

# New Amazon plant in Alabama expected to create 1,500 jobs



Amazon is building a \$325 million fulfillment center near Birmingham, Ala., that's projected to initially employ 1,500.

**BIRMINGHAM, ALA. (AP)** — A \$325 million Amazon facility being built near Birmingham will initially employ 1,500 people fulfilling orders, and the workforce could swell even more, the online retailer and local officials have announced.

A statement by the Seattle-based company said the 855,000-square foot facility would be located in Bessemer just west of Alabama's largest city. Workers will pack and ship small items to customers including books, household items and toys, the company said.

Jefferson County Commission President Jimmie Stephens told news outlets the operation could eventually employ as many as 3,000 people. Employees will receive full benefits and an average hourly wage of \$14.65.

"By choosing to locate its Amazon Fulfillment Center here, Amazon is making the largest single private investment in the city of Bessemer's 131-year history," Mayor Kenneth Gulley said in a statement. "Amazon is bringing jobs and opportunity to our residents and students."

Birmingham is one of the last U.S. cities its size without an Amazon facility to fulfill orders. The region previously submitted a proposal for Amazon's new headquarters but wasn't selected.

The Amazon project, which will include advance robotics that are used to handle packages, matches the state's strategy to lure tech jobs, said Commerce Secretary Greg Canfield.

"We've made recruiting technology-focused jobs a priority, and Amazon's presence in the state will help us advance toward our goal," he said.

Amazon already has a sorting and shipping center on the Gulf Coast at Mobile. That facility, valued at \$30 million, has more part-time and seasonal workers than the operation being built in Bessemer.

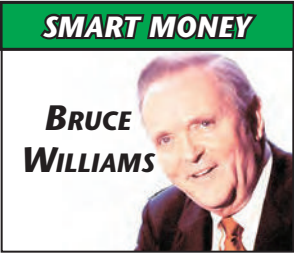
## Do I need an attorney?

DEAR BRUCE: I'm buying some property from a friend. He purchased this land approximately six years ago, and this will be roughly half of what he purchased then. It will include a modular home and waterfront lake property.

At the time he purchased it, he had the title looked at and brought the abstract up to date. I trust this person fully and will be a neighbor of his on this property. No mortgage will be involved; I will just write a check. My question to you is, do I still need an attorney to look this over?

— M.L.

DEAR M.L.: I understand how the transaction seems simple to you, and it likely is. On the other hand, I would never purchase a piece of property without having an attorney review all of the paperwork attached to it. Having no mortgage will simplify things, that is true, but I



**SMART MONEY**

**BRUCE WILLIAMS**

can't overstate my position. Any time a piece of property is being transferred from one person to another, both parties should be represented by an attorney.

Don't worry about your friend. It is his obligation to look out for himself. This isn't an expensive proposition, and clearly you're fortunate that you can just write a check for the property. By all means, consult an attorney first.

DEAR BRUCE: I have a universal life insurance policy, which I've carried since 1982. I'm now 63 years old and considering canceling it. I have a wife, no children and am in good health. The

policy is \$200,000 with a cash value of \$23,000. The premium payment is \$133. I have a 401(k) and a Roth IRA that are currently worth about \$500,000. My savings are about the same. In your opinion, should I cancel the policy or keep it?

— Bill

DEAR BILL: It looks like you have a couple of options here. You can sell the policy. Or you can consider canceling it and getting back the cash value, but with a low cash value, I suspect you would be better off selling it. You need to make those inquiries.

The fact is, you can afford it; it's a very reasonable premium. If you want to leave a much larger estate, keeping the policy is the way to go. But you have no children and you're in good health, so if you prefer to have the cash, I would consider selling it and then compare that to the regular cash value.

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