

SUNSHINE

Savers

NEWSLETTER 2025

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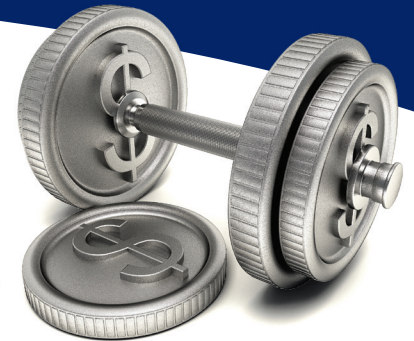
Sunshine Savers is a non-profit club sponsored by Pinellas Federal Credit Union to promote financial education to its members and share the benefits of saving, investments, and financial management.

Sunshine Savers is a Select Employee Group (SEG) of Pinellas Federal Credit Union. Once you join the Sunshine Savers, you also gain the benefit of being eligible for membership at PFCU.



10 Money Moves to Strengthen Your Finances

Managing your money can feel overwhelming. Between bills, expenses, and savings, it can feel like there's never enough cash flowing. But small, intentional changes can make a big difference.



1 Pay Yourself First

Treat savings like a monthly bill. Set up an automatic transfer to your savings account each payday so your balance grows effortlessly.

2 Rethink Purchases in Work Hours

Before buying an item, think of how many hours you'd have to work to afford it. A \$200 concert ticket equals 10 work hours at \$20/hour. This helps you weigh whether something is worth it.

3 Use Savings Tools that Build Discipline

Certificates earn higher returns in exchange for locking in funds for a set term. This helps your savings grow without temptation to spend.

4 Set Spending Thresholds Before Buying

Thwart impulse buys with a "24-hour rule" for all non-essential items over a certain threshold, like \$50. After a cooling-off period, you may decide you don't want it.

5 Track Spending to Spot Patterns

Use a budgeting app to track your spending. Small habits like food runs can add up fast. Identifying patterns helps you cut back.

6 Automate Bills to Stay Organized

Automating your bill payments and funds transfers lets you prevent missed due dates and save consistently. Once payments are set, your finances run on autopilot.

7 Build an Emergency Fund for Peace of Mind

Start small, then aim to save 3-6 months of expenses. An emergency fund protects you from relying on high-interest debt for surprises.

8 Use Cash or Debit for Everyday Spending

Paying with cash or a debit card rather than credit helps you avoid overspending and stick to your budget.

9 Maximize Employer Benefits

Take advantage of discount programs, 401(k) matches, and HSAs to boost your savings.

10 Try a No-Spend Challenge

Commit to a week of only paying for necessities (bills and groceries) and cutting out extras (shopping and dining out). You can reset, save cash, and refocus on your goals.

Why Every Household Needs an Emergency Fund

Life is full of surprises. Some are exciting, like the chance to travel somewhere new. Others are less exciting and can even be expensive, like car repairs. These unexpected expenses can derail your finances in an instant. That's why every household needs an emergency fund.

An emergency fund is like your financial first-aid kit for life's curveballs.



How Much Should You Save?

Aim to save 3-6 months of living expenses. It may seem high, but this amount prevents you from relying on payday loans or high-interest credit cards.

Your emergency fund protects you in the event of:

- Medical bills
- Job loss or reduced hours
- Car or home repairs

The Cost of Being Unprepared

With emergency savings, a \$2,500 car repair could end up costing you over \$1,000 extra in credit card interest. But with your emergency fund, you can pay the bill in full and focus on replenishing your savings with no debt and no stress.

How to Build Your Fund

You don't need to save it all at once! It's okay to start small and build momentum as you go.

- **Start small and grow:** Even \$20-\$50/month makes a difference. Once you've built the habit, aim to save 1 month of expenses, then work up to 3-6 months.
- **Be consistent:** Making regular deposits helps you build discipline.
- **Automate savings:** Schedule automatic transfers so your balance grows effortlessly.
- **Increase as you can:** Boost your contributions when you have extra money from paying off a loan or getting a raise.

Open Your Emergency Fund Today with a Savings, Certificate, or Money Market From Pinellas FCU!



Over 60 Years
**of Financial
Counseling**

For more than 60 years, GreenPath Financial Wellness has helped people reduce financial stress and take control of their money. This national nonprofit offers free financial counseling services with certified experts. GreenPath offers expert guidance to help you:

- Build a Budget
- Eliminate Debt
- Pave a Path to Homeownership
- Review and Improve Your Credit Score
- And More!

To learn more about this free benefit for credit union members, visit www.pinellasfcu.org.



Account Access & Locations:
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