



## **NAVIGATING FINANCIAL STRESS IN A PANDEMIC**

- Thank you to the Gothenburg Early Childhood Learning Coalition for partnering with Flatwater Bank to make this information available to everyone.
- The news surrounding the coronavirus outbreak updates constantly.
- It's important to create a plan for both your household and your finances to ensure you'll be ready for whatever challenges you might face.
- If you have questions during the webinar, please use your chat icon and we will try and answer them at the end of the presentation.
- Following are some actions you should consider.

## REVIEW YOUR SPENDING & DECIDE IF ADJUSTMENTS NEED MADE

- Fun money
- Emergency fund
- Groceries
- Travel & entertainment
- Online shopping
- Fixed expenses



FLATWATER BANK



### REVIEW YOUR SPENDING & DECIDE IF ADJUSTMENTS NEED MADE

Your spending should be flexible under your current circumstances.

If your cash flow has changed because of reduced hours or a layoff, your spending should be adjusted until your income becomes more stable.

- Fun money - Pause spending for fun money or travel money and reallocate those funds.
- Emergency fund - Allocate any extra money to an emergency savings account.
- Groceries - Adjust your grocery spending to allow for purchasing groceries every two-weeks to two-weeks to limit your time in public places.
- Travel & entertainment - With reduced travel and access to restaurants, in-store shopping, shopping, beauty appointments, & entertainment venues,  
Make additional deposits to your emergency fund.
- Online shopping - Avoid supplementing in-store shopping for unnecessary online purchases.
- Fixed expenses - Review your other monthly fixed expenses like rent/mortgage, utilities, auto utilities, auto loans, etc.

Are you able to make these payments on time, do your lenders have plans to help?  
help?

## **FINANCIALLY PREPARE FOR THE LONG-HAUL**

- **Hoarding**
- **Unexpected expenses**
- **Special offerings**
- **Extra income**



### **FINANCIALLY PREPARE FOR THE LONG-HAUL**

- **Hoarding** - with reports of empty store shelves you might be tempted to stock up on groceries and supplies for the next three months or more, but rather than spending more than your normal budget buy necessities every two weeks to help your budget go longer and abide by social distancing.
- **Unexpected expenses** - Hopefully with all the precautions being made to help prevent Covid-19 from sticking around we will come out of this sooner than later, but nevertheless you need to prepare for unexpected expenses and diligently plan and prioritize **ALL** your finances for the next few months.
- **Special offering** - With advertised specials encouraging large or unplanned purchases on the rise, be cautious about committing to a purchase that may restrict your budget in the future.
- **Extra income** – In some cases you may be experiencing more income right now than normal with tax returns, extra bonus on unemployment income, or stimulus checks.  
In most cases this increase in income is limited or a one-time boost, so you want to make sure you use of these funds wisely.
  - **Save for the future**
  - **Create or add to your emergency fund**
  - **Pay ahead on debt, always pay down higher interest debt first**

## **CUT BACK EXPENSES TO THE CORE**



- Prepare for the future
- New expenses
- Ongoing expenses

**FLATWATER BANK**



### **CUT BACK EXPENSES TO THE CORE**

**When income is reduced due to being laid off or working fewer hours it will become spend your available resources were necessary.**

- **Prepare for the future - One way to help prepare for any future financial hardships is your expenses and cut out anything unnecessary.**
- **New expenses - Chances are, some expenses will be cut by default, but other may start to add up. Prioritize new expenses and cut what is not necessary.**
- **Ongoing expenses - Look at your consistent expenses like subscriptions and decide if you really need them.**

## CONTINUE TO MAKE YOUR PAYMENTS

- Prioritize
- Don't skip



## CONTINUE TO MAKE YOUR PAYMENTS

- **Prioritize** – If your income hasn't fluctuated, or even if it has, prioritize your monthly bills and continue to make your payments.
  - The four expenses that should be on the top of most lists are: housing, utilities, food and transportation.

