



FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Doug Henderson Credit Counselors | 804-222-4660 ext. 780 | doug.henderson@repaydebt.org
Jessica Rinck BCF&M | 757-497-4811 | jessica@bcf-m.com

1-800-REPAY-DEBT | www.RepayDebt.org

FACT SHEET

CREDIT COUNSELORS BACKGROUNDER

Credit Counselors, a nonprofit consumer credit counseling agency, was established to serve as an advocate in resolving consumer debt problems for consumers of all ages. Over the past 23 years, the agency has helped over 330,000 families achieve financial security. Credit Counselors is an educational organization, dedicated to helping clients identify the source of their financial burdens, and then make appropriate financial choices.

The NFCC Seal of Approval



Credit Counselors is a member of the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC), the most established credit counseling trade organization in the country, which includes more than 1,300 community-based agency offices nationwide. NFCC members can be identified by the NFCC member seal, signifying that the member agency's mission is focused on the consumer, and the agency employs the best business practices possible to ensure every customer's funds are safe. All financial counselors at Credit Counselors are REQUIRED to become NFCC certified. They must pass a formal proctored exam in six areas of intense study, which include: "Consumer Rights and Responsibilities," "Spending Plans and Budgeting," "Credit and Borrowing," "Debt Management and Bankruptcy," "Counseling Principles and Processes," as well as "Challenging Issues."

The First Step to Financial Independence

Budget counseling and credit education are free services offered by Credit Counselors. During an in-depth, confidential interview with one of the certified credit counselors, consumers are encouraged to *really* look at their financial situation. This includes evaluating their debts, assets, monthly payment obligations, living expenses and income. The certified credit counselors discuss the vast array of options for debt management, and work with the clients to achieve the following objectives:

- Establish a reasonable spending plan, a household budget for necessary living expenses and modest savings for emergencies
- Maximize available income and other resources
- Learn how to dispute erroneous information on a credit report

Customized Debt Management Programs

For those who need extra help to overcome their debt load, Credit Counselors offers a customizable Debt Management Program for clients who qualify. This plan is voluntary. Credit Counselors contacts unsecured creditors such as credit card companies, doctors, and lawyers, and negotiates with them for special considerations. This might include lowering payments, reducing interest rates, waiving fees and re-aging accounts for existing debt. Consumers make just one monthly payment to Credit Counselors, who then distributes payments to each of the clients' creditors.

The cost? The majority of Credit Counselors funding consists of voluntary contributions from the creditors who benefit from credit counseling services. Because Credit Counselors is a nonprofit agency, if a consumer chooses to join the Debt Management Program, Credit Counselors asks for a minimal monthly contribution to cover administrative costs. Credit Counselors works with all creditors on behalf of its clients, regardless of whether their creditors financially contribute to the agency.