

Sound advice

Find us on 

SNOCOPE NEWS & INFORMATION • WINTER 2023

2024 Holiday Schedule

NEW YEARS DAY HOLIDAY
Monday, January 1, 2024

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY
Monday, January 15, 2024

PRESIDENTS DAY
Monday, February 19, 2024

MEMORIAL DAY
Monday, May 27, 2024

JUNETEENTH
Wednesday, June 19, 2024

INDEPENDENCE DAY
Thursday, July 4, 2024

LABOR DAY
Monday, September 2, 2024

VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY
Monday, November 11, 2024

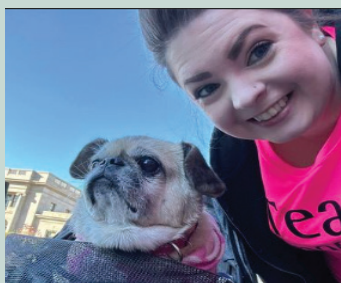
THANKSGIVING DAY
Thursday, November 28, 2024

DAY AFTER THANKSGIVING
Friday, November 29, 2024

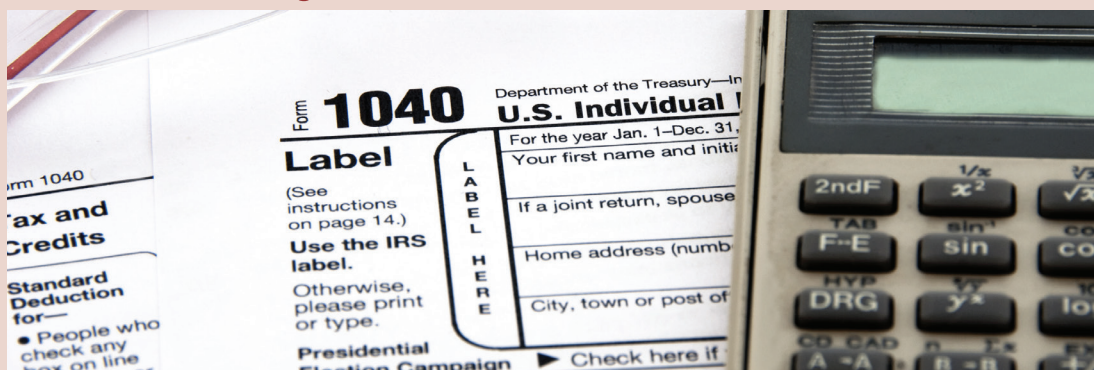
CHRISTMAS
Wednesday, December 25, 2024

What do six dogs, seven people, a sunny day and feather boas have in common?

Read the back for more!



Think You Might Get a Tax Refund? Wait Just a Minute!



According to IRS data, the average tax refund issued this tax season is \$3,263. If you're getting a large tax refund this year, you may be like many Americans and already have it spent before it arrives. But before that stash of cash burns a hole in your pocket, give serious thought to pausing before spending it. It can be tempting to splurge on buying new electronics or taking the family on a fabulous vacation. Given the economically challenging times we face, it may be time to take a more practical approach to a tax refund.

During the time between receiving your refund and deciding what to do with it, aka the "decision-free zone," take time to think about the options that make the most sense for you and your family, and give yourself space so you can make an intelligent decision when you're ready. Take yourself out of the psychology of spending "feel good" cycle where spending the refund in one fell swoop provides instant gratification.

Most taxpayers surveyed in a Jackson Hewitt survey say they'll immediately spend their refund on essentials like groceries, rent, utilities, and bills. If this is the case for you, then kudos for taking a rational approach to spending the refund. On the other hand, do you feel you're in more of a survival mode this year? If so, it may be a good idea to freeze the refund during the decision-free zone to avoid making an irrational decision.

If you, however, have been hunkered down, paying off debt, getting caught up on bills, and socking away money here and there in savings, you may feel like you're getting ahead with your finances. But, with so many options available, from paying bills and building savings accounts to investing it or remodeling an area of your home, how do you know what the best move is? Taking a practical approach, particularly this year, is a wise way to approach a tax refund.

What is your money mindset?

Your money mindset is the set of beliefs and attitudes you have about money that drive your

Continued on back...

Notice to Members:

With the ever-rising cost of postage and increased mailing costs, SnoCope is forced to reinstate our paper statement fee of \$1.00 for those members that elect paper statements, effective March 1, 2024*. This fee can be avoided easily by simply enrolling in e-statements. First, sign up for online banking on SnoCope.org, then choose the option to receive e-statements, or call the branch at 425.405.9973 and a Member Service Rep can assist you.

