

SUDDENLY SINGLE

Navigating the Financial Transition of Divorce



While divorce is never easy, thoughtful planning can help ease some of the pain. Here are key things you can do to keep on track while transitioning to your new financial life.



Gather and organize important documents

- Each spouse's (and child's) birth certificates, Social Security Cards and passports
- All mutual bank, brokerage, and retirement account statements
- All insurance policies, including life, health, homeowners and auto
- Past tax returns for five years
- Mortgage or home-equity loan documents
- A list of outstanding bills or personal financial obligations
- Real property deeds and motor vehicle titles (pink slips)
- Credit reports
- Any wills or trusts

Make an inventory list

- All household goods with pictures of valuable items (if possible)

- Personal (non-marital) belongings
- Contents of any safe deposit boxes or storage units

Assess your financial situation

- Employee benefits for each spouse
- Expenses of each spouse
- Income of each spouse



Separate your finances

- Set up a new checking and savings account at a bank other than the one with your joint account
- Open a new credit card in your name only
- If appropriate, change beneficiaries of life insurance, 401(k)s, etc.

Consult your financial advisor about how best to divide your investment assets

- IRA assets may be divided as a tax-free transfer if spelled out in divorce documents
- Qualified plan assets will require a qualified domestic relations order (QDRO) detailing the disbursement
- Non-retirement investment assets (such as brokerage accounts) can be divided without court documents

Prepare for the meeting with your attorney

- If you have children, know your wishes regarding custody, visitation and child support
- Decide whose health insurance should cover the children
- Evaluate your earning capabilities and whether or not alimony should be considered
- Decide which assets you really want to keep
- Calculate how much outstanding debt there is on any assets you wish to keep
- Know your feelings about keeping/selling the family home



AFTER A DIVORCE

Reorganize your finances

- Create a new monthly and yearly budget that reflects your current lifestyle
- Re-evaluate your financial goals, plans for new goals going back to school?)
- Re-assess your insurance needs, including life, health, and property and liability
- Take a look at your tax situation, including tax filing status, credits and deductions
- Update your will

Manage your credit

- Order a copy of your credit report and check for inaccuracies (especially with any joint accounts that may be closed)
- Continue to monitor your credit in case issues crop up months, or even years, later
- Pay off all debts you agreed to pay in the divorce, and make sure your ex has, too
- Work to establish a positive credit history in your name
- Help your children adjust to a new financial reality—avoid overspending out of guilt

Face the future with confidence

- Seek support if you need it
- Find time for yourself
- Take a deep breath, and know that you can do this

**Need additional guidance?
Contact your financial advisor today.**

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