

Coronavirus: Managing your Financial Resilience

During times of uncertainty, finances can be the last thing on your mind. But, for many of our Serve and Protect family throughout the country, now is a time when their financial resilience becomes vital. Some are facing the possibility of their household income halving, others are suddenly having to arrange childcare, all whilst continuing to serve and protect our nation during this difficult time. **But, what can you do to maintain your financial resilience?**

Below are some useful hints and tips to help you get through this challenging period.

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1) Mortgage Payment Holidays



If you are struggling to keep up with your mortgage during the COVID-19 pandemic, you may be eligible for a rest period of 3 months during which you will not have to pay your mortgage. Note that this is a voluntary break offered by a few banks. If you feel that you could benefit, contact your bank to find out if they offer it and make sure you fully understand the process. The cost of the 3 months will result in a small uplift on your remaining payments, and you will still be charged interest for this period.

2) Access your Fixed-term Savings Account



If you need access to funds as a result of COVID-19, you may consider accessing your fixed-rate savings account. Usually, if you want to withdraw from a fixed-rate savings account before your term is up, you will incur penalties for early withdrawal. However, several banks have pledged to waive penalties for those who need to access their funds because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Your interest may be affected, so if you can manage without, do so. Instead, look at cutting down your outgoings and creating an emergency budget plan on the free tool on our website www.policecu.co.uk/loans/budget-planner/.

3) Help for Renters and Landlords



If you are renting from a private or social landlord and you are struggling to meet your rent as a result of COVID-19, you should contact your landlord in the first instance to work out a realistic repayment plan. New legislation set to be imposed by the government means that no evictions can take place lawfully within the next 3 months, protecting renters who are struggling financially. Existing protocols in place for social landlords dealing with rent arrears will also be extended to help private landlords manage the deficit.

4) Avoid high cost lenders



When times get tough, it can be tempting to turn to high cost lenders or high-interest credit cards to get cash quickly. Whilst this might solve the problem to begin with, it can often leave you in a worse position later on, as a result of high interest, fees, and the adverse impact it can have your credit history. If you are in need of a loan to support you, there are ethical alternatives out there that can help you, like the credit union.

5) Speak to someone



Lean on your Serve and Protect family. If you have colleagues that you can ask to help you cope with your financial stress, now is the time to do so. Too often, when we face financial worries, we are too afraid to talk to someone. Instead, we suffer in silence. If you are already feeling the impact and are having difficulty paying your debts, reach out to your creditors as soon as you can. Some creditors will offer small periods of non-payment, to allow you some time to get things in order. Remember, it is okay to ask for help!

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Here for you, when you need us most.

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