

ALABAMA SECURITIES COMMISSION

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Governor Ivey Declares April as Facts on Saving and Investing Campaign Month; Alabama Securities Commission and Partners Provide Tips that Make Cents

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA (April 8, 2022) -- Who will have the biggest impact on your financial future? YOU! Governor Ivey declared April 'Facts on Saving and Investing Campaign' month in Alabama. The Alabama Securities Commission (ASC), the Alabama Jump\$tart Coalition, and other valued partners are providing the tips below to help you secure a more prosperous financial future. Alabamians interested in additional resources can visit the education section of the ASC website at www.asc.alabama.gov.

Below are four tips to help Alabamians reach their financial goals.

Tip No. 1: Budget

Don't try to keep up with the Jones. Living beyond your means is one of the biggest financial pitfalls for most Americans. The cure is to create a monthly budget and stick to it.

"Budgeting can provide assurance and freedom; it shouldn't feel restrictive. Having a plan and saving for larger purchases gives you confidence. Knowing that a purchase won't cause you to go into debt can relieve stress and help you sleep better at night," said ASC Chief Deputy Director Amanda Senn.

The ASC offers free budgeting resources and financial information on the [She Can](#) section of the ASC website.

Tip No. 2: Pay Down Debt and Pay it Off

Another common, yet vital, practice for those wanting to make wise financial decisions is to pay down debt. Paying off debt requires cutting expenses where you can and allocating the money saved to make payments.

"There are multiple strategies for paying off debt, like starting with the highest interest debt first or starting with the smallest amount known as the 'snowball' method," said ASC Director Joseph P. Borg. "Whatever method you choose, determine to persevere and make avoiding and paying down debt a priority. It's a challenging process, but it is well worth it!"

To make more than the monthly payment on your outstanding debts, find creative ways to cut spending in other categories. Some ideas include: shopping at less expensive stores- especially grocery stores, passing on dining out, finding roommates, and avoiding "I deserve it" type purchases.

Tip No. 3: Invest for Retirement

Are 401 (k), 403 (B), Roth IRA, and Traditional IRA investment terms or alphabet soup? Whether you understand the definitions and tax advantages of these retirement accounts or are confused by these typos that somehow made it to print, the ASC has free investor education resources to clarify terminologies for the beginner and increase the understanding of the seasoned investor.

Even while paying off debt, regular investing can have significant pay offs. Dollar-cost-averaging, the rule of 72 and compounding also teach that starting early is the best way to increase the size of your nest egg. Not sure you believe it? The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) offers a free [compound interest calculator](#) that proves it.

Tip No. 4

“Once you make money, you have to protect it from thieves, con artists and unsuitable financial products. The ASC offers fraud prevention materials and training seminars for groups year-round,” said Director Borg. “A great place for a beginner to start is our free guide produced in partnership with Kiplinger’s Personal Finance Magazine and the Investor Protection Trust called Starting to Save for Retirement.” You can access the guide electronically by clicking [here](#).

Don’t fall victim to “get rich quick” investment schemes, especially if they are presented as low risk opportunities. Normally, higher risk and the potential for higher profits go hand-in-hand. If you are suspicious of an investment offer, check out the registration (required by law) of anyone making you an offer, charging a fee for investment advice, and the product being offered by calling the ASC at 1-800-222-1253.

The ASC cautions investors to thoroughly research any investment opportunity. Call the ASC at 1-800-222-1253 and ask for the registration department to check out persons offering investment opportunities, investment advice for a fee and any products they offer. Contact the ASC to report suspected fraud, inappropriate securities business practices, or to obtain consumer information. Free investor education and fraud prevention materials are available at www.asc.alabama.gov.

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For further information contact 1-800-222-1253 and ask for Public Affairs.

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