West Virginia - The Hartford SMART529

While a similar program (SMART529 WV Direct) is available to West Virginia residents on a direct basis, this advisor-sold version is available nationally. The Hartford SMART529 program features a menu of age-based, static, and individual portfolio options utilizing Hartford Funds, two iShares (BlackRock) funds, one MFS fund, and a stable value portfolio managed by Invesco. Accounts can be linked to the Upromise rewards service.

5-Cap Rating

Resident:

Non-Resident:

Savingforcollege.com's 5-Cap Ratings provides an evaluation and comparison of 529 plans, utilizing a formula that examines dozens of factors grouped into the following categories. (Scale 0 to 5; 5 is highest)

Performance	Costs	Features	Reliability	Resident Upgrade
3.34	3.99	5.00	4.45	0.70

Investment Options

Age-based/Enrollment Year investment options:

The Age-Based Portfolios option consists of 9 portfolios of underlying funds with varying risk tolerances. Contributions are placed into the portfolio corresponding to the beneficiary's age, and later reassigned to more conservative portfolios as the beneficiary approaches college age.

Static investment options:

Select among 5 multi-fund portfolios (Aggressive Growth, Growth, Balanced, Conservative Balanced, and Checks and Balances), 13 individual-fund portfolios, and a stable value portfolio.

Underlying investments:

Hartford Funds mutual funds, two iShares (BlackRock) mutual funds, one MFS mutual fund, and an Invesco Stable Value portfolio

Taxes and other Benefits

Program match on contributions:

The SMART529 Bright Babies Program (effective 8/1/15) provides a one-time incentive contribution in the amount of $100 per designated beneficiary born or adopted on or after 1/1/15. The designated beneficiary must be a resident of West Virginia and the account must be opened within one year of the birth/adoption date.

The SMART529 Matching Grant Program (discontinued for new applications as of 8/31/15) provides matching grants to eligible West Virginia families in an amount up to $500 per designated beneficiary per year, up to a lifetime maximum of $2,500 per designated beneficiary, with a dollar for dollar match.

State tax deduction or credit for contributions:

Contributions to West Virginia's 529 plans are fully deductible in computing West Virginia taxable income.

State tax recapture provisions:

The principal portion of nonqualified withdrawals from this plan are included in West Virginia taxable income to the extent of prior West Virginia tax deductions. Rollovers apparently are not subject to recapture.

State definition of qualified expenses

The state conforms with the federal definition of qualified education expenses, which includes expenses for higher education, apprenticeship programs, interest and/or principal on qualified education loans up to a $10,000 lifetime cap, and up to $10,000 per year in tuition in connection with enrollment or attendance at an elementary or secondary public, private, or religious school. Distributions from a 529 account directly to a Roth IRA are considered a qualified expense for state income tax purposes.

State tax treatment of qualified distributions:

Qualified distributions from West Virginia and non-West Virginia 529 plans are exempt.

State tax treatment of rollovers:

West Virginia follows federal tax-free treatment.

Does the sponsoring state exclude the value of an account for state financial aid purposes?

Yes

Does participation in the program provide beneficiaries with any advantages in qualifying for resident tuition status at state institutions?

No

Is there a rewards program or outside scholarship program that works with this program?

Yes, the Upromise Rewards program can be linked to any 529 college savings plan. Upromise Rewards is free to join and offers members cash back for college.

Data as of: 04/25/24

General

Program type:

Savings

How to enroll:

Enroll through a financial advisor.

Initial year of operation:

2002

State agency(ies):

State Treasurer's Office under the authority of the West Virginia College and Jumpstart Savings Programs Board of Trustees

Program manager:

Hartford Funds Management Company, LLC.

Program distributor:

Hartford Funds Distributors, LLC

Contributions

Maximum contributions:

Accepts contributions until all account balances in West Virginia's 529 plans for the same beneficiary reach $550,000.

Minimum contributions:

With lump-sum contributions, the minimum initial contribution is $250 ($50 for West Virginia residents), and the minimum subsequent contribution is $25 (no minimum for West Virginia residents). With the automatic investment plan, the minimum contribution level is $25 per month ($15 per month for West Virginia residents).

Does the program offer an e-gifting platform for receiving gift contributions?

This plan offers a robust gifting platform that allows gift-givers to save their own profile for recurring or future contributions.

Fees & Expenses

Enrollment or application fee:

None.

Account maintenance fee:

$25 annually, deducted at the end of each year, waived for accounts over $25,000, for WV residents, and for accounts in the automatic investment program. No annual maintenance fee for Class E fee structure.

Program management fees:

0.17% management fee (includes 0.07% to the state) except Stable Value has 0.15% management fee (includes 0.05% to the state), plus distribution/servicing fees of 0.25% (Class A), 0.80% (Class B), 0.99% (Class C), or 0% (Class E).

Expenses of the underlying investments:

Ranges from 0.13% to 0.88%.

Total asset-based expense ratio:

Class A: 0.53% - 1.30%
Class B: 1.08 - 1.85%
Class C: 1.27% - 2.04%
Class E: 0.28% - 1.05%

Contact

Website:

https://www.hartfordfunds.com/products/smart529.html

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Plan Portfolios

There is no investment data available for this plan. Please visit https://www.hartfordfunds.com/products/smart529.html for additional information.

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