



MIKE DEWINE
★ OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL ★



DEALING WITH DEBT COLLECTORS

If you are receiving calls and letters from third-party debt collectors, make sure you understand your rights under the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act.

YOUR RIGHTS:

- A debt collector must send you a letter within five days after contacting you by phone, including how much you owe, who you owe it to, and how long you have to dispute the debt.
- You have 30 days from the date you are contacted by the debt collector to send the collector a letter disputing the debt and specifically requesting verification of the debt.
- Whether or not you owe the debt, you can tell debt collectors in writing not to contact you again. *That does not eliminate the debt.*

DEBT COLLECTORS MAY NOT:

- Harass or use obscene words when talking to you
- Contact you before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m.
- Contact you without identifying themselves
- Tell others about your debt
- Contact you at work if you or your employer disapproves



DEBT CONSOLIDATION

Companies may promise to “erase” your debt, reduce your interest rate, or improve your credit score. These claims are often bogus, and most will charge you for services you could do yourself for free.

QUESTIONS TO ASK DEBT CONSOLIDATION ORGANIZATIONS:

- What will my monthly payments be?
- How much do your services cost?
- When will my payments be due?
- How long will it take for me to pay my debt?
- Will you deal with all my creditors and provide written proof of contact?
- Will you send me written information about your services?
- How will debt consolidation affect my credit?

If you need help managing your debt, the best solution is to contact your creditors directly. Explain your situation to them and try to arrange a payment plan.

For more information, to report a scam, or to schedule a consumer speaker, contact Ohio Attorney General Mike DeWine’s office at 800-282-0515 or www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov.



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