



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking

FINANCIAL RESOURCE GUIDE



Dear Washingtonian,



The Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking (DISB) is pleased to provide you with our Financial Resource Guide.

Part of the Department's mission is to educate and empower residents and protect them from scams and financial abuse. In support of Mayor Muriel Bowser's efforts to set residents on pathways to the middle class, the Department is working to make the lives of District residents more financially sound and secure.

Through its annual education forums, consumer guides and Money Smart workshops, the Department offers District residents fraud prevention and lifelong financial education opportunities.

As the financial services regulator for the District of Columbia, the Department protects consumers and stimulates business development in the District. Programs like DC BizCAP, Financially Fit DC and Student Loan Ombudsman services highlight the ways we are fostering small business, promoting financial education and helping residents take control of their financial lives.

We want to be of service. Please contact us if we can help answer your questions or provide additional resources!

Sincerely,
Karima M. Woods
Commissioner

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PERSONAL FINANCE RESOURCES

Where do I go to open a checking or savings account, get a loan and identify other financial services?

DISB provides lists of banks and federal credit unions operating in the District on its website.

Web: disb.dc.gov/banksinDC or disb.dc.gov/federalcreditunionsinDC

Are there bank accounts available for low or no fees in the District?

DISB's Bank on DC Program provides access to financial services and products including no-fee or low-fee accounts to the unbanked and under-banked households in the District.

Organization: Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking (DISB)
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-727-8000

Web: bankondc.org

Where do I go for free financial services for military, veterans and their families?

VALOR (Veterans Assistance for Learning, Opportunity, and Readiness) for Bank on DC provides free financial education classes, online tools and resources for active service members, veterans and their families.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Web: bankondc.org

Looking to get out of debt? Buy a home? Build an emergency fund?

Financially Fit DC is a financial education program with an online component that helps residents improve their financial capability and set financial goals. The program has five core components: Making a Budget, Managing Credit, Buying a Home, Planning for Retirement and Building Wealth.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Web: financiallyfitdc.com

Is there a program to help me save money to reach my financial goals?

DC Opportunity Accounts, a 4:1 matched savings program, helps qualified District residents save up to \$7,500. Qualified residents make regular deposits of up to \$1,500 in a savings account to meet their goals. When the savings goal is reached, the funds in the account will be matched 4:1 by the Department and private funders. The funds can be used to help pay for a variety of expenses, including education, first-time home purchases, medical emergencies, small business development and retirement. The Department supports the DC Opportunity Accounts Program through a contract with Capital Area Asset Builders.

Organization: Capital Area Asset Builders
1100 H Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005

Phone: 202-419-1440

Email: dcopportunity@caab.org

Web: www.caab.org

Where can I get a free personal financial assessment?

Life Cents is a free, online personal financial wellness program designed to help you evaluate your finances and improve your financial health. The program promotes financial stability through financial education, access to local resources and other tools.

Web: bankondc.org

CREDIT BUILDING

How can I get a free copy of my credit report?

Federal law entitles you to one free credit report annually from each of the three national credit reporting companies: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. AnnualCreditReport.com is the only authorized source for the free credit report.

Phone: 877-322-8228
Web: annualcreditreport.com

HOUSING

FORECLOSURE PREVENTION RESOURCES

I am behind on my mortgage. Where can I go for help?

The District's Foreclosure Prevention Hotline can be reached for foreclosure and housing-related resources.

Phone: 202-265-CALL (2255) or 855-449-CALL
Web: disb.dc.gov/foreclosurehotline

Are there any alternatives to foreclosure?

The District's Foreclosure Mediation Program is where homeowners and lenders meet face-to-face to discuss alternatives to foreclosure.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-727-8000
Email: DISB.mediation@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/foreclosuremediationprogram

Housing Counseling Services, Inc. provides comprehensive housing counseling, training, advocacy, technical assistance and housing opportunities for low- and moderate-income home buyers, home owners and tenants.

Organization: Housing Counseling Services, Inc.
2410 17th Street NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20009
Phone: 202-265-2255
Email: info@housingetc.org
Web: housingetc.org

Is there a program that will lower my monthly mortgage payments?

The federal Making Home Affordable program offers options for lowering monthly mortgage payments, transitioning out of your home without foreclosure and mortgages for the unemployed.

Phone: 888-995-HOPE (4673); 877-304-9709 TTY
Web: makinghomeaffordable.gov

BUYING A HOME

Where do I go to get a mortgage?

Most banks and federal credit unions in the District offer mortgage loans. DISB provides lists of banks and federal credit unions operating in the District on its website.

Web: disb.dc.gov/banksinDC **or** disb.dc.gov/federalcreditunionsinDC

How much mortgage can I afford?

The mortgage calculator provided by the DC Housing Finance Agency helps you estimate how much mortgage you can afford.

Organization: DC Housing Finance Agency
Address: 815 Florida Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-777-1600
Web: dchfa.org

How do I find a licensed mortgage lender and broker?

Residents can access a database of mortgage lenders and brokers licensed by DISB for free through the public access portal of the Nationwide Mortgage Licensing System.

Web: nmlsconsumeraccess.org

HOME PURCHASE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Are there any home purchase assistance programs?

