



# Recession Toolkit

We are Here to Help.

*Remember that you are never alone. Here are some useful resources to help empower and support yourself and your loved ones.*



## Living Through a Recession

If you've noticed it costs more to feed your family than in years past, it's not your imagination. Experts think the United States is entering a recession—a period of weak or slow economic activity accompanied by other factors, like inflation and unemployment. If this is the case, it will impact businesses, families, and individuals by bringing job loss, rising costs, and tight budgets.

Preparation and awareness are the best ways to live through an economic recession with minimal disruptions. This toolkit will share ideas to save money and control your budget and resources to survive the downturn.

### What is a recession?

The definition of a recession is more complicated than it may seem to those who don't study economics. There are no fixed rules or thresholds that signal a recession has started or has ended. Recession is determined by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) by evaluating many factors including:<sup>1</sup>

- Employment numbers
- Personal income
- Industrial production
- Consumer spending

Even more confusing is that these factors are reported at different intervals and often lag up to three months. So, when the NBER confirms the recession, consumers have already felt the pinch of increased costs and tight budgets—sometimes for months!

### What does a recession mean for me?

Although determining if we're entering a recession can be complex, understanding who will be affected is simple: a recession touches every person in the U.S. in some way.<sup>2</sup> Consumers can expect increased prices of consumer goods, like groceries and gas, higher interest rates for credit cards and loans, and cutbacks on available services or products from their favorite stores as they brace for declined spending.

For individuals, a recession can look like this:

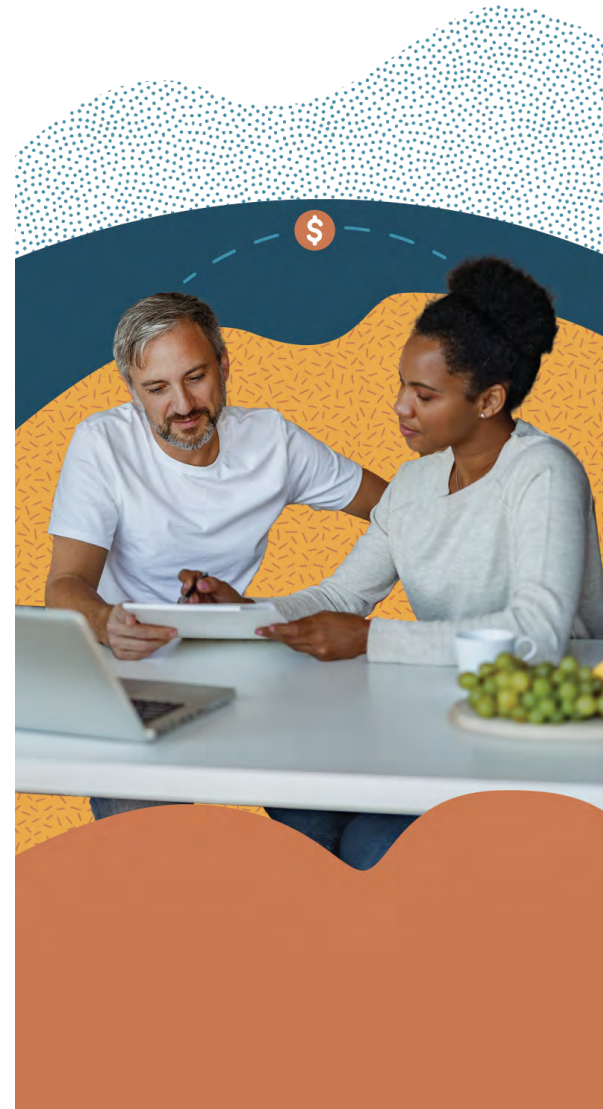
- Job layoffs or a decline in work hours
- Growing interest fees on credit card balances
- Volatile investment portfolios
- More difficulty getting approved for a personal loan or mortgage
- Fewer job opportunities
- Higher spending on gas, food, and clothing

Experiencing a recession has physical and mental health implications, too. Stress from financial strain can lead to sleeping problems, anxiousness, symptoms of depression, and overall poor health. People who have lost their jobs sometimes also lose access to healthcare.

## Recession-proof your life

Living through a recession can be challenging, but it's not impossible. Planning ahead instead of waiting until the announcement of a recession is critical, and 9 of 10 Americans say they are taking steps to prepare for a possible recession.<sup>3</sup> Here are some actionable tips to recession-proof your life.

- Cut back on your spending by eliminating extra expenses you don't need and put the extra money in an emergency savings account.
- Create a budget, ensuring everyone in your household is on board, and stick to it as closely as possible.
- Create a second emergency budget with only essentials in case you find yourself unemployed or underemployed.
- Avoid using credit cards and carrying a balance.
- Use the extra money to pay down debt, especially loans or credit card debt with skyrocketing interest rates.
- Look for a part-time job or gig to bring in extra income in addition to your full-time job.
- Review or update your resume in case you face a layoff.
- Reach out to colleagues to build a referral network to help those searching for a job—and for help if you need to find a new job.
- Try to save at least \$1,000 in an emergency fund by putting away 10% of your paycheck in a high-yield savings account.
- Use coupons and money-saving apps like Ibotta, Swagbucks, or Rakuten for discounts or money back on your everyday spending.



