



**PEPPERDINE**  
UNIVERSITY



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **Who is Benefit Financial Services Group (BFSG)?**

BFSG is a Registered Investment Advisory\* firm and through our team of CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® (CFP) professionals, BFSG provides fiduciary investment, financial, and retirement planning advice to the employees of our clients. Pepperdine University (Pepperdine) has partnered with BFSG to offer employees a financial planning resource to prepare for the future.

*\*Registration does not imply a level of skill or training.*

### **What is a “fiduciary”?**

A fiduciary is someone that is required by law to act only in your best interest. At BFSG, we do not sell insurance, annuities, or any other types of investment products. This is our way to ensure that we always strive to put employees' interests first.

### **How does BFSG get paid?**

We offer financial planning services to the Pepperdine community as part of our agreement with Pepperdine. As noted above, BFSG does not sell any investment products, insurance, or annuities, and cannot collect commissions or additional hard or soft dollar fees. In other words, there are no hidden fees across our entire organization.

### **What is the cost for Pepperdine faculty and staff to complete a financial plan with a BFSG financial planner?**

The cost of our financial planning services for eligible Pepperdine employees is included in BFSG's agreement with Pepperdine! One of BFSG's key objectives is to improve employee retirement outcomes, and our Personal Financial Strategies (PFS) program is designed for us to engage employees directly to ensure they are on track for a successful retirement.

Every employee's situation is different, and advice may vary widely from one employee to the next based on individual circumstances. Therefore, we will ask you to sign a financial planning agreement (contract) prior to completing a financial plan for you. The planning agreement is meant to inform you that Pepperdine does not endorse the recommendations provided by BFSG.

### **What information must I share when doing a financial plan?**

The more information the better, from bank statements to tax reports, to retirement plan and brokerage statements, the more information our team has the better the financial planning output. For most people, this is the first time they look at their entire financial picture in a holistic manner, and it becomes the basis for all future money habits.

### **Is any information shared with Pepperdine?**

Absolutely not. The financial planning process at BFSG is strictly confidential. We only share statistics on the number of employees who take advantage of the benefit so Pepperdine can gauge if the benefit is worth offering. We never share the names of employees who use the service or any personal information such as assets or financial position. We also do not share your information with any third parties, nor are you in a marketing or spam email list at BFSG.

To ensure your privacy is maintained, we do suggest all correspondence with BFSG be conducted using a personal email address. BFSG cannot control who sees email confirmations sent back to your work email address.

### **What is included in a financial plan?**

As noted above, this will vary based on each participant's unique financial situation and future goals. For example, a younger participant may receive a goal-specific financial plan looking to pay down debt, purchase a home, and/or save for graduate school. Someone closer to retirement may receive a much more comprehensive financial plan looking at cash flow in retirement, probability of success, estate planning, diving into their tax situation, and planning when to take Social Security. You can also [click here](#) to watch a quick 3-minute video that describes the financial planning process.

### **What age should I be when I do my first financial plan?**

Start today! It is never too early to start working with a financial planner. Starting the process early in life will help ensure you are making the best possible decisions for your financial future, and later in life this process will help ensure you maintain your standard of living in retirement. The difference between starting this process in your 20's versus in your 40's or 50's can be astounding to the likelihood of success, so start as soon as possible.

### **Can my family be part of the financial planning process, or is it just for me?**

Absolutely! If you are married or have a partner, it is essential to include them in the financial planning process. Many participants, especially later in life, even bring their children into the planning process as they prepare to leave a legacy. In the end, this process is for you and may include whoever you like.

### **How often can I do a financial plan, and how often should I update it?**

As often as you like. Please keep in mind that the process requires a lot of data gathering, and the first one can be time consuming. We typically recommend you update your financial plan every 1-2 years, or before every major life event (marriage, children, home purchase, retirement, etc.)

### **What's the catch?**

There is none. Seriously. BFSG has been working with organizations and their employees since 1991\*, and we spend every day trying to make the lives of our clients and their employees better. We are successful when our clients are successful, and happy employees are a primary driver of every organization's success.

*\*BFSG has been a Focus Financial Partners Inc. partner firm since 2007.*

### **How can I schedule an appointment to meet with a BFSG financial planner?**

If you would like to take advantage of this benefit, please [click here](#) to add an appointment directly to our calendar. Additionally, you may schedule an appointment by emailing us at [financialplanning@bfsf.com](mailto:financialplanning@bfsf.com), or calling us at (949) 955-3203.

### **What is your relevant experience, including your licenses, education, and other qualifications? What do these qualifications mean?**

One of the hallmarks of BFSG is that our firm has a tremendous amount of experience and a wide bench of investment professionals that are drawn from the different areas of the firm. Chartered Financial Analyst® (CFA) Charterholders, Certified Public Accountants (CPA)/Personal Financial Specialists (PFS), Certified Financial Planner™ (CFP) professionals, MBAs, and PhDs working together to offer solutions in critical areas of your financial life. Click [here](#) for more information about our financial advisor's relevant experience, licenses, education, and other qualifications.