



THE SHEAF

Spring 2021

3 Reasons Retirement Planning Starts Early

It's never too early to begin planning for your retirement. In fact, the earlier you start your planning, the greater security you'll have when the time for retirement arrives. Many people in their 20s and 30s view retirement as something that is so far in the future that it's hard to make it a priority. Honestly, it's likely the last thing on your mind. After all, your career is just beginning.

Retirement planning, though, is about much more than just saving money. Decisions you make today can have huge impacts on your retirement plans 20, 30 and even 40 years from now, including your ability to manage your money and debt. These are three reasons to begin your retirement planning early.

1. Build Your Savings

Small investments in your retirement today can prove extremely valuable to you decades down the road. The earlier you begin setting aside money for retirement, the more time your money has to work its compound interest magic in your favor. This means you'll earn money on the interest you make along the way. That's a HUGE reason to begin saving money early.

2. Keep Debt Low

Saving now establishes good habits to help you manage your debt for the rest of your life. The goal is to have as little debt as possible. You especially want to avoid high credit card debt and other unsecured debt. While mortgages and auto loans are often necessary, frivolous debts often works against you.

As you age, new expenses arise, including things like:

- Purchasing a home
- Starting a family
- Saving for kids to go to college

You're much better prepared to handle these expenses if you're not drowning in large amounts of debt.

3. Plan for Taxes

As you work on your investment strategy, it's important to understand that depending on the investment types, you may have tax ramifications when you are ready to withdraw that money after retirement. Consider a few key questions and allow them to dictate your retirement planning:

- Should you pay taxes now in return for lower taxes when you retire?
- Will taxes be higher when you retire?
- Do you wish to defer, at least, some of your taxes until retirement?
- How can you maximize your investments to minimize taxes now and later?

The sooner you begin planning for post-retirement taxes, the easier your investing becomes.

We're Here to Help!

As your credit union, we understand that retirement planning, when young, is difficult. We're here to help provide you with sound advice for retirement savings and how to maximize your efforts. Give us a call at 202-479-2270 or email us at members@agfed.org to discuss various retirement and savings accounts that may aid you in your effort.

CONTACT US

24/7 Member Services:
(202) 479-2270

24/7 Online Banking
www.agfed.org
Email us: members@agfed.org

24-hour Loan by Phone:
(888) 451-LOAN (5626)

24-hour Telephone Banking:
A.R.T. (Audio Response Teller):
(202) 488-3130 or (800) 872-2328

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 2225, Merrifield, VA 22116-9998

We continue to help our members remotely and offer appointments at the South Building Branch on a limited basis for members who have USDA ID.

USDA South Building Branch
1400 Independence Ave., SW, RM SM-2
Washington, DC 20250

USDA Cafeteria Branch
1400 Independence Ave., SW, RM 1218
Washington, DC 20250

George Washington Carver Center Branch
Temporarily closed due to renovations in the building, this branch has relocated to BARC West.

BARC West Branch
10300 Baltimore Ave., Bldg. 003, RM 327
Beltsville, MD 20705

Riverdale Branch
4700 River Road, RM 1C09
Riverdale, MD 20737

Smithsonian Branch
Smithsonian Castle, RM B-10
1000 Jefferson Drive, SW
Washington, DC 20560



AgFed
Credit Union

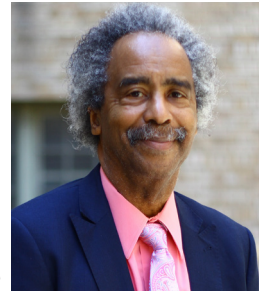
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CHAIRPERSON'S CORNER

New Beginnings



Spring is a time of new beginnings as we move into April and come out of a long winter of stay-at-home orders and social distancing. Increasing vaccination rates give us hope of a return to normalcy, but what will that "normal" look like? While no one is completely sure, we do know that the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the world and the way we interact with others and do business. Mask-wearing may become the norm during the winter flu season. Remote working may become more widespread. Many people may rely exclusively on services such as grocery delivery, telemedicine and videoconferencing. Yes, Zoom and its future generations are here to stay.

New beginnings are happening at the credit union too. While our branches are still closed and most of the staff continues to work remotely, we have added even more options for convenient banking from the safety and comfort of your home. With the recent launch of Zelle, you now have the ability to send, receive and split money easily. These functions are contact-free through the mobile banking app. We also recently added an additional layer of security to online and mobile banking as cybersecurity becomes increasingly important in our digital world. We have also implemented a simplified online account opening process. This provides assistance in getting the financial products you need even easier. AgFed is holding its second totally virtual annual meeting on April 28th and we hope you will join us to learn even more about these new beginnings.

As we "spring ahead" into whatever normal may look like, I'm sure of one thing, AgFed will continue to focus on the needs of the membership. If there is a product or service we can offer to make "normal" work better for you, please let us know. We await your feedback.

Sincerely,

Elard J. Phillips, Chairperson

Introducing the AgFed MoneyDig Blog



How do I pay for large medical bills? What is the best way to use my tax refund? When is it time to ditch my old car? AgFed's MoneyDig Blog is here to answer these crucial financial questions. The MoneyDig Blog digs deeper into important financial education topics, provides financial tips and tricks and answers common financial questions in order for you to get more confident about your personal finances.

We hope you'll check out the MoneyDig Blog by visiting AgFed's homepage or by visiting the blog directly at <https://www.agfed.org/blogs/moneydig/>.