The Home Purchase Assistance Program, Employer Assisted Housing Program and Negotiated Employee Affordable Home Purchase Program provide financial assistance for low- and moderate-income households and District Government employees for the purpose of first-time home purchase.

Organization: Department of Housing and Community Development
1800 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20020
Phone: 202-442-7200
Web: dhcd.dc.gov

Are there any home down payment assistance programs?

DC Open Doors offers a number of mortgage products including down payment assistance loans, Federal Housing Administration loans and Fannie Mae conventional mortgage loan products.

Organization: DC Housing Finance Agency
815 Florida Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-777-1600
Web: dchfa.org/homeownership

How do I find a housing or credit counselor?

The federal government sponsors housing counseling agencies throughout the country to provide free or low cost advice on buying a home, renting, defaults, foreclosure avoidance, credit issues, reverse mortgages and other housing issues.

Organization: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street SW, Washington, DC 20410
Phone: 800-569-4287
Web: entp.hud.gov/idapp/html/hecm_agency_look.cfm

How do I find housing for rent or sale in the District?

DCHousingSearch.org is a free online housing locator provided by the DC Department of Housing and Community Development. It includes listings for rentals, properties for sale and Section 8 options.

Phone: 877-428-8844
Web: dchousingsearch.org

How do I find financial assistance for displaced tenants?

DC Office of the Tenant Advocate provides assistance with emergency housing and relocation expenses for tenants who are displaced by fires, floods or government closures. The office also helps resolve tenant and landlord disputes.

Organization: Office of the Tenant Advocate
2000 14th Street NW, Suite 300 North, Washington, DC 20009
Phone: 202-719-6560
Web: ota.dc.gov

I am thinking of bringing in a boarder, renter or Airbnb guest into my home or property. Are there any landlord requirements?

The District requires a basic business license including a certificate of occupancy from the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) before offering a dwelling or rooming unit in a residential building. Applications must be submitted in person at DCRA's Permit Center located at 1100 4th Street SW, second floor. Additional information on rental housing can be found on the Office of the Tenant Advocate's website: ota.dc.gov.

Phone: 202-442-4400
Email: dcra@dc.gov
Web: dcra.dc.gov



STUDENT LOANS

Worried about defaulting on your student loans?

DISB licenses student loan servicers who service non-federal student loans in the District of Columbia. If you have concerns regarding student loans, you can reach out to the District of Columbia Student Loan Ombudsman. The Ombudsman is an unbiased and confidential resource who assists residents with issues related to student loans. The Ombudsman evaluates the concerns of both District borrowers and student loan servicers to promote collaborative solutions.

The Ombudsman cannot represent borrowers or make decisions about specific loan forgiveness or repayment plans. The Ombudsman can provide information and guidance on many issues related to student debt including student loan repayment programs, complaints with student loan servicers, student loan consolidation and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-727-8000

Email: DCLoanHelp@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov/studentloanhelp

AUTO INSURANCE

How can I compare costs for auto insurance?

DISB provides sample profiles of auto insurance rates offered in the District.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Email: disb@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov/autoinsrates

Is there a program for pedestrians or passengers injured by an uninsured driver?

The DC Uninsured Motorist Fund is for eligible pedestrians or passengers injured by an uninsured driver, who has no identifiable source of recovery, that provides benefits specified by District of Columbia law.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Email: Insconsumerservices@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov/DCuninsuredmotoristfund

Do I need to have vehicle insurance?

The District of Columbia's Compulsory/No-Fault Motor Vehicle Insurance Act requires valid vehicle insurance for every person applying for registration or a reciprocity sticker in the District. The insurance must be maintained as long as the vehicle is registered in the District. Lapses in coverage are subject to fines. Do not cancel insurance until vehicle tags are surrendered to DC's Department of Motor Vehicles.

Organization: DC Department of Motor Vehicles

Phone: 202-737-4404

Web: dmv.dc.gov/service/vehicle-insurance

What do I do if I am in a car accident?

Getting into an accident can be stressful and chaotic; it is difficult to remember what to do immediately following a wreck. Many people are unsure about what information they need to share with, and collect from, the other driver. It would be helpful if you provide your name and insurance information. Divulging more than that, such as your address or driver's license number, could put you at risk for identity theft. DISB, through the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, provides **WRECKCHECK**. This free smartphone app walks you through the process of collecting information when you are in a car accident and allows you to email the report directly to your insurance agent. The app is available on iOS and Android devices, and in a PDF version.

Web: disb.dc.gov/fileautoclaim

HEALTH INSURANCE RESOURCES

I do not have employer-sponsored health insurance. Where can I go to buy it?

DC Health Link is the online marketplace created for District residents, including lawfully present immigrants, families, small business owners and their employees to shop, compare and select health insurance that meets their health needs and budgets.

Phone: 855-532-5465
Web: dchealthlink.com

I have a question about a proposed change in my health insurance rate. Who can I talk to?

You can provide feedback to DISB on proposed changes to health insurance rates and plans including those offered on DC Health Link. DISB can research your rate to determine if it complies with District of Columbia law.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Email: HealthRate.Comments@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/healthinsratereview

I lost my job and no longer have health insurance. Are there any programs to help me?