When faced with financial insecurity, many people begin worrying and can act out of fear. Others deny the possibility of a recession and continue to live like they always have. Neither of these responses are ideal! Here are a few mistakes you should avoid when facing a recession:

- Don't presume you don't need a budget. Even if you live within your means, it never hurts to review what you spend and see how you can save for a rainy day.
- Don't make big purchases—think vehicles, renovations, or additional properties. Not only will you likely be paying more in interest due to higher interest rates, you'll also have money tied up in payments.
- Don't wait to prepare. Remember, news of a recession is typically two to three months behind the actual dip.
- Don't make knee-jerk decisions about your investments. The most successful investors have a long-term strategy.
- Don't panic. Panic often leads to rash decisions that can be detrimental to your financial future.
- Turn off the news! The 24/7 news cycle can instill fear of the unknown. Stay aware of what's happening in the world, but don't dwell on economic news.



**Here are some resources to help you budget, save, and get help if you need it.**

- [Making a Family Budget – consumer.gov](#)
- [5 Money Mistakes That Can Harm a Relationship – UpriseHealth.com](#)
- [54 Ways to Save Money – America Saves](#)
- [5 Ways to Cope with Recession – CNBC](#)
- [Financial Assistance for Food, Housing, and Bills—USA.Gov](#)
- [Personal Finance Resources – MoneyManagement.org](#)
- [\[Free Template!\] How to Use a Debt Tracker to Visualize Debt Payoff \(financialbestlife.com\)](#)
- [Financial Stress: Because you matter.](#)
- [Financial Wellness – Part 1 – UpriseHealth.com](#)

**Discover more tips from Uprise Health Personal Advantage webinars:\***

- [Recession](#)
- [Layoffs](#)

\* Must be signed in to view resources.

1 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/cea/written-materials/2022/07/21/how-do-economists-determine-whether-the-economy-is-in-a-recession/>

2 <https://www.forbes.com/sites/qai/2022/09/11/how-does-a-recession-affect-me/?sh=19cdf1c440c4>

3 <https://www.newsweek.com/2022/08/05/recession-proof-your-life-what-do-protect-your-money-now-1727879.html>



## Dealing with Financial Stress

About 20% of Americans use half their pay to pay down debt—which averages about \$38,000 per household, not including mortgage debt. With these kinds of numbers, it's easy to see why 73% of Americans name financial stress as their top worry.

Financial insecurity comes from a combination of cost of living, income, and debt, including medical debt, credit card debt, vehicle loans, student loans, and mortgage payments. An individual with a generous income who lives in an area with a low cost of living but carries a high amount of debt may experience financial stress. Another individual who lives in a city with a high cost-of-living but has a low income and low debt ratio will also likely feel the strain of financial worry. Although the circumstances are different, the stress is the same.

Nearly everyone will experience financial stress in their lives at some point. When you are faced with stress and worry, try these ideas to ease your fears.

**Face your finances head-on, no matter how bad they may seem.** You need to know where your financial future is right now before you can define where you're going. Sometimes, the fear of the unknown is worse than the truth—you may discover you are better off financially than you think.

**Start a budget.** Financial worry can be triggered by feeling helpless or a loss of control, and creating a budget will help you feel some control over your situation.

**Sell unused belongings, like clothes, electronics, or furniture.** You'll enjoy less clutter, which can help you feel more at ease in your space, and can get some extra money to pay down debt.

**Talk to a financial adviser or counselor.** These professionals are experts in helping people get on track with their financial future. Don't be embarrassed of your situation or worry what your advisor thinks. They work with all kinds of people and can help you!

**Participate in positive self-talk when it comes to your finances.** For instance, instead of saying, "I can't go out to eat because I don't have money," say "I have the opportunity to cook a delicious meal at home." It may feel silly, but positive self-talk can transform your financial mindset for the better.

**Take advantage of counseling or therapy appointments through your EAP.** Overspending or spending outside your means is sometimes linked to underlying stress or trauma, and talking with a mental health professional can help you heal.

### Resources for Managing Financial Stress

- [7 Ways to Manage Financial Stress](#)
- [Financial Stress: How to Cope](#)



## We Are Here to Help

EAP benefits are available to all employees and their families at NO COST to you. The EAP offers confidential advice, support, and practical solutions to help you through your grief and loss. You can access these confidential services by calling the toll-free number below and speaking with our care team or accessing online.

### Short-Term Counseling

For a deeper level of support, members can request short-term counseling by calling Uprise Health. Our nationwide provider network of more than 60,000 counselors can be filtered by criteria including geography, clinical specialty, cultural background, and other preferences, to ensure a perfect fit for you. After speaking with our care team, you will be provided with a list of providers. You can schedule an appointment yourself or ask the care team for assistance scheduling.

### 24-hour Crisis Support

During business hours, members who are in crisis are connected with an Uprise Health clinician who will stabilize your situation and refer you to appropriate support. After-hours calls are answered by behavioral health professionals located within the U.S. If you are in life threatening situation, please call 9-1-1 as you would do for any other medical/life emergency.

### Online Peer Support Groups

As part of your EAP program, you can request up to 10 online peer support groups where you will have a safe and confidential place to speak with others who have similar issues. Please call Uprise Health and speak with our care team to learn more about the Grief and Loss support group.



#### Contact Uprise Health

Call: 1-800-395-1616

Visit: [members.uprisehealth.com](https://members.uprisehealth.com)