

## Commonly Asked Questions About Credit Files

### **Q. How can I correct a mistake in my credit file?**

**A.** Complete the Research Request form and give details of the information you believe is incorrect. We will then check with the credit grantor, collection agency or public record source to see if any error has been reported. Information that cannot be verified will be removed from your file. If you and a credit grantor disagree on any information, you will need to resolve the dispute directly with the credit grantor who is the source of the information in question.

### **Q. If I do have credit problems, is there someplace where I can get advice and assistance?**

**A.** Yes, there are a number of organizations that offer assistance. For example, the Consumer Credit Counseling Service (CCCS) is a non-profit organization that offers free or low-cost financial counseling to help people solve their financial problems. CCCS can help you analyze your situation and work with you to develop solutions. There are more than 600 CCCS offices throughout the country. Call 1 (800) 388-2227 for the telephone number of the office nearest you.

## Facts You Should Know

- o The length of time an account or record remains in your credit file is shown below:

Collection Agency Accounts: Remain up to 7 years from the Date of First Delinquency.

Credit or Other reported accounts: Accounts paid as agreed remain for up to 10 years from the date last reported by the lender. Accounts not paid as agreed (i.e., delinquent, charged off, accounts placed for collection) remain for up to 7 years from the Date of First Delinquency.

Public Records: Bankruptcy-

Chapter 7 or 11 bankruptcies filed and discharged remain for 10 years from the date filed.

Chapter 12 and 13 bankruptcies remain for 7 years from the date filed.

Dismissed bankruptcies (all chapters) remain for 7 years from the date filed.

**New York Residents Only** (must be a current resident): Paid collections remain on your Equifax credit report for 5 years from the date of the first missed payment. A paid Charged Off account remains on the file for 5 years from the Date of First Delinquency.

- o Name, address, and Social Security Number information may be provided to businesses that have a legitimate need to locate or identify a consumer.

### **Additional Notice to Consumer:**

You may request a description of the procedure used to determine the accuracy and completeness of the information, including the business name and address of the furnisher of information contacted, and if reasonably available the telephone number.

If the reinvestigation does not resolve your dispute, you have the right to add a statement to your credit file disputing the accuracy or completeness of the information; the statement should be brief and may be limited to not more than one hundred words explaining the nature of your dispute.

If the reinvestigation results in the deletion of disputed information, or you submit a statement in accordance with the preceding paragraph, you have the right to request that we send your revised credit file to any company specifically designated by you that received your credit report in the past six months (twelve months for California, Colorado, Maryland, New Jersey and New York residents) for any purpose or in the past two years for employment purposes.