

HOLISTIC WELLNESS CHALLENGE



FINANCIAL SAFETY NET



EMERGENCY FUND

CHALLENGE your Service members and yourself to use at least one of the recommended resources to improve financial readiness.

FACTS & FIGURES: DID YOU KNOW?

- An emergency fund is separate from a regular savings account and covers **three to six months** of living expenses in case of illness, job loss, or other unexpected bills.¹
- **Less than half of 18-29-year-olds** have emergency funds.¹
- Financial difficulties were reported in **32%** of National Guard suicides and **25%** of suicide attempts.²

FINANCIAL FITNESS

The impact of financial stress is felt far beyond the wallet. It takes a toll on mental and physical health, it erodes trust in personal relationships, and it reduces military readiness.

You can minimize that stress by having emergency funds to cover unforeseen expenses, like car repairs. Think of it as a financial safety net to avoid dipping into regular savings or going into debt.

Start your journey to financial fitness by taking the **Financial Well-Being Assessment** (<https://finred.usalearning.gov/FWBA/DigitalTool>) to identify spending habits and ways to improve your economic outlook. While you're at it, don't forget to check your **Credit Report** (<https://www.annualcreditreport.com>) which is a key indicator of your financial health.



CONTACT US

For more information on financial readiness or other topics email: ng.ncr.ngb.mbx.integrated-prevention-branch@army.mil

CNGB & SEA Corner

Always Ready, Always There

As Guardsmen, we are "Always Ready, Always There" to support our country and fellow citizens. Similarly, **an emergency fund is always ready, always there to help you pay unexpected bills.**

Check out the steps for building and maintaining a financial safety net. It protects your money and gives you peace of mind so you can focus on important things like family and mission.

Stronger Together. Stronger Tomorrow.

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STEPS TO SUCCESS

Saving three to six months of expenses can seem overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be with these helpful hints:³

- **Start small.** Everything adds up over time, even \$25 per paycheck helps.
- **Reduce temptation.** Automatically transfer funds to a separate account.
- **Cut back.** Evaluate subscriptions or memberships with high fees.
- **Dine in.** Pack a lunch, skip the daily latte, and cook more meals at home.
- **Sell stuff.** Turn unused items, like clothes or baseball cards, into cash.
- **Side gig.** Teach a class or flip furniture.
- **Tax refund.** Put a portion in savings.

As always, make sure your money is in a safe, easily accessible account so funds are available if an emergency strikes.



MONEY MANAGEMENT

What does it mean?

- Money management is making informed financial decisions while understanding the personal and professional impact of those decisions.

Why does it matter?

- Successful money management, like creating an emergency fund, allows Service members to focus on mission essential tasks.

What can you do?

- Understand the link between financial readiness and mission readiness.
- Establish a separate account for an emergency fund and automatically transfer funds to this account from each paycheck so that it is out of sight, out of mind.
- Remember that emergency funds are to be spent on unexpected expenses, like vet bills, and not non-essential things, like a vacation.
- If an unexpected expense arises, don't hesitate to use the emergency funds. Be proud of your preparedness and focus on replenishing the funds.
- Take the Financial Well-Being Assessment and check your Credit Report to better understand your spending and savings habits. Set a reminder to revisit these tools yearly so you can adjust your financial plans as needed.
- Reach out to someone you trust, such as a Chaplain or Director of Psychological Health, if you are in financial distress. Asking for help is a sign of strength.
- Check out the Spotlight below and contact a Personal Financial Counselor to ensure your financial readiness.



Make Your

VOICE HEARD

Participate in the 2025 DEOCS

On August 1, the Defense Organizational Climate Survey (DEOCS) fielding window will open.

The DEOCS is a Command Climate Assessment tool that provides commanders and National Guard leaders with important feedback about the current state of their unit or organization.

All National Guard members are **strongly encouraged to participate** and make their voices heard. Findings will inform policies and programs that better support and protect Service members.



RESOURCES TO RECOMMEND



State Military and Family Readiness Program Managers can connect you with a Personal Financial Counselor and help identify other support services in the community. <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/resources/tools/national-guard-family-program-lookup/>



DoD's Office of Financial Readiness offers a one-stop-shop for Service members and families to achieve personal financial readiness in support of the mission. <https://finred.usalearning.gov/>



SenSe, a free financial education app for Service members and families, is packed with timely, factual, unbiased financial information. <https://finred.usalearning.gov/ToolsAndAddRes/Sense>



Military OneSource provides tools and resources to help Service members and families set and achieve their financial goals. <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/financial-legal/personal-finance/>



PERSONAL FINANCIAL COUNSELORS (PFC)

- PFCs provide National Guard members and their families with free financial counseling and support services, like creating a spend plan, debt relief, and building an emergency fund.
- Listen to "The Balance Podcast" in which the PFC for the 111th Attack Wing of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard talks about financial readiness and the peace of mind gained from making the most out of your money. <https://www.dvidshub.net/audio/86915/balance-podcast-keith-donnell-may-2025>
- To find a PFC near you, go to: <https://finred.usalearning.gov/PFCMAP>.

REFERENCES:

1. Report on the Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households. <https://www.federalreserve.gov/consumerscommunities/sheddataviz/emergency-savings.html>
2. Annual Report of Suicide in the Military, CY2023. https://www.dspo.mil/Portals/113/2024/documents/annual_report/ARSM_CY23_final_508c.pdf
3. Emergency Funds: The First Step to Financial Freedom. <https://finred.usalearning.gov/Blog/EmergencyFund>