

CREDIT REPORT and DEBT COLLECTION Information

Once every 12 months consumers are entitled to one free credit report from each of the credit bureaus. The three national consumer credit reporting companies are: *Equifax*, *Experian*, and *TransUnion*. The information to order your free credit reports is as follows:

Online: **www.AnnualCreditReport.com**
Phone: **877-322-8228**
Mail: **Annual Credit Report Request Service
P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281**

On your credit report, did you know -

- ✦ The burden of proof in disputes about information contained on your credit reports lies with the individual credit bureaus.
- ✦ A written dispute letter, sent through certified mail to verify receipt of this letter, must be responded to within 30 working days or the debts disputed must be removed. (a follow-up letter is required)
- ✦ Credit bureaus must verify from the creditor that a disputed debt is still owed. If requested, the consumer will receive a copy of the original invoice of the debt owed. If this can not be provided, the entry on the credit report must be deleted. **Keep good records of letters sent and amounts paid.**
- ✦ If still dissatisfied, consumers have the right to write a 'consumer statement' which stays on the credit report, and gives the consumer's 'side' of the story.
- ✦ Most items remain on a credit report 7 years from the date of *last activity*. Bankruptcies, as well as accounts in good standing, can stay on for 10 years. Credit inquiries stay on for 2 years. Tax liens, student loans in default, and unpaid child support may remain on for an indefinite period.
- ✦ You can initiate a dispute on your own at each credit bureau's website, after you have requested a recent credit report.

Pertaining to debt collection practices, did you know -

- ✦ Debt collectors may contact you only between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m.
- ✦ Debt collectors may not contact you at work if they know (through your written communication) that your employer disapproves.
- ✦ Debt Collectors must stop calling you (they may still write) if you **ask them to in writing.**
- ✦ If you are receiving only a social security, pension, disability, or welfare income, and you have no assets, you may be immune from debt collectors and essentially 'judgment proof.'

The FTC (Federal Trade Commission) works for the consumer to prevent fraudulent, deceptive and unfair business practices in the marketplace and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop and avoid them. To file a complaint, or to get free information on any of 150 consumer topics, call 877-FTC-HELP, or use the complaint form at www.ftc.gov.

phone: 360-385-0555 • toll free: 1-888-TO-CCDCS (1-888-862-2327)

www.ccdcs.com • e-mail: info@ccdcs.com