You can purchase individual health insurance through the DC Health Link. Also, the federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act, known as COBRA, gives workers and their families who lose their group health benefits the right to continue health benefits provided by their health plan for limited time under certain conditions (e.g., voluntary or involuntary job loss, reduction in work hours, death, divorce and more.)

Organization: DC Health Link
Phone: 855-532-5465
Web: dchealthlink.com

Organization: U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210
Phone: 866-872-365; 877-889-5627 TTY
Web: dol.gov/general/topic/health-plans/cobra

PUBLIC OR GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED HEALTH INSURANCE PROGRAMS

Are there programs that provide free health insurance?

DC Healthy Families is a program of the DC Department of Health Care Finance that provides free health insurance for eligible District residents and their children.

Organization: DC Healthy Families Enrollment Office (multiple locations)
Phone: 202-639-4041; 202-639-4041 TTY
Web: dhcf.dc.gov/service/dc-healthy-families

The DC Healthcare Alliance offers a range of health care services for eligible District residents.

Organization: Income Maintenance Administration Service Center
Phone: 202-727-5355
Web: dhcf.dc.gov/service/health-care-alliance

Is there assistance for medical services if I am disabled?

If you are disabled and need medical services, you may qualify for DC Medicaid. It is a health care program that can help pay for medical services for low-income and disabled people.

Organization: Income Maintenance Administration Service Center
Phone: 202-727-5355
Web: dhcf.dc.gov/service/medicaid

HOME INSURANCE

How can I compare costs for homeowner and renter's insurance?

DISB provides sample profiles of personal property insurance rates and a list of licensed insurance companies on its website.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Email: disb@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/homeinsrates

Do I need renter's insurance?

If you are a renter, your personal property is not covered under your landlord's insurance in the event of a fire, theft or other unexpected incident. Therefore, you may want to purchase renter's insurance. You can view a list of licensed insurance companies in the District on DISB's website and compare renter's insurance rates.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Email: disb@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/renterinsurance

I paid off my mortgage. Do I need homeowners insurance?

Yes, if you have a mortgage on your home, then the bank or other financial institution holding your mortgage requires you to maintain insurance coverage. Homeowners' insurance protects their financial interest in your home from loss or damage caused by a covered peril like fire or wind damage. It is important that you continue homeowners' insurance coverage on your home after your mortgage is repaid to make certain that your house and your personal belongings are covered, and you have liability protection.

Web: disb.dc.gov/page/it-important-maintain-your-homeowners-insurance

I am thinking about getting a reverse mortgage. What facts should I consider before getting one?

A reverse mortgage is a loan that lets homeowners 62 and older borrow against the equity in their homes. Reverse mortgages can help seniors stay in their homes while receiving income in retirement. The lender pays you a lump sum, a monthly advance, a line of credit or a combination. The amount you can borrow is based generally on your age, the equity in your home and the interest rate the lender is charging. You can use the loan for any purpose. The lender adds interest charges to the loan that accrue each month, so the amount you owe increases over time as the interest compounds. Some reverse mortgages have fixed interest rates; others are adjustable. Reverse mortgages use up some or all of the equity in your home, leaving fewer assets for you and your heirs. For more information on how reverse mortgages work, visit DISB's website.

Web: disb.dc.gov

Do I need flood insurance? Where do I buy it?

The National Flood Insurance Program offers flood insurance that can be purchased through property and casualty insurance agents. Flood insurance protects either your building or belongings in the case of flood. Standard homeowner insurance does not cover damages from floods. You can evaluate your need for flood insurance and review more information by visiting the websites of DISB and the DC Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE).

Web: disb.dc.gov/flood **or** doee.dc.gov/service/flood-insurance-and-coverage

I just moved into my new neighborhood. How do I know if my neighborhood is prone to flooding?

The Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Map Service Center (MSC) is the official public source for flood hazard information produced in support of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Enter your address into the MSC online tool to find the official flood map for your location.

Web: msc.fema.gov/portal/home

If my frozen pipes burst, am I covered by insurance?

Most homeowner and commercial property insurance policies, in general, will cover damage from a frozen pipe that bursts. Coverage usually exists if the policy contains the following or similar language: Coverage is provided when it is determined that damage resulted from a "sudden and accidental" discharge from a plumbing source or system (please check your policy for the exact language). There are, however, exceptions; your insurance policy may not cover the loss if it appears you neglected to take the proper steps to safeguard your property, or if your property is deemed vacant.

Web: disb.dc.gov/page/if-my-frozen-pipes-burst-am-i-covered-insurance

What is the difference between renter's insurance for an apartment and insurance for a condominium?

A major difference between owning a condominium and renting an apartment is that condominium owners own the interior walls and floor of the unit so if they are damaged, the individual unit owner is responsible for the repairs. Another difference is that some condominium associations have the authority to assess individual unit owners for certain damage to the building. Unlike an apartment where the landlord is responsible for repairs to the walls and floors, a condominium owner bears the loss if the walls and floors are damaged. Condominium policies cover damage to the interior walls and floors of the unit, personal items and liability coverage.

Web: disb.dc.gov/page/faq-condominium-insurance

How do I create a home inventory?