* Not all accounts applicable. Some exclusions apply, contact member services for details.

-- Editor's Note --

One of the great parts of being a credit union in this community is the opportunity we have to give back to the area we call 'home'.

As we look back at 2023 we had a great year helping our community, and feel grateful to continue to be a pivotal factor in helping those that help our neighbors. In October, **Team SnoCope** participated in the **Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk** and fortunately the weather was nice (if not a bit chilly) for us and our furry friends. Thanks to all those that donated, we raised **\$1,824!**



Debit Cards

Lost/Stolen: 1-833-933-1681

Outside US: 1-812-647-9794

Disputes/Fraud: 1-866-279-1399
(M-F 5AM-5PM PST, after 5PM, voicemails which will be answered the next business day.)

After Hours Card Services Support:
1-501-246-8497

Visa Credit Cards

425-405-9973

1-844-SnoCope / 1-844-766-2673

After Hours (24/7/365):

1-800-325-3678

CO-OP Shared Branching

www.co-opsharedbranch.org

24-Hour Call Center: 866.692.8669

CO-OP Shared Branches/ATMs

SnoCope Credit Union

NMLS ID #673299

Your savings federally insured to \$250,000

NCUA

by the National Credit Union Administration,
A U.S. Government Agency.



decisions about saving and spending. Coming to grips with yours is essential for realizing how it influences the behavior that may be holding you back from reaching your goals.

Are you in survival mode? If so, consider these options for spending your refund:

- Boost (or start) your emergency savings fund
- Catch up on bills
- Pay your vehicle registration
- Pay your insurance in one lump sum (some companies have a 1-pay discount!)
- Buy essential uniforms for work or school

Do you feel you're getting ahead of your finances instead of behind them? Here are some ways you can keep the momentum going:

- Pay down high-interest debt
- Save for an upcoming expense
- Put it toward a home or car repair

- Buy what you need to make extra money—classes, certifications, licenses, etc.
- Give to a local charity
- Contribute to your retirement fund
- Seed a 529 educational plan
- Create an opportunity fund (saving for an opportunity that may come up later)

When you get lump sums of money, the absolute best thing to do with it is to make a plan. The plan might include using a portion to build up an emergency savings account, putting some toward debt, and taking an incremental amount to buy something small and frivolous for yourself. The key is to be mindful about how you'll spend sums of money before you have it. Then, plan your spending ahead of time when you're in a more rational state of mind.

2024 Financial Wellness Program

2023 was a stellar year for our Financial Wellness Program, offering over 49 sessions this year and offering new topics as we see issues effecting our members and our neighbors in the community.

This year proved to be a very concerning year for cyber crime and identity theft. It was a daily occurrence in the news as huge corporations were digitally attacked and customer data stolen, and on a more "down home" related front, we saw an increase of fraud happening to our own members with a loss of funds. This encouraged us to search for high-quality information for members on how to protect themselves, their accounts and their digital devices. With the video and materials from retired FBI Special Agent Jeff Lanza, we were able to present a webinar and in-person sessions to help our members and neighbors guard their information, devices and data.

Another topic that seemed to be of potential interest is a session on what happens when you lose someone in your life. This helped us create "Final Wishes Conversations - Facts You Should Consider: A Discussion with a Funeral Director & SnoCope's Branch Manager". A delicate topic without a doubt, but one that needs to be had and we found just the person to help us do that for our members and neighbors. To add to the discussion we included our Branch Manager, Josey, to talk about what we, as a financial institution, need in the event of a death to help the family.

What a year! We have the schedule for 2024 ready to go and we've added our new sessions as permanent topics. Below are the dates for 2024, you can sign up now for any of them, just visit the [SnoCope website](#) and go to [Financial Wellness](#). You can watch via computer or your device or join us at the branch, just call Member Services.

1/17/24	PERS Washington St. Retirement Plan
2/14/24	Social Security Planning
3/20/24	Tax Planning Thru Retirement Stages
4/17/24	Transitioning to Medicare
5/7/24	Fraud, Identity Theft & Cyber Security
5/15/24	Preparing for Retirement
6/19/24	PERS Washington St. Retirement Plan
7/10/24	Healthcare in Retirement
8/21/24	Savvy Social Security
9/5/24	Fraud, Identity Theft & Cyber Security
9/18/24	Understanding Life Insurance
10/16/24	Wealth Transfer Planning
10/29/24	Final Wishes Conversations
11/20/24	Savvy IRA Planning

If you have any questions about anything related to the Financial Wellness Program, please call Marketing Director, Tracey Johnson at 425.405.9983 or email at tracey@snoCOPE.org.