



529 Quarterly

First Quarter 2026

Your Bright Directions 529 Account, Upgraded

Managing your college savings just got easier. The new Bright Directions 529 web portal has a clean, modern design that makes it easy to take action on your account. You can make a one-time contribution, set up an automatic investment plan, or do both, all in just a few clicks.

When it's time to use your savings, the portal makes withdrawals straightforward, too. You can send funds directly to a participating eligible college, to your own bank account, or to your beneficiary's bank account. Each option is secure and easy to follow.

Quick tip: keep your contact information current in the portal. It's the best way to make sure you receive important alerts and account updates.



Log in today to explore everything the new portal has to offer.



Strong Security Starts with You

Keeping your account safe is a shared effort, and a few simple habits go a long way. The new Bright Directions 529 portal has enhanced security features, but the strongest protection comes from both sides.



Start with a **unique password** that includes a mix of letters, numbers, and symbols. Avoid reusing passwords across different websites. If managing multiple logins feels overwhelming, a password manager can help keep things organized.



Turning on **two-step verification** is also a smart move. It adds a second layer of protection so that even if someone has your password, they won't be able to get in. While it's best to avoid using public Wi-Fi to access your account, if you must use a shared or public device, always sign out when you're done.



Finally, make sure your **contact information is up to date**. It's a small step that helps keep your account running smoothly and securely.

Log in to portal.brightdirections.com/login to make these changes today

Rolling Over to Bright Directions 529 Could Unlock Tax Savings

Some families hold more than one 529 plan. If you have one with another state, now may be the perfect time to plan a rollover to Bright Directions 529. For Illinois taxpayers, the move can offer significant tax advantages. Illinois permits you to deduct the contribution part of a rollover from a non-Illinois 529 plan on your state income tax return, up to \$10,000 for individual filers or \$20,000 for joint filers each year.^{1,2}

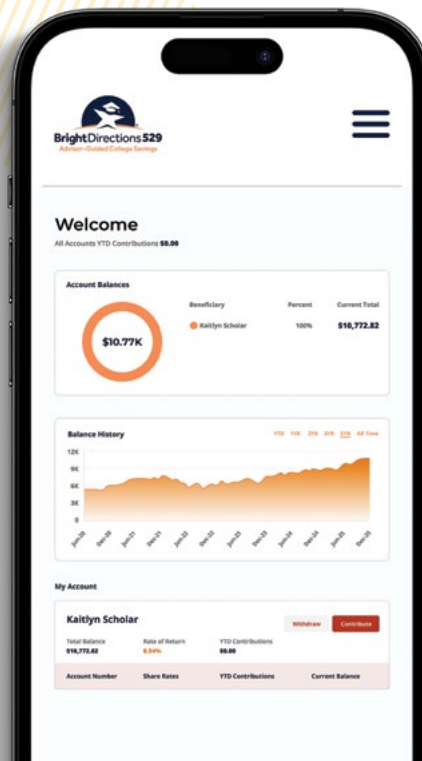
Beyond the potential tax savings, a rollover gives you access to the investment options, flexibility, and the advisor-guided support that Bright Directions 529 is built around. Before making any changes, talk it through with your financial advisor. They can help you weigh the benefits, review any fees or surrender charges from your current plan, and decide if a rollover makes sense for your situation.

College Savings in Your Pocket

A new Bright Directions 529 app is on the way. Soon, families will be able to access their college savings accounts anytime, anywhere—right from their phones.

The app will make it easy to check balances, review recent transactions, confirm payments, and monitor investment performance all in one place. When it's time to take action, contributions, recurring investments, and withdrawal requests can be completed in just a few taps.

The Bright Directions 529 app will officially launch on 5/29 Day, May 29—introducing a faster, more convenient way to stay connected to your college savings.



Is Your Portfolio Still on Track?

The markets have had a solid run over the past several years, which is good news for long-term savers. But strong performance can also shift your portfolio in ways you might not notice right away. When certain asset classes grow faster than others, your overall risk level can creep up without you realizing it.

Now is a good time to connect with your financial advisor for a portfolio review. A quick review of your asset allocation can help confirm that your investment strategy still lines up with your goals and timeline. And if rebalancing makes sense, it can help protect the gains you've already made while keeping your savings pointed in the right direction. After all, the goal isn't just growth. It's making sure the money is there when your student needs it.

The Bright Directions College Savings Program is sponsored by the State of Illinois and administered by the Illinois State Treasurer, as Trustee. Union Bank and Trust Company serves as Program Manager. Northern Trust Securities, Inc. acts as Distributor through March 31, 2026. Northern Lights Distributors, LLC will serve as Distributor effective April 1, 2026. Union Bank and Trust Company is registered as a municipal advisor with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board (MSRB). Balances in your Bright Directions account are not guaranteed or insured by Bright Directions, the State of Illinois, the Illinois State Treasurer, any other state or federal agency, Union Bank and Trust Company or any of its affiliates, the Distributor or any of its affiliates, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (except as provided in the Program Disclosure Statement solely with respect to the FDIC-insured Bank Savings Underlying Investment), or any other entity.

An investor should consider the investment objectives, risks, and charges and expenses before investing. This and other important information is contained in the Bright Directions Advisor-Guided 529 College Savings Program Disclosure Statement, which can be obtained from your financial professional or at BrightDirections.com and should be read carefully before investing. You can lose money by investing in a portfolio. Each of the portfolios involves investment risks, which are described in the Program Disclosure Statement.

Before you invest, consider whether your or the beneficiary's home state offers any state tax or other benefits such as financial aid, scholarship funds, and protection from creditors that are only available for investments in that state's 529 plan.

¹An individual who files an individual Illinois state income tax return will be able to deduct up to \$10,000 per tax year (up to \$20,000 for married taxpayers filing a joint Illinois state income tax return) for their total, combined contributions to the Bright Directions Advisor-Guided 529 College Savings Program, the Bright Start Direct-Sold College Savings Program, and College Illinois during that tax year. The \$10,000 (individual) and \$20,000 (joint) limit on deductions will apply to total contributions made without regard to whether the contributions are made to a single account or more than one account. The amount of any deduction previously taken for Illinois income tax purposes is added back to Illinois taxable income in the event an Account Owner makes an Illinois Nonqualified Withdrawal from an Account or if such assets are rolled over to a non-Illinois 529 plan. If Illinois tax rates have increased since the original contribution, the additional tax liability may exceed the tax savings from the deduction.

²The Illinois Administrative Code provides that in the case of a rollover from a non-Illinois qualified tuition program, the amount of the rollover that is treated as a return of the original contribution to the prior qualified tuition program (but not the earnings portion of the rollover) is eligible for the deduction for the Illinois individual income tax purposes.

Not FDIC Insured*/No Bank Guarantee / May Lose Value
(*Except for the Bank Savings Underlying Investment)

Illinois State Treasurer
MICHAEL FRERICHS
TRUSTEE & ADMINISTRATOR

UBT
Union Bank & Trust
Program Manager