**It is crucial to make sure you save for rent or your mortgage.**

**Your next priority should be your bills for electricity and water.**

**You may not be going very many places right now so money normally spent on travel can go towards putting food on the table and extra supplies for your home and health.**

- **Don't skip** – While some relief options may be available, don't skip your scheduled payments unless you absolutely must.
  - **By skipping your payment you are extending the life of your loan or financial responsibility to pay later.**
  - **In most cases you will also continue to be charged interest raising the total amount that you will owe.**

## **CALL YOUR CREDITORS AND LENDERS**

- **Student loans**

**StudentAid.gov/login or (800) 4-fed-aid**

- **Home loans**

**Fannie Mae (800) 232-6643**

**Freddie Mac (800) 373-3343**

- **Car loans**

**FLATWATER BANK**



### **CALL YOUR CREDITORS AND LENDERS**

When out of options and your just not able to make your payments it is always best to contact first. Some creditors have special programs as a result of the pandemic.

Whatever actions you take, you must keep your credit report in mind as some actions you take have long standing effects on your credit score that can negatively effect you in the future.

- **Student loans – On March 27<sup>th</sup> the CARES Act became law which provided broad relief for loan borrowers.**
  - Interest rates are temporarily set at 0% through Sept. 30, 2020 on Direct Loans, Education Loan Program Loans, and Federal Perkins Loans.
  - Federal student loan payments will automatically stop until Sept. 30, 2020.
  - This is an administrative forbearance which will not effect your credit rating.
  - Payments can still be made by contacting your lender and requesting to be opted out.  
If you do not know who your loan servicer is Visit StudentAid.gov/login or call 1-aid
- **Home loans – Federal lenders and some private lenders are offering borrowers temporary stopping or delaying foreclosure or modifying the mortgage.**
  - If you are facing trouble in advance of your next mortgage payment, call your lender possible.
  - You may qualify for a temporary suspension – called moratorium – of foreclosures for starting March 18<sup>th</sup>.
  - You may also qualify for forbearance for 180 days. Which means you can ask your reduce or suspend your mortgage payments for that time.
  - If you are still having problems, you can ask for another 6 months forbearance.
- **Car loans – Some banks, credit unions, and auto financing companies are letting people or renegotiate their payment schedules.**
  - Contact your lender, you may be able to skip or defer your car payment.
  - You may also be able to change your payment due date to better fit into your budget.
  - See if you can refinance your loan for a lower rate or a longer term.
  - If you agree to changes make sure to get them in writing from the lender.

## **WATCH OUT FOR THESE CORONAVIRUS SCAMS**

- Stimulus payment scams
- Credit related robocalls
- IRS & Social Security calls
- Fake household goods
- Illegitimate charities
- Mortgage relief scams

[irs.gov/coronavirus](https://irs.gov/coronavirus)



## **WATCH OUT FOR THESE CORONAVIRUS SCAMS**

Unfortunately, times of distress make people especially vulnerable to fake products, phishing and scam attacks.

Because people and computer systems are stressed, they are also susceptible to hackers.

Scammers follow the headlines and many companies use half-truths and outright lies to sell their services or they make promises but don't deliver.

- Stimulus payment scams - Only use [irs.gov/coronavirus](https://irs.gov/coronavirus) to submit information to the IRS, The IRS won't contact you about the stimulus payment, you do not have to pay to get your money.
- Credit-related robocalls – just hang up.
- IRS & Social Security phone calls - these government agencies will never contact you by phone, email, text message or social media, they only communicate via mail.
- Fake household goods - shop only with trusted companies, don't click on unsolicited emails or social media offerings for merchandise without doing your research.
- Illegitimate charities - do research before giving.
- Mortgage relief scams – Federal law says that if you hire someone to help with your