DISB, through the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), provides a free smartphone app to help residents create a complete inventory of their belongings for insurance purposes. The app is available for iPhones and Androids. If you do not own a smartphone, you can check out the simple-to-use, downloadable home inventory checklist.

Web: insureuonline.org/home_inventory_checklist.pdf

LIFE INSURANCE RESOURCES

How do I check the licensing status of my insurance agent?

Check out DISB's databases of licensed insurance agents and companies.

Web: disb.dc.gov/licensestatus

How do I locate a life insurance policy of a deceased relative?

DISB, through the NAIC, offers a life insurance policy locator that provides consumers with search capabilities to help find a deceased person's lost life insurance policies and annuities. For more information on locating missing life insurance policies, visit disb.dc.gov/node/920162.

Web: eapps.naic.org/life-policy-locator/#/welcome

How do I know if an annuity is right for me?

An annuity is a contract in which an insurance company agrees to make a series of payments or lump sum payment in return for a premium (or premiums) that you have paid. Many consumers buy annuities so that they will have a regular income after they retire. DISB provides a consumer guide on understanding annuities.

Web: disb.dc.gov/node/813372

OTHER INSURANCE RESOURCES

How do I compare title insurance rates?

Title insurance policies protect the home buyer against losses and legal fees that arise from unknown defects in the title to the property during the purchase of the property. DISB provides sample title insurance rates on its website.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Email: disb@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov/titleinsrates

How do I know if I need long-term care insurance?

The District's *Long-Term Care Planning Guide* will help you determine if long-term care insurance is needed, the costs, options and more.

Organization: DC Aging & Disability Resource Center
500 K Street NE, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-724-5626; 202-724-8925 TTY

Web: dcoa.dc.gov/node/553362

I want to buy non-medical health insurance products (e.g., disability, long-term care, vision, dental, etc.).

How do I find an insurer?

DISB provides a list of licensed insurance carriers that sell non-medical health insurance plans in the District on its website.

Web: disb.dc.gov/non-medicalhealthins

I was injured on the job. Where do I go for medical coverage?

The DC Department of Employment Services administers the local Workers' Compensation Program, processes claims, and monitors the payment of benefits to injured private-sector District employees. Disputes between claimants and employers (or their insurance carriers) are mediated and employers are monitored to ensure compliance with insurance coverage requirements.

Organization: DC Department of Employment Services
Labor Standards Bureau, Office of Workers' Compensation
4058 Minnesota Avenue NE, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20019

Web: does.dc.gov/page/workers-compensation-does

SECURITIES AND INVESTING

I have heard about a great investment opportunity. How can I research it?

Investment offerings in the District are required to be registered with DISB and/or the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). You can check the status of an investment opportunity in the District by contacting DISB.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-727-8000

Email: disb@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov

How can I tell if a securities firm or a particular individual in a securities firm has a DC license?

DISB licenses securities professionals such as broker-dealers and investment advisers and the firms they work for. Broker-dealers and investment advisers include financial planners, investment traders and mutual fund and hedge fund managers. Contact DISB to see if the person or firm has a license.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-727-8000

Email: disb@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov

Can I find out if the securities firm or individual has been the subject of any complaints or disciplinary action?

Yes. You can get any disciplinary history that involves a particular firm or individual by contacting DISB.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-727-8000

Email: disb@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov



How do I find a lost financial asset?

Unclaimed property or financial assets (e.g., paid-up life insurance policies, death benefits, certificates of deposit, stocks, savings and checking accounts) that are considered lost or abandoned by the owner are turned over to the unclaimed property unit of the DC Office of Finance and Treasury. Owners and legitimate heirs can claim funds at any time.

Organization: DC Office of Finance and Treasury's Unclaimed Property Unit
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 203, Washington, DC 20004

Phone: 202-442-8181

Email: dcunclaimed.property@dc.gov

Web: cfo.dc.gov/service/unclaimed-property

Are there tools to help with my investment planning?

The U.S. Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) provides calculators to help you with your investment accounts. Below is a list of calculators.

- Compound Interest Calculator— A calculator to estimate how your money can grow.
investor.gov/tools/calculators/compound-interest-calculator#.Ux_bbMKYbIU
- 401(k) and IRA Required Minimum Distribution Calculator— A calculator to approximate your required minimum distribution based on your age and the value of your 401(k) and IRA accounts.

Web: investor.gov/additional-resources/free-financial-planning-tools/required-minimum-distribution-calculator

How do I calculate my retirement benefit?

The U.S. Social Security Administration's Retirement Estimator is a calculator that gives you an estimate of your retirement benefit based on your actual Social Security earnings record.

Web: ssa.gov/estimator

SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

DISB provides and participates in programs and resources to assist small business owners in creating sustainable economic development.

INSURANCE

Is there a bundle of plans for business insurance?

A business owner's policy (BOP) includes property insurance, business interruption and liability insurance, but not professional liability. Looking for more information on BOPs, commercial auto, home-based and other business insurance resources? Visit DISB's website.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Web: disb.dc.gov/smallbusinfo

Where do I buy health insurance for my small business?

