



THE SOCIETY FOR FINANCIAL AWARENESS

Relationships  
Communication  
Community  
Education

# INFORMATION PACKET

# PURPOSE

**SOFA, The Society for Financial Awareness is a 501(c)(3) Non Profit Public Benefit Corporation. Our Mission is to provide Financial Education across America, one community at a time.**

Many people are preoccupied with their daily routines, often failing to acquire the education necessary to secure a prosperous future. Our Generic Seminars discuss retirement, managing debt, tax strategies, and many more critical components needed to increase one's financial awareness in today's economy.

SOFA is comprised of Financial Professionals who volunteer a pro bono service. Our Members strive to ensure that all individuals increase their knowledge while finding financial comfort through our Workshops and building lasting relationships.

# PROCESS

## How We Service Your Community

SOFA has provided Financial Education to companies and organizations through educational Seminars since 1993. Our 30+ presentation topics cover a wide variety of engaging and enriching information, meaningful to all.

We are a nationwide organization and offer our Workshops FREE of charge. All of our Seminars are conducted in a zero pressure environment with no selling or endorsement of products whatsoever. These are not sales events, they are strictly educational and generic in nature. Attendee participation is highly encouraged!

# PAYOFF

## SOFA Offers Your Group

- Generic Financial Education
- Satisfies ERISA (DOL) 404(c) Req.
- Lots of enjoyment!

## How SOFA Benefits

- Fulfills our Mission Statement by providing pertinent financial literacy
- Exposure in the community
- Potential working relationships with participants

## How Participants Benefit

- Enjoy an entertaining, informative event
- Interactive worksheets and Q&A session
- Gain a greater understanding of practical financial principles to live by
- Complimentary one (1) hour consultation by request

# PLACES WE'VE DONE WORKSHOPS

In addition to working with companies, we also participate with religious organizations, local service clubs, governmental agencies, colleges and universities.



# SYSTEM FOR SEMINAR SUCCESS

Pick a topic, date, and time - SOFA will do the rest! Visit our contact page to schedule!

## WHAT WE PROVIDE:

- ✓ **SPEAKERS**  
*Local experts in their specific field*
- ✓ **HEADCOUNTS & FLYERS**  
*Speaker will provide materials*
- ✓ **30+ FINANCIAL TOPICS**  
*Generic and educational Workshop content*
- ✓ **SIGN UP & EVALUATION FORMS**  
*For contact and speaker records*
- ✓ **COMPLIMENTARY CONSULTATION**  
*Available by request on the evaluation*



Helping all to find financial comfort.



### EXPLORING YOUR OPTIONS FOR A QUALITY RETIREMENT

- Looking at your options at distribution time from a company retirement plan
- Understand the impact of erosion through inflation & taxation
- Proper steps in reviewing 401K performance
- Why plan design is critical

Join special guest speaker **NEW MEMBER** for a **FREE** seminar

**SEMINAR DATE**  
**SEMINAR TIME**

**PRESENTED BY**

COMPANY NAME
SEMINAR LOCATION
<b>RSVP TO</b> CONTACT NAME
PHONE NUMBER
EMAIL ADDRESS

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Being Fiscally Fit is following a set of behaviors that will help lead you to Financial Independence.

Adjust the way you think and talk to yourself about determining your financial place in life.

Commit to replace your old habits with successful habits.

Nothing will change until you do!



**Overcoming Our Challenges**

The Society for Financial Awareness

*Presentation Slide Sample*

## OUR QUALIFICATIONS

- 20+ YEAR TRACK RECORD**  
*Helping all to find financial comfort*
- ERISA COMPLIANT**  
*We satisfy the DOL 404(c) Requirement*
- CONTENT EXPERTS**  
*Speakers are licensed professionals*
- PRO BONO SERVICE**  
*Our seminars are provided at no cost*
- POSITIVE FEEDBACK**  
*Visit the About section at [sofausa.org](http://sofausa.org)*

# SEMINAR TOPICS

Our educational seminars and workshops cover a wide variety of informative, inspiring, and enjoyable topics for one and all. Including, but not limited to:

- Asset Allocation & Modern Portfolio Theory
- College Planning
- Estate Planning
- Exploring Your Options for a Quality Retirement
- Getting Fiscally Fit
- First Time Home Buyers - Issues of Real Estate
- Financial Blunders - Lessons We Never Learn
- Getting Your Financial House in Order
- Social Security Explained
- Is a Roth IRA Right for You?
- I.D. Theft
- Investing Basics for Women
- Investment Concerns in a Fragile Market
- How to Increase Your Health and Wellness
- Legal Lessons for Life
- Maximizing the Right Mortgage Strategies in Today's Market
- Life Insurance and You
- Preparing for Long Term Care
- Taking Control of Your Cash - Eliminating Debt
- Refinancing Your Mortgage 101
- How to Buy Foreclosures & Short Sales
- Strategies for a Sustainable Income in Retirement
- Stress and Your Health
- Real Money - Real Estate
- Tax Planning
- The U.S. Housing Crisis
- Understanding 401k Rollovers
- Understanding Critical Disability Issues
- Women Approaching Retirement and Beyond
- You and Your Credit Score