## WHAT NOT TO DO

- Credit card debt
- Overbuying/overspending
- Travel plans
- Scams



FLATWATER BANK



### What Not To Do

- **Credit card debit** – During financial hardships, try to avoid building upon debt whenever possible. Before you start using credit cards analyze your finances, create a new budget, and talk to professionals that can help.
  - If you are faced with the need to use your credit cards, make sure you plan ahead. Look into the cards' interest rates, credit limits, and late payment fees.
  - After researching your options, adjust your budget to a lot for a consistent credit card payment which allows you to pay down your debt as much as possible while keeping your account in good standing.
- **Overbuying/overspending** – Its always important to have some essentials on hand, however its not necessary to stock up for months at a time.
  - Having enough supplies on hand for a two-week period is recommended.
  - Make and utilize a list of essential items you need when shopping to help prevent unnecessary purchases.
- **Travel plans** – Don't make non-refundable travel plans. If you had any upcoming travel plans, they were likely put on hold.
  - Most hotels and airlines are actively waiving fees and rescheduling trips during this time.
  - That said, don't be tempted to make any new travel plans right now. Some travel companies are offering low-cost deals for flights and hotels, but its better to keep the money in your account for now.
- **Scams** – Unfortunately, times of distress make people especially vulnerable to fake products, phishing and scam attacks.
  - Because people and computer systems are stressed, they are also susceptible to hackers.
  - Look out for these coronavirus scams:
    - Credit-related robocalls, just hang up
    - IRS & Social Security phone calls, these government agencies will never call you, they only communicate via mail

## **CORONAVIRUS STIMULUS PAYMENTS**

- Who gets money
- What to do
- Non-Filer
- Status of payment

**“Get My Payment” at [irs.gov/coronavirus](https://irs.gov/coronavirus)**



## **CORONAVIRUS STIMULUS PAYMENTS**

**By now most people have received their stimulus payments, however if you have not you can still check with IRS.**

- **Who will get money – Adult U.S. residents that meet established income limits, including taxpayers, retirees (social security, railroad), beneficiaries (SSDI, disability, veterans), and non-filers (with income less than \$12,200 or \$24,400 for married couples).**
- **What to do – Most people don't have to do anything to get the money.**
  - **The IRS will use the same payment method (direct deposit, direct express debit card, or paper check) used to send the individual's tax refund, social security, retirement or other government benefits money.**
  - **If the IRS doesn't have your direct deposit information, you can go to “Get My Payment” at [irs.gov/coronavirus](https://irs.gov/coronavirus) and let them know where to send your direct deposit.**
- **Non-Filer – If you don't usually file a tax return, go to [irs.gov/coronavirus](https://irs.gov/coronavirus) to access the “Non-Filer” portal to figure out what, if anything, you have to do to claim your money.**
- **Status of payment – To check on the status of your payment you can now use the “Get My Payment” feature at [irs.gov/coronavirus](https://irs.gov/coronavirus).**

## LAI D OFF, FURLOUGHED, FEWER HOURS, UNEMPLOYED

- Unemployment insurance
- Expanded coverage
- State of Nebraska



Info: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

File: <https://networks.Nebraska.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>

FLATWATER BANK



## LAI D OFF, FURLOUGHED, FEWER HOURS, UNEMPLOYED

- Unemployment insurance – Unemployment Insurance provides benefits, usually in weekly payments, to eligible workers who become unemployed through no fault of
- Expanded coverage – In March, the new federal law greatly expanded unemployment Many workers who were not previously covered are now eligible.
  - The new law also increases the weekly benefit amount that states currently \$600, until July 31, 2020.
  - The new law also provides an additional 13 weeks of benefits for people who unemployed after their state benefit period runs out.
- State of Nebraska – Nebraska is providing updates on unemployment insurance COVID-19 at <http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>
  - To file a Nebraska unemployment claim go to <https://networks.Nebraska.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>

## CREATING A BUDGET

- Tips & basics
- Track your spending
- Calculate your income
- Set financial goals
- Create your budget



### CREATING A BUDGET

If you struggle from debt or are looking to take control of your finances, you will need to make a few life changes and preparing and adhering to a budget is the beginning.

