

# Cash flow budget for servicemembers and veterans

Cash flow budgets can help servicemembers, veterans, and their families manage their finances.

A cash flow budget includes the timing of income and expenses on a weekly basis. For example, if a bill is due the first day of the month, it is listed in the first week of the cash flow budget. If a benefit is received on the last day of the month, it is listed in the last week of the month.

Often, financial management challenges arise from a mismatch between the timing of income and benefits and uses of those resources. Use this tool to help military families manage that timing.

## What to do

- **Fill in the total starting balance for week 1** by totaling up the cash and benefits currently available.
- **Complete the sources of income and benefits section.** Put the amounts in the weeks you get them.
- **Total your sources of income and benefits for each week.**
- **Complete the uses of income and benefits section.** If available, use your completed "Servicemember and veteran spending tracker." Or use information from your checking account, credit card statement, bills, and receipts.
- **Total your uses of income and benefits for each week.**
- **Subtract the total uses of income and benefits from the total sources of income and benefits to get the total ending cash balance.** The total ending balance for one week becomes the Total starting balance for the next week. If the total ending balance is positive, you have financial resources to carry over to the next week. If this number is negative, you do not have enough money to cover your spending in that week.
- **Look for ways to bring your budget into balance.** You could direct more income to

debt repayment, saving for retirement, or some other use, or find ways to reduce spending. You could make cuts in your spending on wants, renegotiate terms for your obligations, or look for ways to reduce spending on your needs.

To access a dynamic and fillable version of this tool, visit [consumerfinance.gov/  
your-money-your-goals/companion-guides](https://consumerfinance.gov/your-money-your-goals/companion-guides).



# Use a **Cash flow budget** for servicemembers and veterans

1. Complete each section of the cash flow budget.
2. Identify where you may be short on resources to cover your spending.
3. Identify ways to better match the timing of your sources and uses of cash, increase income, or cut spending.

To access a dynamic and fillable version of this tool, visit: [consumerfinance.gov/your-money-your-goals/companion-guides](https://consumerfinance.gov/your-money-your-goals/companion-guides).

|                                              |                                                                                    | WEEK 1                 | WEEK 2                     | WEEK 3                     | WEEK 4                     | WEEK 5                     |
|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b>BEGINNING WEEKLY BALANCE</b>              | Your starting balance is a total of your cash, prepaid card, and account balances. | Starting balance<br>\$ | Wk. 1 ending balance<br>\$ | Wk. 2 ending balance<br>\$ | Wk. 3 ending balance<br>\$ | Wk. 4 ending balance<br>\$ |
| <b>+<br/>ADD MONEY YOU RECEIVE EACH WEEK</b> | Net pay                                                                            | +                      |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|                                              | Spousal salary/wages                                                               | +                      |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|                                              | Spousal disability                                                                 | +                      |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|                                              | Self-employment                                                                    | +                      |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|                                              | Unemployment                                                                       | +                      |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|                                              | Federal, state, or tribal benefits                                                 | +                      |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|                                              | Other                                                                              | +                      |                            |                            |                            |                            |
|                                              | <b>Total income</b>                                                                | =                      | =                          | =                          | =                          | =                          |

|                                                                                                         |                                                        | WEEK 1 | WEEK 2 | WEEK 3 | WEEK 4 | WEEK 5 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| <div> <div></div> <div> <div>—</div> <div>SUBTRACT<br/>YOUR<br/>WEEKLY<br/>EXPENSES</div> </div> </div> | Mortgage loan                                          | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Car loan                                               | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Credit card loan                                       | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Student loan                                           | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Relief society loan                                    | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Allotments                                             | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Child support/<br>alimony                              | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Emergency fund                                         | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Retirement savings                                     | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Mobile phone                                           | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Education/childcare                                    | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Housing/utilities                                      | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Insurance                                              | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Transportation                                         | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Subscriptions<br>(e.g. magazines,<br>newspapers, etc.) | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Entertainment                                          | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Dining out                                             | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Personal care                                          | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Groceries/<br>household supplies                       | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Gifts/charity                                          | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Pets                                                   | —      |        |        |        |        |
|                                                                                                         | Other                                                  | —      |        |        |        |        |
| ENDING<br>WEEKLY<br>BALANCE                                                                             |                                                        | =      | =      | =      | =      | =      |

## **DISCLAIMER**

The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau prepared the tools included in the Your Money, Your Goals: Focus on Military Communities companion guide as a resource for the public. This material is provided for educational and information purposes only. It is not a replacement for the guidance or advice of an accountant, certified financial advisor, or otherwise qualified professional. The CFPB is not responsible for the advice or actions of the individuals or entities from which you received the CFPB educational materials. The CFPB's educational efforts are limited to the materials that CFPB has prepared.

The tools may ask you to provide sensitive information. The CFPB does not collect this information and is not responsible for how your information may be used if you provide it to others. The CFPB recommends that you do not include names, account numbers, or other sensitive information and that users follow their organization's policies regarding personal information.

This guide includes links or references to third-party resources or content that consumers may find helpful. The Bureau does not control or guarantee the accuracy of this outside information. The inclusion of links or references to third-party sites does not necessarily reflect the Bureau's endorsement of the third-party, the views expressed on the outside site, or products or services offered on the outside site. The Bureau has not vetted these third-parties, their content, or any products or services they may offer. There may be other possible entities or resources that are not listed that may also serve your needs.