

A man and a woman are sitting together, smiling and looking towards an older man in a suit who is partially visible on the right. The man is wearing a blue button-down shirt and a watch, and the woman is wearing a white striped shirt. They appear to be in a professional setting, possibly a meeting or consultation.

If you're looking for
personal financial planning,
talk to us.



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WHY GET A PERSONAL FINANCIAL PLAN? ///

If you are considering getting started on a financial plan for yourself, your household or your business, you are not alone.

A number of reputable independent sources¹ have reported that financial planning is one of the fastest growing and most in demand financial services.

Creating and following long-term financial and tax planning strategies can be daunting, even during stable and prosperous times. In an economic environment that is in constant flux, staying on top of your complex financial life is even more challenging. It's also more important than ever. We can help.

¹ Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, CNNMoney, Pew Research Center



If you are
wondering why?
Let us help.

WHY WORK WITH A CPA FINANCIAL PLANNER? ///

A CPA is licensed by your state and adheres to a strict professional code of conduct. The CPA Code of Professional Conduct is over 125 years old and has been continually updated to meet evolving needs, new technology and changing regulations.

CPAs are regulated financial planners. A founding principle of the AICPA Statement on Standards in Personal Financial Planning Services and the CPA Code of Professional Conduct is “always acting in the best interest of the client,” an exceptionally important factor in selecting a financial planner.

Our firm may bring in knowledgeable experts in specialized financial areas to help with your financial plan. The principle of “always in the best interest of the client” extends to them, and we will collaborate closely with them to ensure your interests are the primary consideration.

As a trusted adviser, we are in a unique position to provide objective recommendations so you can make informed decisions. CPAs who also are financial planners have knowledge and experience in multiple financial planning

areas — ensuring that all of the bases are covered. Plus, CPAs’ characteristic tax expertise is a unique and valuable service that further differentiates our services from other financial planners.

CPAs have been doing financial planning for clients for over 100 years, a testament to the sustained rigor, depth of expertise and practical value of our experience and education as CPAs.

So, why a CPA financial planner? Along with our financial planning knowledge, you can count on competence, objectivity and the highest standard of integrity for your most important financial decisions.

On the following pages, we’ve included information about working with a CPA financial planner, what you can expect and the services that may be important to you.

BENEFITING FROM THE SERVICES OF A CPA FINANCIAL PLANNER ///

CPAs have ranked among the most valued and respected professionals for more than 125 years and are second only to physicians in terms of consumer trust and confidence.

CPA financial planners provide a full range of services that can help you attain financial security and success. Although they do not offer every service discussed here, they have their own specialized combination and will work with other professionals to complement those services — customizing their offering to meet your unique needs and specific goals.



A CPA financial planner
can help you achieve
financial milestones.

MEETING YOUR PERSONAL FINANCIAL GOALS ///

Whether you're thinking of purchasing a new home, saving for retirement, eliminating debt or funding a college education, a CPA financial planner can help you achieve financial milestones, including:

- Devising practical savings and investment strategies that help you navigate the complexities of your financial life, capitalize on your fiscal strengths and address your financial weaknesses
- Ensuring your cash flow is flexible enough to accommodate the good, the bad and the unexpected in your personal and professional lives
- Helping to monitor and revise your financial plan as necessary so you can create a fluid action plan that meets your goals as well as your lifestyle



Retirement
Planning



Education
Planning



Income Tax
Planning and
Preparation



Strategic Business
Planning and
Consulting



Estate
Planning



Risk Management
Planning



Investment
Planning

Retirement Planning

Specialized guidance and support from a CPA financial planner can help you develop a plan that delivers a secure and comfortable retirement and peace of mind during your pre-retirement years.



RETIREMENT PLANNING

It is never too late to plan for retirement; however, the sooner planning starts, the more financially prepared you are likely to feel when the time arrives. Specialized guidance and support from a CPA financial planner can help you develop a plan that delivers a secure and comfortable retirement and peace of mind during your pre-retirement years, including:

- Reviewing expenses that will be, or are likely to be, incurred during your retirement and creating a plan to eliminate any shortfall between income and expenses
- Identifying the primary sources of retirement income that you have or should have and calculate the savings required for you to retire at a specific age and achieve your desired lifestyle
- Creating strategies for preserving and growing retirement account balances and distribution amounts
- Recommending a diverse range of tax-efficient financial tools — IRAs, 401(k)s, investments and tax-sheltered opportunities — that are best suited to your age and retirement time frame



INCOME TAX PLANNING AND PREPARATION

A continuing education requirement keeps CPA financial planners up to date about constantly changing tax laws so they can provide prudent, year-round tax planning counsel, including:

- Designing strategies you can follow throughout the year to reduce your taxes
- Clarifying the impact of the latest tax laws, legislation and IRS rules on your tax liability
- Identifying the long- and short-term tax consequences of your spending, investment and other financial decisions, and advising you on the steps you can take to reduce your future tax liability



ESTATE PLANNING

For most of us, planning for the distribution of our financial resources and personal property can be a difficult and emotionally charged issue. However, with a CPA financial planner's professional and comprehensive approach to estate planning, you can be assured that your wishes will be honored, including:

- Reviewing wills, trusts, retirement plans and other estate-planning documents and ensuring they remain up to date
- Developing a strategy that fulfills your goals while preserving assets for the next generation, reducing estate-tax liability and providing for sufficient liquidity
- Explaining methods of property transfers, estate-tax rules, the impact of the most current estate-planning legislation and possible future changes in rules and regulations
- Collaborating with other team members — attorneys, investment advisers, appraisers and insurance brokers, among others — to ensure that every issue is properly addressed by the appropriate expert

A woman with short, straight grey hair and bangs is sitting on a grey fabric sofa. She is wearing a dark blue V-neck long-sleeved shirt and light-colored lace leggings. She is holding a dark grey tablet with both hands and looking at the screen. To her left is a patterned pillow with a black and white floral design. The background shows a large window with white frames, looking out onto a green landscape with trees and a house. A semi-transparent white box with a thin black border is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text.