- **Tips and basics** – First step is to start right now. If you are going to get out of the hole, you have to stop digging right now.
  - Reduce all excess spending as soon as you can to avoid incurring new debt.
  - Stop using credit cards and in some cases, you may have to go to cash only to help restrict spending.
  - Budgeting is an ongoing process. Staying disciplined can be hard, but even if you stumble it's important to get back up and keep trying.
  - Budgets can be adjusted and there's no goal you can't reach with the right amount of practice.
- **Track your spending** – Before you start creating a budget, you need to be aware of how much you spend.
  - Track your spending over the next month and make notes of how much you spend on things like:
    - All bills, loans, living expenses, entertainment funds, groceries, everyday purchases.
  - The total of these expenses will be your total monthly spending.
  - It's important that you track everything and stick with it (every \$4.99 latte needs to be accounted for).
  - While tracking your spending, categorize each bill or purchase into separate categories like:
    - Housing, Utilities, Automotive, Loans, Amenities, Medical, Taxes, Entertainment, Necessities, Groceries.
- **Calculate your income** – Once you know how much you spend a month; you need to calculate how much money you have coming in.
  - Include every source of income you have, no matter how small. Every amount of money that comes in can be considered a source of income and you should include it in your budget and apply it to your expense, debt payments and goals.
- **Set financial goals** – After you've calculated your income and tracked your spending, it's time to think about setting goals.
  - You need to have a reason to change, some of the most common are: eliminating credit card debt, buy a home or car, child's education, saving for retirement.
- **Create your budget** – After completing all the other steps its time to create your budget which includes balancing your budget and trimming off excess spending.
  - First, subtract your total monthly expenses from your total monthly income. If its negative, you will need to find areas to cut your expenses or if possible, increase your income.
  - It's helpful to look at expenses in two categories: necessary (needs) and discretionary (wants). Discretionary are the first place where cuts can usually be made.
  - Every situation is not the same for every person so its hard to determine exactly how much money should be spent in every budget category but here is a general idea:
    - Housing = 35-45%
    - Transportation = 15-25%
    - Utilities = 8-15%
    - Food = 10-20%
    - Medical = 8-15%
    - Clothing = 5-10%
    - Savings = 5-10%
    - Debt payments = 20%
  - Savings are a crucial part of your budget and you should strive to save as much as possible for emergencies, retirement and other goals. As you pay down debt increase savings.
  - Budgeting can be very difficult but if you stick with it, you can prevail.

## GOOD PERSONAL FINANCIAL GOALS

- Emergency fund
- Pay off credit card
- Save for retirement
- Homeownership
- Pay off car
- College education



FLATWATER BANK  
un



## GOOD PERSONAL FINANCIAL GOALS

Still not sure what to aim for? Here are some personal financial goal examples that can get started.

