# Frequently asked questions about Northstar



## What does Northstar do?

Northstar is a financial planning and management tool to help support you on your financial journey, whether you have a one-off question, a big decision to make, a goal you're working towards, or are looking for a long-term financial plan.

Northstar provides you with a variety of personal finance and benefits tools to help you better understand and utilize your assets, as well as access to a personal financial advisor who will work with you 1-on-1 to discuss personal finance topics and decisions.

Northstar can help you understand financial topics, analyze your situation to identify gaps or opportunities, provide an objective perspective on financial decisions, quantify the impact of different choices, suggest solutions to help you meet objectives, create a plan of action, and connect you to helpful resources.



## What topics do you typically help employees with?

Northstar helps employees with dozens of topics that impact their finances or relate to their employer benefits. These include:

- Creating a realistic budget you can stick to
- Prioritizing different debt and creating a debt payoff plan
- Balancing short-term and long-term financial and life goals
- Prioritizing saving for retirement
- Selecting employer benefits
- Family planning and financially supporting family members
- Managing windfalls and planning for taxes
- Investment advice based on your personal goals and finances
- Paying for medical expenses
- Making a major purchase like buying a home or paying for a wedding
- Thinking about estate planning



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## How much does Northstar cost?

You have a company-sponsored membership to Northstar. This means all costs associated with your Northstar membership are paid for by your employer at no cost to you.




## What qualifications do Northstar's financial advisors have?

All of Northstar's financial advisors hold the CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ designation or the local equivalent if CFP® is not applicable in your specific country. The CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ certification is provided by the CFP Board, which has been the standard for financial planning for more than 30 years. In addition to the CFP® designation or local equivalent, many of Northstar's financial advisors choose to hold additional credentials and certifications based on their personal focus areas.

Northstar's financial advisors have an average of 11 years of experience supporting individuals with financial planning topics. They have each met extensive training requirements consistent with their certifications across a wide range of topics, spanning retirement planning, budgeting, equity analysis, employee benefits, public pensions, and more. To maintain their certifications, Northstar's financial advisors receive ongoing training and regular re-certification.

In addition, each Northstar Advisor receives extensive in-house training upon joining Northstar. Our financial advisors also receive in-depth training on your company's specific benefits before they can start working with you.

## How can I trust the guidance I receive from Northstar?

Northstar is a different kind of financial services company, because we created our product with as few conflicts of interest as possible. Northstar and its financial advisors do not make any commissions, bonuses, or fees. If we recommend a product or service, it's because our team has vetted it and believes it would be beneficial to your personal financial situation–there are no kickbacks ever. We do not manage any assets or funds, so we don't receive any fees for total assets managed. We keep your information 100% confidential and don't share it with anyone–not even your employer. All of our financial advisors are fiduciaries so the guidance they provide is always in your best interests.

## Are Northstar's financial advisors fiduciaries?



Yes, all of Northstar's financial advisors hold local certifications that make them fiduciaries. As a fiduciary, they are mandated by law to manage their clients' money in their best interest and benefit, not their own.



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## How do I work with a Northstar financial advisor?

Once you create your Northstar account, you'll be asked questions about your financial goals. You are then matched with a Northstar Advisor who works with you 1-on-1 to provide custom financial advice based on your life stage and personal goals. Your financial advisor will get to know you and will provide increasingly personalized and proactive advice as they learn more about your evolving priorities. You can work with your dedicated Northstar Advisor via chat, video call, or phone call, based on your personal preference. You have unlimited access to your Northstar Advisor, and they typically respond within 1-2 business days.

## Can I request a different Northstar financial advisor?

If you would like to be reassigned to a new financial advisor, contact our team at support@northstarmoney.com and we will do our best to match you with a new financial advisor that meets your needs.

## How does Northstar ensure my data is safe?

At Northstar, we put our members' privacy and security first. Northstar doesn't share any personal information with employers, third party vendors, or organizations. Northstar uses bank-grade AES 256 and TLS for data encryption, and Plaid's secure API to link accounts and guard personal financial data.

This means all financial information is encrypted at rest and in transit. By using Plaid, an industry-leading third party provider, to connect to a user's bank accounts, Northstar has a read-only view of financial data, without access to your bank credentials. Plaid is certified in internationally-recognized security standards, like ISO 27001, ISO 277001, and SSAE18 SOC 2.

There are also strict permissions within Northstar's system, so only those who are able to assist you will have access to your financial information (i.e. your Northstar Advisor). Northstar is AICPA SOC 2 certified, which means we have met or exceeded industry standards for managing data and are audited biannually.

## Will my employer have access to information in my account?

No, information and data shared with Northstar and your Northstar financial advisor is never shared with your employer.






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## Do I have to link my financial accounts? What if my financial institution isn't supported?

No, account linking is not required to use Northstar or work with your financial advisor. However, it is helpful to use certain tools within the product and to provide context to your Northstar Advisor.

To see which financial institutions are currently supported for account linking, please view Plaid's up-to-date list here. If your institution is not supported at this time, you can add your bank account information manually or you can share your account balance details directly with your personal financial advisor.

## What are the password requirements to create an account?

To create a Northstar account, you must create a password with a minimum of 8 characters with various character classes (uppercase, lowercase, number, and special character) required. Accounts are locked after 6 failed login attempts.

## How do I get started?

Go to northstarmoney.com/activate to create a Northstar account, and use your work email to confirm eligibility for your free Northstar account. You'll receive a verification email and will then be prompted to create your account with a personal email address. If you need any help during the process, please email us at support@northstarmoney.com.

## What happens to my account if I leave my employer?

Following your last day of employment, you will retain access to your Northstar account for a three month period at no cost to you. During this time, you can continue to utilize all aspects of Northstar, including access to your financial advisor. We want to ensure you feel supported as you transition out of your role. Once the three month period has ended, you can email support@northstarmoney.com to have your chat conversations exported.



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