



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
CREDIT COUNSELING ORGANIZATION
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS



Mailing Address

P.O. Box 5757
Columbia, SC 29250-5757

S.C. Code Ann. § 37-7-101 et seq.

www.consumer.sc.gov

Street Address

2221 Devine St., Ste. 200
Columbia, SC 29205-2418

SOUTH CAROLINA CONSUMER CREDIT COUNSELING ACT: A **Credit Counseling Organization** and its **Credit Counselors** serving South Carolina debtors must be licensed. An organization is a **Credit Counseling Organization** when providing or offering to provide consumers with credit counseling services for a fee, compensation, or gain, or in the expectation of a fee, compensation, or gain, including debt management plans.

Credit Counseling Services means (1) receiving or offering to receive funds from a consumer for the purpose of distributing the funds among the consumer's creditors in full or partial payment of the consumer's debts; (2) improving or offering to improve a consumer's credit record, history, or rating; (3) negotiating or offering to negotiate to defer or reduce a consumer's obligations with respect to credit extended by others.

Complete the Credit Counseling Organization License Application and all additional forms in their entirety. Incomplete, illegible, or faxed applications will not be accepted. Incomplete information could result in the delay or denial of your application.

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK: All individuals listed in Question #11 of the application must request a criminal record check from the State Police of the State of the individual's residence, unless otherwise stated or prohibited by law. The report must be forwarded directly from the State Police to the Department of Consumer Affairs. For South Carolina, visit www.sled.sc.gov. *Reminder: Credit Counselors must also request a criminal record check.*

CREDIT REPORT: All individuals listed in Question #11 of the application must obtain a current (less than 90 days old) composite credit report. On the report, include the **organization's name** and "**SCDCA- Credit Counseling**".

SURETY BOND: A surety bond in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or in an amount that equals or exceeds the total amount of South Carolina clients' funds in the applicant's trust account at the time of application, whichever is greater, is required. The Special Deposit Bond Form, which can be found on the Department's website, must be used. The name on the bond must exactly match the name of your organization as stated in the Articles of Incorporation or Articles of Organization.

FEES: All fees must accompany the application.

- **Investigation Fee - \$50** This is only required to accompany initial applications.
- **Application Fee - \$100 per location** listed in Question #7. Licenses expire annually on December 31st. Licenses are issued to the specific company location. Annual renewal is required.
- **Counselor Fee - \$40** A fee of \$40 per counselor listed on the organization's Supplemental Form B(s) (Counselor applications must also be submitted.)

CONTINUING EDUCATION: Twelve (12) hours of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) must be earned by December 31st of every other year of licensure (every 2nd renewal/ even-numbered renewal). **CPE is NOT required for initial licensing. CPE is required for:** (1) Owners, (2) A designee of a LLC or corporation and (3) Counselors.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:
South Carolina Department of Consumer Affairs

QUESTIONS:

James C. Copeland, Staff Attorney ~ 803-734-0375

jcopeland@scconsumer.gov

Deborah Friday Lockard, Program Coordinator ~ 803-734-4209

dfriday@scconsumer.gov

SEND COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO:
SCDCA

Legal Division: Credit Counseling

P.O. Box 5757

Columbia, SC 29250-5757