



THE GINSBURG LAW INSIDER

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SHOULD YOU USE YOUR TAX REFUND TO PAY OFF DEBT?

For many Americans, a tax refund represents the largest lump-sum payment they will receive all year. While it can be tempting to spend that money on a vacation, home improvement project, or major purchase, using some or all of your refund to reduce debt may provide long-term financial benefits.



Attorney Amy Ginsburg

Start with High-Interest Debt - If you carry balances on credit cards, personal loans, or other high-interest accounts, paying down those debts can save you hundreds—or even thousands—of dollars in future interest charges. Reducing revolving credit card balances may also improve your credit utilization ratio, which can have a positive impact on your credit score.

Prioritize Debts Carefully - Not all debts are equal. Consider focusing on:

- Credit cards with the highest interest rates.
- Past-due accounts that could result in collection activity.
- Debts that may negatively affect your credit report.
- Accounts that are accruing fees or penalties.

Before making payments, make sure you understand whether the debt is valid and whether it is still legally collectible.

Be Cautious with Collection Accounts - Many consumers are contacted by debt collectors regarding old debts. Before using your tax refund to pay a collection account, ask for written validation of the debt and confirm that the information being reported is accurate. In some situations, making a payment on an old debt may have legal consequences, including restarting certain timelines under state law. It is often wise to understand your rights before sending money to a collector.

Don't Forget Emergency Savings - While paying down debt is important, financial experts often recommend maintaining some emergency savings. Unexpected expenses such as vehicle repairs, medical bills, or home maintenance can quickly lead to new debt if you do not have a financial cushion. Consider balancing debt repayment with setting aside funds for emergencies.

Watch Out for Tax Refund Scams - Scammers frequently target taxpayers by posing as the IRS, state tax agencies, or financial institutions. Remember:

- The IRS generally initiates contact through mail, not phone calls, emails, or text messages.
- Be cautious of unsolicited requests for personal information.
- Never click suspicious links claiming there is an issue with your refund.

Know Your Rights - If you are struggling with debt, facing collection activity, or believe inaccurate information is appearing on your credit report, you may have rights under federal and state consumer protection laws. Debt collectors must follow strict rules, and consumers have protections against harassment, false representations, and unfair collection practices.

At Ginsburg Law Group, we help consumers understand their rights when dealing with debt collectors, credit reporting issues, and other consumer finance matters. If you have questions about a debt or collection account, contact us to discuss your legal options.

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LEGAL PLAN UPDATE

LEGAL PLANS: WHAT IF MY MATTER ISN'T COVERED?

Don't assume you have to handle the issue on your own. Even if your legal matter is not fully covered under your legal plan, many plans provide access to participating attorneys at reduced rates for services outside the scope of coverage.

What Phil Dunphy Got Right About Real Estate

Phil Dunphy may be one of television's most lovable Realtors, but beneath the jokes and dad humor, he understood something important: A home isn't just a purchase—it's where life happens.

Whether you're buying your first home, upgrading for a growing family, or downsizing for retirement, real estate decisions involve more than square footage and interest rates. They involve schools, memories, finances, and your future.

Phil always focused on helping clients find a home that fit their lives, not just their budget. That's a lesson worth remembering in today's market.

Before signing a contract, make sure you:

- ✓ Understand all financing terms
- ✓ Review disclosures carefully
- ✓ Budget for unexpected expenses
- ✓ Ask questions before—not after—closing

Because while Phil could make home buying look easy in 22 minutes, real estate decisions have long-term consequences.

And remember: "When life gives you lemonade, make lemons. Life will be all like, 'What?!'" 🍋 (Okay, maybe don't follow Phil's advice on everything.)

More Ways to Stay Informed

Follow us on our [website](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), [TikTok](#) or visit the [Consumer Bar](#) (our blog) - and follow our blog on [Facebook](#) too.

In some cases, plan members may receive:

- Discounted hourly rates
- Reduced flat-fee services
- Lower consultation fees
- Preferred pricing on legal representation

Every plan is different, and coverage can vary depending on the type of legal issue involved. Before deciding not to seek legal assistance, contact your legal plan administrator or our office to determine what benefits may be available. A matter that isn't covered at 100% may still qualify for significant savings through your legal plan's attorney network.

If you have a legal plan and need legal assistance, be sure to tell us when you call. We can help determine whether your matter is covered and whether discounted services may be available through your plan. Not sure whether your issue is covered? Ask anyway. Many legal plans provide discounted legal services for matters outside the plan's standard coverage, and we're happy to help you understand your options.

Your real estate transaction deserves experienced legal counsel. Whether you're purchasing, selling, developing, or resolving a property dispute, our legal team provide strategic guidance designed to protect your interests every step of the way. Contact us today to schedule a consultation.



FEATURED WEBSITE RESOURCE

Preparing for Your Estate Planning Meeting

To make the most of your estate planning consultation, please complete your online estate planning questionnaire before your appointment. The information you provide helps us understand your family, assets, goals, and concerns so we can focus on creating a plan tailored to your needs.

Before your call, take some time to:

- ✓ Complete your estate planning questionnaire
- ✓ Consider your estate planning goals and priorities
- ✓ Identify trusted individuals who could serve as executor, trustee, guardian, power of attorney, or health care agent
- ✓ Review your major assets and financial accounts
- ✓ Write down any questions you would like answered

During the consultation, we'll review your information, discuss your objectives, explain available planning options, and outline the next steps in the estate planning process. The more information you provide in advance, the more productive and personalized your consultation will be.

Learn More:

https://ginsburglawgroup.com/estate_planning_meeting/