DC Health Link is an online marketplace created for individuals, families and small business owners with less than 50 employees to compare and select health insurance that meets their health needs and budgets. If you have more than 50 employees, DISB provides a list of appropriate health insurance carriers on its website.

Organization: DC Health Link
Phone: 855-532-5465
Web: dchealthlink.com
Web: disb.dc.gov/healthinsproducts

ACCESS TO CAPITAL

The District of Columbia Business Capital Access Program (DC BizCAP) is funded by the U.S. Treasury State Small Business Credit Initiative. The initiative, a \$1.5 billion fund, was established by the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 to assist small businesses and entrepreneurs who were adversely affected by the economic recession of 2008 and the credit crisis that followed. The District was allocated \$13.2 million to support District businesses. DISB established and administers DC BizCAP to provide capital to District small businesses and entrepreneurs who continue to encounter reductions in the availability of credit and heightened requirements to obtain financing. DC BizCAP provides critical capital through three programs that provide alternatives to traditional commercial financing to facilitate private lending and investments in District small businesses.

Is there a program that provides collateral support to small businesses?

The DC BizCAP Collateral Support Program (CSP) provides collateral support for small business borrowers who might be qualified for loans but are unable to meet the lender's security requirements. Qualified small businesses use the loans to buy equipment and inventory; for expansions or renovations; working capital; start-up costs; leasehold improvements; or refinancing.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-727-8000
Email: disb@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/node/391732



Is there a program that provides loan support for small businesses?

The DC BizCAP Loan Participation Program (LPP) provides loan support for small businesses that may qualify for loans but are unable to meet capital requirements or the debt service coverage ratio of the lending institution. Under this program, the District buys a portion of a loan originated by a lender to bolster capital on the borrower's balance sheet and reduce its debt service. The District's maximum purchase of the commercial loan cannot exceed 50 percent of the loan up to \$1 million. A list of participating lenders, loan enrollment procedures and borrower eligibility requests are available on DISB's website.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-727-8000
Email: disb@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/node/1019992

Is there a program that makes equity investments in small businesses?

The DC BizCAP Innovation Finance Program (IFP) provides capital for investment in District of Columbia start-ups and emerging companies that seek financing alternatives to traditional commercial financing. The IFP provides the capital either (1) through a co-investment with an innovation finance company into the small business; or (2) by investing as a limited partner in an innovation finance company that shall then make an investment into that small business.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-727-8000
Email: disb@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/node/1020002

Is there a program that provides start-up capital for small businesses?

The DC Certified Business Enterprise Revolving Micro Loan Fund program provides start-up capital to small businesses that do not have enough capital to grow in their early stage of development. The maximum loan amount is \$25,000.

Organization: Department of Small and Local Business Development
441 4th Street NW, Suite 850 North, Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-727-3900
Web: dslbd.dc.gov/publication/microloan-program-application

How do I bid on contracts?

The Government of the District of Columbia offers a variety of programs to help businesses bid on and acquire contracts. The portal below provides access to business services, applications and resources.

Web: dmped.dc.gov/page/do-business-dc-government **or** dslbd.dc.gov/getcertified

OTHER SMALL BUSINESS RESOURCES

Where do I go for small business resources including how to create a business plan?

The DC Small Business Resource Center is a one-stop shop for entrepreneurs and small businesses looking to start and grow their companies in the District. Services include training, workshops and seminars, counseling, one-on-one technical assistance and computer software.

Small Business Resource Center locations:

Organization: Department of Small and Local Business Development
441 4th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001
Phone: 202-727-3900
Web: dslbd.dc.gov

Organization: Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs
1100 4th Street SW, Washington, DC 20024
Phone: 202-442-4400
Web: dcbiz.ecenterdedirect.com

Are there grants available to make improvements to small businesses?

The Office of the Deputy Mayor for Planning and Economic Development (DMPED) invests in small business development via the Great Streets Small Business Retail Grants, which are competitive grants up to \$50,000 for qualified small business owners who wish to improve their place of business.

Organization: DMPED
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 317, Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-741-7620
Email: great.streets@dc.gov
Web: greatstreets.dc.gov

Are there grants available for non-residential real estate projects?

DMPED will fund projects to fill the gaps in non-residential components of a mixed used project, real estate, or retail development project in targeted census tracts where unemployment is 10 percent or greater.

Organization: DMPED Neighborhood Prosperity Fund
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 317, Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-727-6365
Email: dmped.eom@dc.gov
Web: dmped.dc.gov/page/neighborhood-prosperity-fund-npf

How do I do business in Washington, DC?

The Washington, DC Economic Partnership (WDCEP) produces an annual guide on how to start a business and develop business in the District. Topics include business registration and licensing, finances, taxes, incentives, and labor laws. The guide is available in English and Spanish.

Organization: WDCEP
1495 F Street NW, Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-661-8670
Web: wdcep.org/tools-research/publications



ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Is there an energy assistance program in the District?

DOEE can help you with your energy and utility bills. They have financial assistance, discounts and late bill forgiveness programs.

