**Three ways to strengthen your financial well-being**

Did you know our state offers three important programs that positively impact your family’s finances? That’s right. The [**State Treasurer’s Office**](https://treasurer.sc.gov/) offers three consumer-oriented program that can provide value to you and your loved ones by offering opportunities to save, invest and plan sound financial futures.

**Unclaimed Property Program**

Millions of dollars are transferred to the [**state’s Unclaimed Property Program**](https://treasurer.sc.gov/what-we-do/for-citizens/unclaimed-property-program/) each year by companies that cannot locate the owners. From old utility deposits to uncashed payroll checks, life insurance proceeds and unredeemed shares of stock, this is the first place you should look for your missing money.

Currently, the State Treasurer’s Office holds more than $950 million in unclaimed funds, and these funds can belong to individuals, estates, businesses and even churches and charities. It’s estimated that one in seven people have unclaimed money so it’s a good idea to search your name at least twice a year to see if there are funds that rightfully belong to you. If you find unclaimed property, it’s easy to claim it online and receive a check within a matter of weeks after you have provided the required documentation.

**Future Scholar 529 College Savings Plan**

The award-winning [**Future Scholar 529 College Savings Plan**](https://futurescholar.com/) offers a flexible, low-cost investment program that helps families save for their children’s future education. Plus its tax benefits make it a great choice for South Carolina residents. You can deduct 100 percent of your contributions from SC state income tax returns. The money in a Future Scholar account grows tax-free and when funds are withdrawn for qualified education expenses, such as tuition, room and board, books, supplies and equipment, there is no tax consequence.

Future Scholar’s flexibility is another great benefit as funds can be used at eligible two- or four-year colleges, trade or technical schools throughout the U.S. as well as more than 600 schools internationally. You can also use 529 funds for K-12 tuition, registered apprenticeships, and even student loan repayment (up to $10,000). If your child gets a scholarship or decides to take a different path, you can easily transfer the account to another sibling or family member.

Even better, you don’t have to do it alone. Account holders can invite their friends and family to make contributions for special occasions through the eGift platform, which makes it easy and convenient for anyone to participate in a child’s dream of a future education.

**Palmetto ABLE Savings Program**

The State Treasurer’s Office administers the [**Palmetto ABLE Savings Program**](https://palmettoable.com/), which provides individuals with disabilities and their loved ones the opportunity to save and invest for the future.

Like its college savings counterpart, contributions to a Palmetto ABLE® account are deductible on South Carolina tax returns and earnings grow tax-free. Account owners can use the funds for a number of qualified expenses that improve their quality of life, such as basic living expenses, healthcare, job training and education, transportation and assistive technology, to name a few.

Most importantly, Palmetto ABLE accounts provide account owners and their families with peace of mind that they won’t lose their existing needs-based benefits, like SSI and Medicaid, creating a pathway to financial stability that hasn’t existed before. And with the recent expansion of age eligibility, even more South Carolinians can benefit from this vital savings program.

To learn more about the consumer-facing programs administered by the State Treasurer’s Office, visit [**treasurer.sc.gov**](https://treasurer.sc.gov/).