# WHY BUDGET?

Living with a budget may seem restrictive, but it's actually empowering.

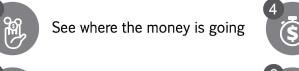


### With a budget, you'll be empowered to:



Spend less than you earn





Address those weaknesses



See exactly how much you have to work with



See where your spending weaknesses are



Reallocate funds from what's less important to you to what's more important to you

## **Getting Started**

- Establish your long-term goals
- ▼ Know your take-home pay
- Collect monthly receipts
- ▼ Factor in regular, periodic expenses (e.g.: insurance)
- ▼ Record every expense, no matter how small
- Be realistic with goals
- Set up automatic savings
- Adjust your plan as needed



#### **Common Goals**

- ▼ Reduce debt
- Save for a down payment to buy a house
- ☑ Pay down or pay off credit card debt
- ✓ Make a major purchase
- Establish college savings
- Build an emergency fund

## **Budgeting Tools**



**Paper** and pencil



Quicken or similar software



Excel spreadsheet



Smartphone apps there are several that can help

#### **Common Ways to Save**

- Reduce entertainment spending
- Cut down on eating out
- Budget your vacations
- Use coupons
- ✓ Look for bargains on gas
- Skip sodas and coffees when eating out - Water is usually free





#### **Reducing Debt**

- ✓ Pay off higher-interest credit cards first
- ▼ Take advantage of balance-transfer offers if they have promo rates
- ✓ Make a game of it by challenging family members to see who can save the most on regular expenses
- ▼ Talk with the credit union staff for more ideas