Organization: DOEE
1200 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-535-2600
Web: doee.dc.gov/energyassistance

The following utilities also have assistance programs:

Organization: DC Water
1385 Canal Street, SE, Washington, DC 20003
Phone: 202-787-2000
Web: dcwater.com/customer-assistance

Organization: Washington Gas
1100 H Street, NW Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 844-WASHGAS (844-927-4427)
Web: washingtongas.com/home-owners/savings/energy-assistance

Organization: Pepco
PO Box 97274, Washington, DC 20090-7274
Phone: 202-833-7500
Web: [pepco.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Pages/DC/AssistancePrograms\(DC\).aspx](http://pepco.com/MyAccount/CustomerSupport/Pages/DC/AssistancePrograms(DC).aspx)

The Office of the Peoples Counsel also provides resources for utility consumers:

Organization: Office of the Peoples Counsel
1133 15th Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-727-3071
Web: opc-dc.gov/consumer-assistance

SAVING AND INVESTMENT PROGRAMS

How do I save money on federal and local taxes?

The DC Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a special tax break, based on the federal EITC, designed specifically for low- and moderate-income workers. People who worked last year and had income of less than approximately \$54,884 and qualify for the EITC will pay less in taxes or even get cash back. To be eligible, individuals must have earned income or certain disability income. DISB supports the District's EITC campaign through a contract with Capital Area Asset Builders.

Organization: Capital Area Asset Builders
1100 H Street NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-419-1440
Email: info@caab.org
Web: caab.org/en

Organization: DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer
1101 4th Street SW, Suite 270 West, Washington, DC 20024
Phone: 202-727-4829
Web: otr.cfo.dc.gov/page/earned-income-tax-credit-dc

How do I save money for college?

The DC College Savings Plan is a tax-advantaged 529 college savings investment plan offered by the Government of the District of Columbia. The plan helps District and non-District families save for higher education expenses for a designated beneficiary.

Organization: DC Office of the Chief Financial Officer
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Suite 203, Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-727-2476 or 800-584-6401
Web: cfo.dc.gov/service/dc-college-savings-plan

Is there a rebate program for my home?

The RiverSmart Homes program offers a series of rebates for trees, rain barrels, rain gardens and impervious surface removal. Any District single-family homeowner is eligible to apply for the rebates, and homeowners that have already participated in the RiverSmart Homes program can also take advantage of the rebates.

Organization: Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE)
1200 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-535-2600
Web: doee.dc.gov/riversmartrebates

Is there an energy assistance program in the District?

DOEE can help you with your energy and utility bills. They have financial assistance, discounts and late bill forgiveness programs.

Organization: DOEE
1200 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-535-2600
Web: doee.dc.gov/energyassistance

FINANCIAL SCAMS

Have you received a telephone offer that seems too good to be true?

Check out DISB's financial fraud prevention tips that can help protect you and your family from fraud and identify scams. Senior citizens especially should be aware of financial fraud scams, which come in different forms such as in-person, by telephone or through unsolicited letters and emails. If you, or someone you know, is a victim of a scam, report the incident to DISB for investigation.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-727-8000

Email: disb@dc.gov

Web: disb.dc.gov

Have you received a phone call from someone who claims to be from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)?

Scammers use the IRS name, logo, fake employee names and badge numbers to steal money and identities from taxpayers. Often, these criminals will say taxpayers owe money and demand payment right away. Also, scammers will lie to taxpayers and say they're due a refund. The thieves ask for bank account information over the phone. The IRS warns taxpayers not to fall for these scams. Be aware that IRS will:

- Never initiate a call to you directly (IRS will mail tax bills to you first);
- Never demand information;
- Never ask for your credit card number over the phone; and
- Never threaten you with arrest by local police.

Organization: Internal Revenue Service

Phone: 1-800-829-0433 Tax Fraud Hotline

Email: complaints@tigta.treas.gov

Web: irs.gov/individuals/how-do-you-report-suspected-tax-fraud-activity

Did you know that a physician has to certify medical products before Medicare will pay for it?

Older adults are frequent targets of Medicare schemes, especially by medical equipment manufacturers offering free medical products in exchange for your Medicare numbers. Because a physician has to sign a form certifying that equipment or testing is needed before Medicare pays for it, con artists fake signatures or bribe corrupt doctors to sign the forms. Once a signature is in place, the manufacturers bill Medicare for merchandise or service that was not needed or ordered. Before you give the salesperson your Medicare numbers, confirm with your doctor that you need the medical equipment. Also, ask your doctor to provide a detailed account of the services needed. Review any account statements carefully and report Medicare errors immediately.

Organization: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Inspector General

Phone: 1-800-MEDICARE

Web: Medicare.gov

A contractor offers a home improvement at a reasonable price. The contractor wants to start work before the papers are signed. How do I verify that this is a legitimate offer?

Do not let a contractor rush you into a decision about home repairs or improvements, financing or signing papers. First, check out the contractor's license with the DC Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs at 202-442-4400 and research the lender's activities with DISB at 202-727-8000.

I received a notice in the mail saying I won \$50,000 and need to send in \$500 to pay the taxes on the prize money. Is this legit?

No, this is a scam. The elderly are among the most targeted when it comes to sweepstakes and lottery scams. Don't send any money or give your personal information to these callers, especially when you didn't enter the sweepstakes or lottery.

I received an unsolicited financial offer in my email inbox. Should I respond to it?

