

What to do if you can't pay your bills

Financial wellbeing

Research shows that when we're worried about money, our work suffers. Poor financial wellbeing can lead to increased absence and reduced productivity.

If you owe money and you're struggling to pay

Don't ignore bills or letters about money you owe. You should speak to the organisations you owe money to – they might let you pay smaller amounts or take a break from payments. Every

organisation is different, so it's important to check what help you could get.

Do you have an emergency fund?

Use this if you need help paying a bill.

Check if you are entitled to any extra help.

It is important to check if you can get extra help or support, even if you're working. You might be able to claim benefits or increase your current benefits if you are:

- struggling to afford essentials such as food and housing
- sick or disabled
- not working
- working and on a low income
- a pensioner on a low income
- a carer
- responsible for children.

Use the following website to see if you are entitled to any further benefits: entitledto.co.uk. Our employee assistance programmes (EAPs) can help with this too – read on for more information.

You can also contact your local council. They might help you pay for things like:

- your energy and water bills
- food
- essential items, for example clothes or an oven.

Reduce your credit card payments. If you are overpaying, consider moving to the minimum payment amount to free up cash flow, but remember that this will incur more interest.

Speak to somebody. Friends and family will be facing the same issues. Remember you can use our EAPs for advice and support. Read on for more information.

Consider a loan. It is usually more expensive to take out a loan – you'll have to pay extra costs like interest. If you decide to take out a loan, you should:

- compare different deals
- check you can afford to pay the loan back.

A salary-deducted debt consolidation loan can be used to pay off high interest, unsecured debts or multiple high-cost debts – such as credit cards, store cards, overdrafts, expensive personal loans and payday loans – with one lower rate loan. This means you only have to make one monthly payment, making it easier to manage your finances. For more information, visit PeoplePerks, click on Financial Perks and then Fairer Finance Loans.

0% credit cards could help temporarily without incurring interest for a period of time. Be careful of Buy Now Pay Later schemes as these are credit agreements.

Before doing anything else, you should contact the organisations you need to pay. You might be able to agree to a plan to help pay the money you owe.



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Useful tips to try and save money

- Use a better value supermarket
- Consider eating less meat, as this can be expensive
- Don't go shopping when you're hungry
- Heat the person, not the property
- Use food banks.

Need more help?

Our [Employee Assistance Helpline](#) can provide you and your family with counselling and advice covering a variety of personal, family or workplace issues. All calls are free and confidential. Call 24 hours a day on **0800 328 1437**; visit

[employeeassistance.org.uk](#) (the access code is SREAP); or find out more by logging into PeoplePerks.

We're also partnered with the Retail Trust to provide specialist emotional and physical support for retail colleagues. You can access this through your PeoplePerks account; via the trust's free and confidential 24-hour helpline on **0808 801 0808**; or by email at helpline@retailtrust.org.uk. Our package for retail staff includes a host of wellbeing features, which are available at [myrtwellbeing.org.uk](#).

Our PeoplePerks site is full of education, support, tools and activities to help your wellbeing. It includes a specific area on wellbeing, including financial wellbeing. Log in at [peopleperks.co.uk](#). If you don't have a username or have forgotten your details, email the People Administration team at peopleadmin@sueryder.org or call **01491 640905** for support.

The [Wellbeing Resource Page](#) on [RyderNet](#) has huge amounts of support and information, including more printable wellbeing guidance sheets like this. There are also signposts to external resources and support from other organisations. If you want to learn more about wellbeing and mental health issues, the [Learning and Organisational Development team](#) offers a variety of training and development options including e-learning packages, qualifications and training for line managers. Email the team at learningteam@sueryder.org.

We also have around **70 Mental Health First Aiders** across Sue Ryder. To find their details, please visit the [Wellbeing Resource Page](#) on [RyderNet](#).