**See the Literacy section at [sofausa.org](http://sofausa.org) for more details**

# ERISA 404(C) REQUIREMENT

## WHAT 404(C) REQUIRES:

Some fiduciaries have reviewed summaries of 404(c) and concluded that they are "safe" if the plan offers participants at least three diversified investment choices, along with opportunity to make frequent changes among them. However, the regulation clearly specifies that participants also must have "sufficient information to make informed investment choices." A subsequent Interpretative Bulletin issued by the Department of Labor (96-1) clarifies what this means, as well as the potential loss of 404(c) protection for companies that offer participant investment advice.

## HERE IS A 404(C) COMPLIANCE CHECKLIST:

- Have all eligible participants been clearly informed that the plan intends to comply with 404(c)?
- Have participants been given the name, address and phone number of the plan fiduciaries responsible for providing investment information?
- Does the plan have a written Investment Policy Statement (IPS) and does it explicitly state that the plan intends to comply with 404(c)?
- Has the plans Annual Summary Plan Description been checked against specific requirements of 404(c)? Has this process been documented in the plans Compliance file? Have plan documents been reviewed by an ERISA compliance attorney?
- Does the plan have a published schedule of participant information and education events? Is a document file maintained, containing copies of all communications with plan participants? At every meeting with plan participants, is a list of attendees recorded and filed?
- Have any restrictions on transferring to or from an investment choice been clearly communicated to participants?
- Have all transaction fees and commissions that affect the participant been disclosed? Specifically, have participants been given a description of the annual operating expenses of each designated investment alternative?

***The DOL has defined four specific categories of participant communication that do not constitute "investment advice" for purposes of limiting 404(c) protection. They are: 1) plan information 2) general financial and investment information 3) asset allocation models 4) interactive investment materials, such as worksheets, PC illustrations, etc. The common denominator of all four is that they don't steer the participant in any particular investment direction. Does the plans investment advice meet this test?***

- If an asset allocation model identifies a specific investment alternative available under the plan, have participants been advised that investment alternatives with similar risk and return characteristics also are available?
- If calculators are used in investor education, are they based on generally accepted investment theories? Do they clearly disclose the "What if assumptions on which they are based, such as retirement age, income levels, inflation rates, rates of return, and all plan investment alternatives?
- Has the plan taken a survey of participants to determine their level of investment knowledge? Are plan communications written in a style and language that participants can clearly understand? Is the information provided "generic" in nature?
- Are plan fiduciaries aware of specific duties that may not be delegated or protected under 404(c), including prudent selection and monitoring of investment menu choices?
- Does the plan have a formal process for evaluating investment managers adherence to fund objectives, including a written evaluation report?
- Does the plan have fiduciary liability insurance from a carrier such as American International Group (AIG); Lloyd's of London, Reliance Insurance, Travelers Property Casualty, or Chubb Executive Risk? The cost of this coverage typically is about 5% of the coverage limit purchased - \$25,000 per year for a \$5 million policy. Premiums can double or triple for participant-directed plans that offer either of two investment choices: 1) company stock 2) a self-directed brokerage option.

# COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES

## QUALIFICATIONS

SOFA is qualified by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) non profit entity. SOFA's seminars have specific compliance standards and disclaimers to properly uphold the authenticity of our organization.

## STANDARDS

All SOFA presentations are strictly educational and informative. Our presentations mostly contain “topic-specific” content, presented by licensed professionals. All SOFA presentations educate, inform, and hopefully inspire the audience to take control of their financial future.

## DISCLAIMER

SOFA, the organization, does not offer to sell financial products nor promote any one particular company. Though the presenter may mention specific financial instruments and their functionality, SOFA’s role is only to educate and inspire. SOFA specifically represents it’s speakers and Workshop content; all other endorsements are non-SOFA related.

## ACTIVITY REPORTS

To preserve SOFA’s legitimacy as a Non Profit, SOFA members are required to submit Appointment and Seminar Activity Reports to SOFA HQ.

**See the Visitors section at [sofausa.org](http://sofausa.org) for our FAQs.**



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**We appreciate your interest!**