Cybercrime is a \$445 billion industry. Emails are sent to individuals with the purpose of capturing confidential personal and financial information such as passwords, checking and credit card account numbers and Social Security numbers. The scammers use the information to steal your identity. Do not respond to unsolicited email offers; just delete them from your account. If your identity is stolen, report the crime to your financial service providers and to the three credit bureaus: Equifax at equifax.com or 1-800-525-6285; Experian at experian.com or 1-888-397-3742; and TransUnion at transunion.com or 1-800-680-7289.

Have you received a phone call from a grandchild's friend or another relative asking for money to be wired right away to keep them out of trouble?

This is called the grandparents scam. To avoid becoming a victim of this scam, (1) never send money to individuals before verifying that the calls are coming from legitimate sources; and (2) if a caller claims to be a grandchild, hang up the phone and call the actual grandchild or the grandchild's parents immediately. Report scams to DISB's Enforcement and Consumer Protection Division at 202-727-8000.

Web: disb.dc.gov/publication/beware-grandparent-scam

I receive prerecorded calls from unknown individuals regarding the award of a grant. What should I do?

This type of financial scam is called the grant scam and is carried out using robocalls—automated telephone calls with prerecorded messages. Often, the phone number will appear on your caller ID as originating within the 202 area code; it also may appear to be coming from a government agency—this is called “spoofing.”

When you answer the telephone, a prerecorded message may announce that, “this is the Grant Department from Washington, DC;” that you have been approved for a grant of \$9,000; and that they have been trying to reach you regarding your money transfer. The prerecorded message may ask you to call it. Do NOT call the number. Likewise, do NOT press any numbers on your dial pad that the prerecorded message might suggest. If you receive a live, unsolicited call from an unknown individual asking for your banking or other personal information to confirm payment of your grant money, do NOT interact with the caller. Instead, hang up immediately. No federal or state government grant-making agency will solicit money or personal banking information from a potential grant recipient.

Report unsolicited calls to the Federal Trade Commission. Be prepared to provide information such as the time and date of the call, the number that appeared on your caller ID screen, your telephone number and a description of the message.

Organization: Federal Trade Commission
600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580

Phone: 202-326-2222

Web: DoNotCall.gov

Is there a program to help me identify financial scams targeting seniors?

DISB, in conjunction with the Elder Abuse Prevention Committee, holds “Money Smart for Older Adults” presentations at senior centers throughout the District to keep seniors up-to-date on financial information and ways to detect financial scams. The Money Smart curriculum is provided by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection. To request a financial fraud prevention presentation at your neighborhood center or location, complete the speaker request form at disb.dc.gov/service/request-speaker-disb.

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-727-8000
Email: disb@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov

FILE A COMPLAINT, REPORT FRAUD AND OTHER ISSUES

Where do I go to file an insurance, financial services or securities complaint?

Consumers can file a complaint with DISB about transactions, products and providers in the insurance, securities and banking sectors. Our consumer services division handles complaints regarding:

- home, auto, business, health, life, dental and other insurance problems
- affinity group plans
- investment accounts
- securities offerings
- broker-dealers and investment advisers
- questionable investment practices
- suitability of transactions
- check cashers including those operating in small grocery stores and liquor stores
- consumer credit service organizations
- consumer sales finance companies
- banks, money lenders, money transmitters
- mortgage lenders, mortgage brokers and mortgage loan originators
- service contracts

Complaints may include:

- coverage issues
- claim disputes
- premium problems
- sales misrepresentations
- policy cancellations
- refunds
- inappropriate conduct of financial service providers and salespersons
- student loan servicers
- behavioral health providers
- appraisal management companies

Organization: DISB
1050 First Street NE, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20002
Phone: 202-727-8000
Email: disbcomplaints@dc.gov
Web: disb.dc.gov/file-complaint-and-report-fraud

After I submit the complaint to DISB, what can I expect?

A staff member will call or write you regarding the complaint.

Where do I report suspected abuse of seniors and incapacitated adults?

The Adult Protective Services Unit, under the DC Department of Human Services, investigates reports of alleged cases of abuse, neglect and exploitation by third parties, and self-neglect of vulnerable adults 18 years of age or older. Financial elder abuse reports also can be filed with DISB. See information above on how to file a complaint.

Organization: DC Department of Human Services, Family Services Administration
Adult Protective Services
64 New York Avenue NE, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: 202-541-3950

Web: dhs.dc.gov/service/adult-protective-services

Where do I go to resolve problems with Medicaid, Medicare and other government-sponsored health plans?

The District's Health Care Ombudsman can help you understand your health care rights and responsibilities; resolve problems with health care coverage and bills; help you access health care services; and navigate health plan appeals that pertain to Medicaid, Medicare, DC HealthCare Alliance, DC Healthy Families and prescription drug coverage.

Organization: DC Office of Health Care Ombudsman and Bill of Rights
One Judiciary Square, 441 4th Street NW, 900S, Washington, DC 20001

Phone: 202-724-7491; 877-685-6391

Web: healthcareombudsman.dc.gov

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

DISB can help address your question and refer you to the right resource. Several federal government agencies offer support with financial services issues.

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)

The CFPB writes rules and enforces federal consumer financial protection laws, takes consumer complaints, researches consumer behavior and monitors financial markets.

