



# 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.*

(803) 734-4251 | [www.consumer.sc.gov](http://www.consumer.sc.gov) | (803) 734-4200

### Street Address

293 Greystone Boulevard, Ste. 400  
Columbia, SC 29210-8004

**IMPORTANT:** Complete the Credit Counseling License Application and any additionally required 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. Please print or type the application information.

**\*Application is not complete without the filing fees. Make checks payable to S.C. Department of Consumer Affairs.\***

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Pursuant to the South Carolina Consumer Credit Counseling Act, a *Credit Counseling Organization* and its *Credit Counselors* serving South Carolina debtors must both be licensed through the Department. A *Credit Counseling Organization* is an organization that provides or offers 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; OR (3) negotiating or offering to negotiate to defer or reduce a consumer’s obligations with respect to credit extended by others.

### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

#### Criminal Record Check

All Owners, Partners, Members, Officers or Directors must request a criminal record check from the State Police of the State of the individuals’ residence, unless otherwise stated or prohibited by law. The report must be forwarded directly from the state police to the S.C. Department of Consumer Affairs. For South Carolina residents, visit [www.sled.sc.gov](http://www.sled.sc.gov).

**NOTE:** All Credit Counselors must also request a criminal record check.

#### Surety Bond

A surety bond in the amount of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) or an amount that equals or exceeds the total amount of South Carolina clients’ funds in the licensee’s trust account at the time of renewal, 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.

#### Application Fees

All requisite fees must accompany the application.

- The Investigation Fee is a fifty dollar (**\$50**), one-time fee that must accompany the initial application.
- The application fee for Organizations is one-hundred dollars (**\$100**) per location.
- The application fee for Credit Counselors is forty dollars (**\$40**) per Counselor.

#### Continuing Professional Education (CPE)

Twelve (12) hours of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) must be earned by December 31st of every other year of licensure (every second renewal/even-numbered renewal). No CPE is required for initial licensing. CPE is required for: (1) Owners; (2) A designee of a LLC or Corporation; and (3) Counselors.