- **Emergency fund** – Life is unpredictable, and it’s important to be prepared. Saving for emergencies is one of the only goals that is a necessity.
- **Pay off credit card** – Paying off high interest credit cards is one of the most common goals. The best way to make real progress is to make more than the minimum stop borrowing against the card.
- **Save for retirement** – You most likely will work towards this your entire life. the earlier you start, the better off you’ll be in the end.
- **Homeownership** – A great long-term goal, homeownership is one of the largest to aim for for most people.
- **Pay off car** – Having a monthly car payment should not be a staple of life. Try to pay as fast as you can to avoid having the debt be more than the vehicle is worth.
- **College education** – Whether you’re a student paying off your own balance or a your child’s education, college tuition is easily a substantial goal to base your budget
- **Plan for fun** – While most financial goals are oriented around being responsible, you always try to aim for one “fun” goal like a nice vacation, a new TV, or any other that you simply want.
  - If you work hard and save diligently, you deserve to reward yourself with fun goals. Plus, it’s a great way to practice self-discipline and goal setting.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 0;"><b>Family Services</b></p> <p><i>Gothenburg Early Childhood Learning Coalition</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partnering with Dawson County Well-Being Initiative</li> <li>• Can connect families or individuals with resources</li> <li>• GECLC.coordinator@gmail.com</li> <li>• 308-529-8784</li> </ul> <p><i>Nebraska Child Care Referral Network</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.nrchildcarereferral.org/">https://www.nrchildcarereferral.org/</a></li> <li>• Locate local licensed child care providers and current availability</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 0;"><b>Food</b></p> <p><i>Gothenburg Food Bank</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Located inside the American Lutheran Church</li> <li>• Call 308-537-3433 to learn more and make an appointment</li> </ul> <p><i>School Lunch Program</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breakfast and lunch available every weekday for any child under 18 - no qualification</li> <li>• Call 308-537-3651 ext. 6127</li> <li>• <a href="http://bit.ly/GPSMeals2020">http://bit.ly/GPSMeals2020</a></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 0;"><b>Housing</b></p> <p><i>City of Gothenburg</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilities - 308-537-3668</li> <li>• Housing Authority - 308-537-7275</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 5px 0;"><b>Unemployment</b></p> <p><i>Nebraska Department of Labor</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://www.dol.nebraska.gov/Unemployment">https://www.dol.nebraska.gov/Unemployment</a></li> <li>• Lexington office is closed - call ahead</li> <li>• 308-324-2064</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 0;"><b>State Services</b></p> <p><i>ACCESSNebraska.gov</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One site to apply for and manage many state assistance programs, including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Medicaid</li> <li>◦ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)</li> <li>◦ Aid to Dependent Children (ADC)</li> <li>◦ Aid to Aged, Blind and Disabled (AABD) Payment</li> <li>◦ Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)</li> <li>◦ State Disability Program</li> <li>◦ Child Care Subsidy</li> <li>◦ Refugee Resettlement Program</li> <li>◦ Social Services for the Aged and Disabled (SSAD)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Many of the requirements for these programs have been relaxed due to the current pandemic. Families that didn't qualify before may now qualify for benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DHHS COVID-19 Hotline: 402-552-6645</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 0;"><b>Emergency Services</b></p> <p><i>Community Action Partnership of Mid-Nebraska</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• County-wide resources for housing and emergency assistance</li> <li>• 308-324-4219</li> <li>• <a href="http://communityactionmidne.com/">http://communityactionmidne.com/</a></li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 0;"><b>Mental Health</b></p> <p><i>Nebraska Family Helpline</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 888-866-8660</li> <li>• Resources for parents and families available 24/7</li> </ul> <p><i>Region II Human Services</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="http://www.2hs.com">www.2hs.com</a></li> <li>• Lexington: 308-324-6754</li> <li>• North Platte: 308-534-6029</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center; background-color: #e0e0e0; margin: 0;"><b>Suicide Prevention</b></p> <p><i>American Foundation for Suicide Prevention</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text TALK to 7474741</li> <li>• 800-273-TALK</li> <li>• <a href="https://afsp.org/mental-health-and-covid-19">https://afsp.org/mental-health-and-covid-19</a></li> </ul> <p><i>Suicide Prevention Lifeline</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 800-273-8255</li> <li>• <a href="http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org">www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org</a></li> </ul>	

**Gothenburg Early Childhood Learning Coalition**  
[www.GECLC.org](http://www.GECLC.org) – 308-529-8784

**Flatwater Bank**  
[www.flatwater.bank](http://www.flatwater.bank) – 308-537-7181



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Gothenburg Early Childhood Learning Coalition
  - [www.GECLC.org](http://www.GECLC.org)
  
- Flatwater Bank
  - [www.flatwater.bank](http://www.flatwater.bank)
  
- There are a lot of resources available right now. Many of the requirements for programs have been changed or relaxed due to the current situation. If you are in need of resources, it's worth a phone call to learn more.
- The GECLC is working to help connect families with resources, so if you need something not listed here, contact the GECLC community coordinator Nichole Hetz at the phone number or email listed and she can help make the connection.

All attendees are eligible to enter a drawing for one of two \$50 Peterson's gift cards.



scan with your smartphone camera OR Go to <https://forms.gle/SLdo8bU7kkNJPnCV8>

1. Complete an anonymous online webinar evaluation
2. Enter your name and contact info to be entered in the drawing
3. Submit your evaluation by **Noon tomorrow, Wednesday, April 29**, to be entered in the drawing



ALL LIVE WEBINAR ATTENDEES ARE ELIGIBLE TO ENTER A DRAWING FOR ONE OF TWO \$50 PETERSON'S GIFT CARDS

- Scan with your smartphone camera
- Go to <https://forms.gle/SLdo8bU7kkNJPnCV8>
- Anyone can take the survey anonymously to share your thoughts and let us know if there are other webinar topics you might be interested in. Your input is appreciated. Only surveys received by Noon on April 29 will be entered in the drawing.



**Thank you for  
attending today!**

**A copy of this presentation may be found  
on the GECLC or Flatwater Bank's  
websites.**



**Thank you for attending today!**

**A copy of this presentation may be found on the GECLC or Flatwater Bank's websites.**