access to tax free money that they can then use for expenses.

Eliminate your debts

Nothing works against your savings quite as much as debt. If you've got a credit card balance, student loans, or any other payments that cut into your budget, eliminating them should be a priority so that you can allocate more to your savings and investment goals.

One way to do this is with the debt snowball method. This is where you prioritize paying off the debt with the smallest balance first and then roll the payment towards the debt with the next highest balance, and so on. The result is a payment that gets bigger (like a snowball) until eventually, you've become debt free.

The bottom line

The best way to start building your savings is to automate your contributions into a retirement account. Also, consider life insurance options that come with cash value. Finally, use the debt snowball method to pay down your debts so that you'll have more money in your budget to finance each of these strategies.

Shelter Insurance: You just can't live without it

Insurance. It's one of those "can't-live-with-it, can't-live-without-it things." You need it to protect against the unlikely and the unthinkable. But what are the chances the unlikely and the unthinkable are going to happen to you? It's a risk one way or the other.

These risks change as our lives change—you buy a new house or car, change jobs, get married, start a family and plan for retirement. That is why you need to have yearly reviews with your insurance agent.

In these annual reviews, you may learn that there are options to help lower your cost of insurance. Higher deductibles, multi-line discounts (discounts for carrying several different types of insurance through the same carrier), good student discounts, driver's education discounts, security system discounts and marriage discounts are some of the options that may be available.

Tina Davenport has been in the insurance business 29 years and with Shelter Insurance for 24 years. Her office, located at 203A North Cannon Boulevard, offers insurance products for home, auto, life, farm and business.

Call Tina at 680-8900 or email her at TDavenport@shelterinsurance.com.



Tina Davenport of Shelter Insurance is ready to help with your insurance needs at her office, located at 203A North Cannon Blvd.



Learning some key components of financial planning can help people have more capital on hand to help them achieve their short- and long-term goals.

Start thinking about financial planning now

Financial planning has become a catchphrase in recent years, and it's something many consumers may not fully understand. Learning some key components of financial planning can help people have more capital on hand to help them achieve their short- and long-term goals.

A 2018 study commissioned by GuideVine that polled 1,000 Americans 30 and older about their finances found that many lack knowledge of basic financial terms. In addition, the study found that numerous people feel completely lost in regard to having a solid plan with their money. Financial planning can be intimidating, but learning the basics of sound money management can help people secure their financial futures.

According to the online learning resource WiseGeek, financial planning is a process of setting objectives, assessing assets and resources, estimating future financial needs, and making plans to achieve financial goals. Investing, risk management, retirement planning, tax requirements, and estate planning are key components of financial planning.

To get started with financial planning, the financial guide and online resource Ramsay says individuals will need to see where they stand financially, establish financial goals and create a plan to reach those goals. While a person can create his or her own financial plan, oftentimes the help of a financial planner can make sure that all avenues are being explored, especially for financial novices.

It's important to note that financial planning may mean different things to different people. For some, planning may revolve around saving for a child's college tuition but still having enough money left to retire. Another person may be looking to save extra money to invest in a business venture. Others who are living paycheck to paycheck may need help reevaluating their spending so they can grow their savings.

One of the key components of financial planning is to begin doing it as soon as possible. A financial plan can be instituted at any age, and goals can be revisited as life changes occur.

Financial planning strategies are something anyone can learn and utilize to secure their financial futures.



Outstanding in our Field

Tina Davenport

203A N. Cannon Blvd., Shelbyville
931-680-8900 • TDavenport@shelterinsurance.com

We depend on you, the American farmer, three times a day.

You can depend on Shelter!

We're your Shield. We're your Shelter.

