Prepared for:

Build an Emergency Fund

Plan for the unexpected!

Be prepared for life's "bumps in the road" by creating an emergency fund. Ideally your emergency fund will consist of six to 12 months' worth of living expenses. At a minimum, make at least a three-month emergency fund your first short-term goal.

Since your emergency fund needs to be quickly available to meet unexpected expenses, such as a major car repair or replacing a major appliance, it's generally best to place these funds in a safe, liquid savings vehicle, such as a money market account.

Without a safe, liquid emergency fund, you can end up cashing in investments or, worse yet, racking up credit card debt to pay for life's sudden, unexpected financial emergencies.