Investment Planning

A qualified* CPA financial planner's expert insight provides the foundation on which you can build a sound investment plan.



INVESTMENT PLANNING

Creating and growing the resources needed to reach your financial and lifestyle goals starts with a well-crafted investment strategy. A qualified* CPA financial planner's expert insight provides the foundation on which you can build a sound investment plan, including:

- Evaluating your assets, liabilities and cash flow, and determining how you can best meet your current financial needs
- Explaining the advantages and disadvantages of the full range of investment options, from annuities, Treasury bills and insured certificates of deposit to life insurance, stocks, bonds and mutual funds
- Developing a plan that meets your short- and long-term financial goals, is consistent with your risk tolerance and has the potential to generate optimum returns during the time you have to invest
- Providing strategies for managing a sudden financial setback or windfall, including the best ways to use, manage and protect your resources



EDUCATION PLANNING

You and your family can look to the future far more positively when you have a well-planned strategy for education costs. With a plan that features a CPA financial planner's tax savvy investment advice and guidance, you can realize your education funding goals and reap the benefits they deliver, including:

- Creating a timely, diverse college investment strategy designed around your financial resources, child's age, risk tolerance and projected educational costs
- Explaining tax credits and deductions that can defray education costs and the tax implications of education-related investment and savings decisions
- Recommending ways for the student to become involved in the planning process and contribute to the education fund
- Keeping your plan updated to reflect changes in your employment situation, investment options, savings plans, financial-aid requirements and tax laws

* Only professionals who are registered with the SEC or with their state securities regulator to provide investment advice are eligible to do so. Check with your CPA to be sure he/she is an "investment adviser" under federal and/or state securities regulations.



STRATEGIC BUSINESS PLANNING AND CONSULTING

Business owners have a different set of needs than individuals and families. In many cases, however, a small business owner's personal tax issues are intertwined and directly connected with those of their business. CPA financial planners act as independent advisers who can work with business owners to help them coordinate business and personal financial goals, including:

- Creating a realistic business plan and helping you select an organizational structure that meets your needs
- Helping identify financing and negotiating financing terms and conditions
- Advising on employee benefits, executive compensation, retirement plans, insurance and other areas



RISK MANAGEMENT PLANNING

Risk is a part of life. It's how you deal with it that counts. While most of us immediately think of managing risk in terms of insurance, it's important to recognize the need to protect yourself in a full range of areas. This includes both unforeseen events close to home and the fallout from financial and market conditions that might seem far away. Your CPA financial planner can:

- Point out areas of your plan that would be most susceptible to risk
- Describe the types of risks in your investment portfolio
- Suggest ways to manage risks — avoiding, reducing or sharing
- Help quantify the impact of loss of income or assets

The point isn't to be afraid; it's to have a plan in place that offers as much protection as you need to weather a storm. And who better to talk about risk in a clear, levelheaded way than an objective CPA financial planner?



Strategic Business Planning

CPA financial planners act as independent advisers who can work with business owners to help them coordinate business and personal financial goals.

MEETING WITH YOUR CPA FINANCIAL PLANNER ///

Creating a relationship with your CPA financial planner is similar to establishing a trusting relationship with other professionals on whom you rely for sound, objective advice, such as a doctor or attorney. A CPA financial planner will protect your interests, listen to and address your concerns and, equally important, make you feel comfortable and valued. It all begins with your first meeting. Here is what you can expect:

SCOPE OF SERVICES

When you schedule an appointment, he or she will ask you to explain the type of services you need — your scope of services, also called an engagement. Examples include tax preparation, financial planning and investment management.

REQUIRED PAPERWORK

Your CPA financial planner will ask that you bring specific records and other documents with you to the meeting. The type of documents will depend on the engagement. Providing the proper paperwork will allow your CPA financial planner to better understand your situation and ensure a productive meeting.

COST OF SERVICES

Once you have met and discussed the engagement, your CPA will provide you with an engagement letter summarizing the services and the scope of work to be performed. The letter also will discuss the terms of payment, depending on the type of engagement.

A CPA who is also a **financial planner** is in an ideal position to understand your current financial position and specially trained to help you prepare for the future as well — providing objective, independent advice so you can make informed decisions.

As you start thinking about putting together a plan for your family or small business, think about turning to the person who can work with you to coordinate your total financial situation — and help you craft a plan that's CPA strong.

WHAT ARE A CPA'S QUALIFICATIONS? ///

CPAs' qualifications make them the trusted professionals who are best prepared to meet all of your personal and/or business financial and tax planning needs. CPAs must:

- Hold an undergraduate degree (150 hours required in most states)
- Pass a comprehensive, rigorous four-section, qualifying examination
- Meet ongoing strict state-licensing guidelines
- Fulfill generally 40 hours of continuing professional education each year
- Adhere to a code of professional ethics, including standards specific to financial planning

A CPA financial planner builds on this strong foundation with additional knowledge and experience making them uniquely qualified to address your financial needs.





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