



MIKE DEWINE

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REPAIR YOUR CREDIT

If you're struggling to get out of debt, you're not alone.

Companies that claim they can restore your credit and quickly erase debt are a dime a dozen. But beware! Many of these services will do little or nothing to improve your credit.

If you need to repair your credit or consolidate debt, you can arrange payment plans and improve your credit score yourself for little or no cost. Make sure you don't get duped.

IF YOU CAN'T PAY YOUR BILLS:

- Contact a nonprofit credit counseling service in your area.
- Contact your creditors immediately to arrange a payment plan.

QUESTIONS TO ASK CREDIT REPAIR COMPANIES:

- How much do your services cost?
- What do you offer that I can't do myself?
- What proof will you provide that you are negotiating with my creditors?
- What are your cancellation and refund policies?
- Are you in compliance with the Ohio Debt Adjusters Act?

IMPROVE YOUR CREDIT SCORE



- Always pay on time.
- Don't take on new debt to pay old debt.
- Keep balances at 30 percent or less of available credit.
- Get your free credit report at www.annualcreditreport.com.
- Correct mistakes on your credit report by notifying the appropriate credit reporting company in writing.
- Don't close old accounts; a longer credit history improves your score.
- Demonstrate your ability to handle various terms and conditions of credit by having a good mix, including revolving loans (such as credit cards), installment loans (such as auto loans), and mortgage loans (such as home loans).
- Apply for and open new lines of credit only when you need them.
- Find a nonprofit credit counseling service at www.nfcc.org or by calling **800-388-2227**.

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



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