Location: 1700 G Street NW, Washington, DC 20552

Phone: 202-435-7000

Web: consumerfinance.gov

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC)

The FDIC insures bank deposits up to \$250,000 in case a bank fails. It also handles complaints and regulates FDIC insured state banks that are not members of the Federal Reserve System.

Location: 550 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20429-9990

Phone: 202-393-8400

Web: fdic.gov

Federal Reserve

The Federal Reserve is the central bank for the United States. Its mission is to provide the nation with a safer, flexible and stable monetary and financial system. It administers regulations such as the Truth-in-Lending, Equal Credit Opportunity and Fair Credit Reporting Acts.

Location: 20th Street and Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20551
Phone: 202-452-3000
Web: federalreserve.gov

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

The FTC protects consumers by stopping unfair, deceptive or fraudulent practices in the marketplace. It handles complaints concerning most non-bank lenders, such as mortgage and finance companies and state credit unions.

Location: 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580
Phone: 202-326-2222
Web: ftc.gov

National Credit Union Administration (NCUA)

The NCUA is an independent federal agency that handles complaints and regulates national credit unions. The agency has created a website, mycreditunion.gov, where you will find consumer specific information about credit unions.

Location: 1775 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-518-6300
Web: ncua.gov or mycreditunion.gov

Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC)

The OCC charters, regulates and supervises national banks and also supervises the federal branches and agencies of foreign banks. The agency has created a website, Helpwithmybank.gov, to assist consumers with banking issues.

Location: 250 E Street SW, Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-874-5000
Web: occ.gov or Helpwithmybank.gov

U.S. Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC)

The CFTC is the federal agency that regulates the trading of commodity futures and options contracts and takes action against firms suspected of illegal or fraudulent activities.

Location: Three Lafayette Centre, 1125 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20851
Web: cftc.gov

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

HUD is the federal government agency that oversees home mortgage lending practices. It also handles complaints in several categories including housing discrimination, manufactured housing, land sales and deceptive contractors.

Location: 451 7th Street SW, Washington, DC 20410
Phone: 202-708-1112
Web: hud.gov

U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)

The DOJ is the federal agency charged with the enforcement of United States law, both civil and criminal, and is responsible for investigating and pursuing allegations of consumer fraud. The Consumer Protection Branch leads the Justice Department's efforts to enforce consumer protection statutes throughout the United States.

Location: 950 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20530-0001
Phone: 202-524-2000
Web: usdoj.gov

U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC)

The mission of the SEC is to protect investors, maintain fair, orderly, and efficient markets, and facilitate capital formation. The SEC Office of Investor Education and Advocacy also provides a variety of services and tools to address consumer problems and questions.

Location: 100 F Street NE, Washington, DC 20549
Phone: 202-942-8088
Web: sec.gov

U.S. Treasury Department

The Treasury Department is the executive agency responsible for promoting economic prosperity and ensuring the financial security of the United States. You can buy digital savings bonds and other Treasury securities, convert paper bonds and submit damaged currency to this agency. The Treasury's Office of Consumer Policy works to ensure access to safe and affordable financial products and services. It provides information that enables individuals to make sound financial decisions.

Location: 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20220
Phone: 202-622-6415
Web: treas.gov

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)

The VA administers a variety of benefits and services that provide financial and other forms of assistance to service members, veterans, their dependents and survivors. It also handles complaints about loans guaranteed by the VA.

Location: VA Consumer Affairs Service
810 Vermont Avenue NW, Washington DC 20420
Phone: 800-827-1000
Web: va.gov

U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)

The SBA is the only cabinet-level federal agency fully dedicated to small business and provides counseling, capital, and contracting expertise as the nation's voice for small businesses.

Location: Washington, DC District Office
409 3rd Street SW, 2nd Floor, Washington, DC 20416
Phone: 202-205-8800
Web: sba.gov

Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)

The IC3 accepts online internet crime complaints from victims or from a third party. The center is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National White Collar Crime Center.

Location: Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20535-0001
Phone: 202-324-3000
Web: ic3.gov

Social Security Administration (SSA)

The SSA manages Social Security, a social insurance benefit program covering retirement, disability and survivor's benefits. To be eligible for the benefits, workers must pay Social Security taxes.

Location: Postal Plaza Shopping Center, 1905-B 9th Street NE
Washington, DC 20018
Phone: 800-772-1213
Web: ssa.gov

Centers for Medicaid and Medicare

This federal government agency administers the federal Medicaid and Medicare programs. It also handles complaints regarding Medicaid, Medicare, Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage, HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) privacy and more.

Location: 7500 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21244
Phone: 877-267-2323
Web: cms.gov

COVID-19 RESOURCES

Are there resources for individuals and businesses that have been financially impacted by the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency?

The District government has compiled a list of resources to help with financial recovery from COVID-19. Go to coronavirus.dc.gov/recovery.



Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking

1050 FIRST STREET NE, SUITE 801
WASHINGTON, DC 20002
202-727-8000

DISB.DC.GOV
DISB.COMMUNICATIONS@DC.GOV
 @DCDISB

KARIMA M. WOODS
COMMISSIONER

 GOVERNMENT OF THE
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR