



Frequently Asked Questions

What is financial planning?

Financial Planning can be integrated and comprehensive, where all elements of your financial affairs (like retirement planning, investments, insurance and college funding) are brought together into a coordinated, cohesive plan. Or, it can be very specific, focusing just on a single issue of importance or concern to you. In either case, financial planning is a multi-step process that provides you with two important deliverables. First, an in-depth review of your current situation (either comprehensive or specific, depending on your planning objective) and secondly, a road map that provides clear direction on how to achieve your planning goal(s). It is important to remember that financial planning is a dynamic process, not a single, one-time event. The economy, your planning objectives and earned income can all change, necessitating a revisit of the road map.

Isn't financial planning only for those people that have significant wealth?

Any individual, couple or family seeking financial advice can benefit from our services. As a member of the Garrett Planning Network, we have taken a pledge to offer our services to all persons, regardless of their income or assets. We welcome clients who simply want a one-time financial review or are interested in a second opinion before making a major financial decision. Equally welcome are those persons who are seeking ongoing financial coaching and plan monitoring over a longer period of time.

I'm still in college or I'll soon be finishing college, isn't it too early for me to work with a financial planner?

We believe financial planning is especially important for individuals before they enter the full time workforce. A financial planning session will help you understand the importance of personal budgeting and saving regularly. Establishing a savings plan soon after entering the workforce will provide the financial discipline you'll need throughout your working adult life to achieve your financial goals. According to the 2012 Teens and Personal Finance Survey sponsored by the Allstate Foundation, only 24% of teens reported learning how to manage money from their teachers in school.

[What is fee only financial planning and what are its benefits?](#)

Fee-Only financial planners are paid only by their clients. They never receive any commissions, sales incentives, bonuses or special perks paid by insurance companies or other financial service entities for selling their products. A.M. Stutts Financial Management, LLC is a true Fee-Only financial planning firm. Knowing this, you can approach us with the full knowledge that we will be bringing recommendations that are in your best interest only. You do not have to worry that we will need to “sell you something” in order to be paid for providing you advice.

[How do I implement recommendations you make on insurance or investments?](#)

We will advise you on financial products such as investments and insurance, but we do not sell them or receive any benefit from their sale. We can recommend ethical and competent insurance agents to assist you in addressing an insurance need. We can also assist you in establishing a brokerage account at a discount broker (Scottrade, Fidelity, Vanguard, Schwab, T.D. Ameritrade, etc.). We can provide minimal or full support in helping you create an online brokerage account.

[How do you price your financial planning services?](#)

Our fees are based on the time we spend meeting with you, either in-person or over the phone, researching and analyzing your situation, and formulating our recommendations that are specific to your situation. Before you hire us, we will always provide you with a written quote of the full cost of the engagement. We fully disclose all of our fees. We offer an initial consultation, up to one hour, that is complimentary to prospective clients.

[Are fees for financial planning services tax deductible?](#)

Yes, with certain limitations. Section 212 of the Internal Revenue Code permits an itemized deduction for tax and/or investment advice in the miscellaneous section of Schedule A on your Federal Income tax return. It is currently subject to a 2 percent floor of adjusted gross income.

[Tell me about your investment policy](#)

As financial planners and investment consultants, we believe in the following fundamental principals with regard to designing an investment portfolio and making specific recommendations:

- The purpose of a client’s investment portfolio is to fund current and/or future financial objectives.
- The design of the portfolio must take into account the client’s financial objectives, tolerance for risk, needs for current income or liquidity, and special considerations such as income and estate taxes.
- The appropriate allocation of investment assets for your goals and risk tolerance is the most important component in developing an investment portfolio. We believe that having a diversified, well-balanced portfolio, following long-term buy-and-hold strategies, and having patience will increase the likelihood that you will achieve your long-term financial objectives. The important thing to remember is that no one can predict the future. It is difference of opinion that makes a market. Investment and

economic “experts” provided with the same information often come to different conclusions. We do not suggest that we can, or that any of the money or mutual fund managers that we recommend will, make the correct decision every time. We do believe, however, that studying the historic trends and relationships of investment classes and the philosophies and approaches of successful investment managers can provide valuable insight.

[How can I get started?](#)

The first step is an initial inquiry from you. Call us at (630) 404-9652 or email us. We offer an initial no-cost, no-obligation Get Acquainted Meeting, either on the phone or in our offices. For Get Acquainted Meetings, appointments are scheduled based on availability during regular business hours of 9-5, Monday through Friday. Should you decide to engage our services, we can discuss which of our services is appropriate for you.

[Once my financial plan is completed, does our relationship end?](#)

Because financial planning is a process, not an event, we offer ongoing services, periodic reviews and day-to-day consultation as requested and/or needed. Contact us when you have a change that impacts your goals, and contact us annually for a checkup to keep your plan on track.

[Is A.M. Stutts Financial Management, LLC a Registered Investment Advisor?](#)

A.M. Stutts Financial Management, LLC is a Registered Investment Advisor in the State of Illinois. We must comply with a host of government regulations designed for your protection. When considering using a financial planner’s services, it is important to ask for and review a copy of the ADV Part II. Our form ADV Part II is available by clicking ADV at the bottom of our website. The ADV Part II contains information relating to the planner’s qualifications, fiduciary duties and history of any past violations.