



Financial Tips During National Crisis

There are many thoughts that run through our mind during local and national crisis. First and foremost, God's got you – rest in his assurance and know he will walk with you through these events.

Second, we put together a few thoughts that may help you or provide some guidance for you.

Disclaimer: These are suggestions and may vary based on an individual's situation.

I have lots of debt, what should I be doing during a national crisis?

No paying on debt at this point and pile up money to build an emergency fund.. You should be focusing on the four walls (food, shelter, basic clothing and transportation). Put any additional money into your emergency fund so you have quick access to those funds.

I am debt free and have an emergency fund, should I continue to do this?

Absolutely, make sure your emergency fund is NOT an investment account – that it is readily available to you if you need those funds.

I am debt free and have a fully funded emergency fund, should I be focused on paying mortgage, planning for school, college and investing?

The conservative view is to take any additional money you have and put it in your emergency fund; but track how much more you are adding. Contact your mortgage/rental office to discuss what options you have. College loan payments have been deferred by the federal government, but if you have personal loans for college you will have to contact that lender for any options regarding deferment due to this crisis. Let your investments ride out. You do not have to stop investing but do not pull out as the market will comeback just as it did in 2008 housing crash. If

you may be laid off, stop investing and pile more cash if needed in your emergency fund.

There is a thought to get into the market when it is low so when it does rebound, you are in a great position. We recommend working with a financial advisor to do this, and you do this with “disposable” income (i.e. what if it doesn’t come back.)

Should I cash out my investments or take my money out of the bank?

No. The stock market is like a roller coaster—so don’t jump off in the middle of the ride. If you pull your money out now, you’ll guarantee a loss. But if you ride it out, you can bet that eventually the value will go back up. And bank deposits are insured by the FDIC and protected up to at least \$250,000.

What should I do to protect myself and my family right now?

You need to go into conserve mode. This means cutting unnecessary spending, like cable or gym memberships. Focus on paying for the Four Walls—the absolute necessities:

- » Food
- » Utilities
- » Shelter
- » Transportation

7 Things to Do When You Miss a Paycheck or about to Miss a Paycheck (i.e. lose your job)

1 Get on a budget

If you aren't already living on a budget, the time is now! Making a monthly budget will show you exactly where your money is going—no ifs, ands or buts about it.

Without a budget, you really can't make every dollar stretch because you might not even know how much money you have to work with. Plus, your budget will show you places where you can cut back and save money (more on that later). And you don't have to rely on a yellow lined notebook to crunch the numbers. Give our free budgeting app, [EveryDollar](#), a try and see how simple budgeting can be.

If you don't have any income right now, then make a budget based on the amount of money you do have. If you have \$600 left to your name, budget out exactly where each of those dollars will go. It's time to squeeze every last penny out of what you've got.

If you still have cash coming in from your spouse's job or some other source, then adjust your budget to reflect that. Maybe the two of you usually bring in a combined \$5,000 a month. But with the loss of one income, you're down to \$2,500 a month.

Adjust your budget to live off of that one income for the time being. It might be tough to switch up your lifestyle, but you've got to make temporary sacrifices to get through this.

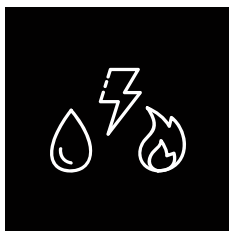
2

Take care of the Four Walls.

When the going gets rough—like it is right now—you need to focus on the things you really need to survive. We call these the Four Walls. Forget the student loan payment, the vet bill and the cell phone bill (for now). The Four Walls are your priority, so pay for these things in this order before anything else:



FOODS



UTILITIES



SHELTER



TRANSPORTATION

These are the basics you need to keep going so you can live to fight another day. And it's really hard to fight when your family doesn't have food, isn't it? So if there's no food in the fridge, don't pay the cable bill. If there's any money left over after you take care of the Four Walls, make a list of what else you need to pay and tackle that in order of importance. When you run out of money—that's it. Someone on the list isn't getting paid, and that's just how it goes. But it sure as heck isn't going to be the checkout lady at the grocery store. Remember, that's priority number one!

If you're renting and having trouble coming up with cash right now, don't stress out. Reach out to your landlord and be honest with them about what's going on. They might be able to work something out with you for the time being, but they can't help if they don't know. Be up front with them and pray for the best.

3

Pause paying off debt.

When you're just trying to make it to another day, you don't need to pay extra on your debt. Instead, focus on piling up cash as high as you can. This will help with peace of mind until you have income again. Once life gets back to normal and everything is okay, you can pick up where you left off with your [debt snowball](#).

If you've been chipping away at your debt, you probably don't want to see all your progress come to a screeching halt. But the reality is, if you're not getting paid, then you're in the middle of a crisis. So pause your debt snowball. If it's within your budget to keep paying the minimum payments on your debt, go for it. But remember, the Four Walls come first. Don't let your family go hungry for the sake of your [FICO score](#).

4

Sell stuff.

Get radical. No, we don't want you to go selling hand sanitizer on eBay for \$50 a bottle. But this is the time to [sell what you can to bring in extra cash](#). Maybe that's your jewelry, clothes, baby items or even the extra car sitting in your garage. If you know you can part with something and get extra cash in your hands—do it! Well, within reason.

5

Get a temporary job or start a side hustle.

If you're out of a paycheck because of the coronavirus (or your business is taking a serious hit from it), that's a real thing. But you don't need to freak about it—just go get some part-time work.

With so much being shut down right now, there might not be as many traditional ways to [make extra money](#) out there. Your local hotels, movie theaters and restaurants probably aren't looking for help. So think about who might be hiring more right now. Look into driving for [Amazon](#) (hello, doorstep toilet paper deliveries), picking up takeout food for [Postmates](#), or dropping off grocery orders with [Shipt](#).

And even if one of those doesn't work out, you can still take up odd jobs around your neighborhood (think cutting the grass, picking up leaves, babysitting, or dog walking). Be on the lookout for opportunities that will add a few extra bucks to your pocket. In this situation, every little bit helps.

6

Look for things to cut.

This is the time to cut back on any unnecessary expenses that you can. Tighten it up. Stop or pause your subscriptions (think Netflix, Hulu, meal delivery kits, specialty makeup boxes). They aren't going anywhere, and you can easily pick them back up once everything blows over and you have extra cash to spend again.

Don't forget to call your cable, internet and cellular providers to see if there's anything they'll do to work with you during this time. Be open and honest, and let them know your situation. You'll never know if you don't ask! And since you already have them on the line, go ahead and downgrade or pause your service for now. None of these things fall into the Four Walls, remember?

And have you heard of this thing called "social distancing?" It means people are encouraged (and want) to stay away from each other right now. Which can make it easier to not spend money. Sports venues are closed, Disneyland is closed—heck, even bars are closed. And even if places are open, this is a time when most people are staying home anyway. Your friends probably won't pressure you to go hit the town this weekend. That's good news for your budget.

We know making sacrifices like this can feel like adding insult to injury when you're already hurting. But keep reminding yourself: This is not forever. We're going to make it through this! You're making temporary sacrifices to tread water until this storm passes and you're back on your feet again.

7

Connect with your church or local community groups.

Let's be clear here: Try to do everything in your power first before you seek help like this. Make sure you cut back where you can and take any temporary jobs to work hard and get back up on your own two feet.

8

Remember to Pray and Seek God First.

Have more specific questions, please send digital card by texting Card to [94000](tel:94000) and check Need Additional Assistance –COVID-19 with message typed at the bottom of the form.