

# Contact your credit card issuer: Fees or payments may be waived amid coronavirus pandemic

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/2020/03/18/coronavirus-credit-card-companies-prepare-struggling-consumers/5067205002/>

Your credit card company may cut you some slack during the coronavirus pandemic.

With repercussions from the outbreak including job cuts, furloughs and business closings, credit card companies are preparing for some cardholders to have problems making their monthly bills.

## Credit card companies can help you

Credit card issuers have programs that can help cardholders when they need assistance – these often kick in during a disaster such as a hurricane, says Matt Schulz, chief credit analyst at LendingTree.

Companies could extend a payment deadline, lower the annual percentage rate (APR) on your card or waive a late fee, he says. "We are seeing that happening right now with the coronavirus," Schulz said.

## Credit card companies' COVID-19 plans

*Here's a selection of how various cable, utility and other companies are taking action:*

**Apple Card:** Customers affected by the coronavirus pandemic can enroll in the customer assistance program in order to skip their March payment without incurring interest. You can send a text to an Apple Card specialist or call right from inside Apple Wallet.

**Bank of America:** The bank wants "clients facing a hardship related to coronavirus to call us and let us know they need help," Bank of America said in a statement to USA TODAY. Assistance for customers – including those beyond credit card customers such as customers with loans – includes deferred payments, fee refunds, deferred payments, and no negative credit bureau reporting, the bank says. Customers should call the number on the back of their credit card or go to the bank's website and click on the Contact Us tab.

**Barclays:** The bank and financial firm is "dedicated to helping impacted customers through these difficult times," Barclays' Caudill told USA TODAY. "Our cardmembers can continue to use our cards with confidence, and we encourage impacted customers to contact us for assistance by logging onto their account and sending us a secure message by clicking 'Contact Us' or using the number on the back of their card."

Wait times on phone calls could be longer usual, he said, so "we encourage our cardmembers to use our digital channels as much as possible."

**Capital One:** Some of the actions the provider of some of the most popular credit cards is now offering includes assistance on minimum payments, suppression of fees and credit bureau reporting and deferred loan payments.

"We understand the concern and uncertainty people may be experiencing surrounding the coronavirus (COVID-19) and are committed to being responsive to the needs of our customers and associates as the situation evolves," Capital One said in a statement to USA TODAY. "We also understand that there may be instances where customers find themselves facing financial difficulties. Capital One is here to help, and we encourage customers who may be impacted to reach out so we can discuss and help find a solution."

**Citi:** Citi continues to monitor the coronavirus spread and encourages cardholders to contact the company if they need help. "We will work with them on an individual basis to understand their particular needs and ensure that they have the assistance they need during this challenging time," said spokeswoman Jennifer Bombardier.

**Comenity:** The credit card company, which issues cards for DSW, Forever 21, Sephora and others, is suggesting its cardmembers call the toll-free customer care number on the back of their credit cards to address hardships they may be facing about making payments.

"We are always available to support and work with cardmembers during emergency situations, including hardships they may be facing as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19)," Comenity said in a statement to USA TODAY. "As the situation warrants, we have the ability to help cardmembers by employing tools such as fee and/or finance charge reductions, or waivers and alternative payment options."

**Chase:** When customers call with issues, Chase may defer payments, waive fees or extend payment dates, the company says. "If you're affected by COVID-19 and need help with your accounts or making payments, please reach out to us," Chase Consumer Banking CEO Thasunda Brown Duckett said in a message on a [new coronavirus landing page for consumers on the Chase website](#).

Beyond that, Chase is recommending consumers use [the website](#) or mobile app for banking. "We want to make sure our clients know they can bank, invest, and make payments from wherever they are, particularly if they're not able to come to a branch," the company said in a statement sent to USA TODAY.

**Discover:** Discover will extend relief to "qualified customers who are experiencing financial difficulty caused by the spread of COVID-19," the credit card company said in a statement to USA TODAY. "Discover customers may receive assistance that can include support related to payment timing, fees and late payments."

**PNC Bank:** An update on [the PNC Bank website](#) says the bank "is prepared to offer assistance, as needed ... through a range of measures" to customers "who encounter hardship as a result of the coronavirus." The bank suggests customers call.

**Synchrony:** The credit card company, which issues cards for Lowe's, Sam's Club, Amazon, PayPal, Gap and others, is encouraging customers "experiencing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19" to contact them, especially using its online channels and apps, Synchrony said in a statement to USA TODAY. The bank is waiving fees and charges and evaluating credit limits. "We will work with customers individually on areas including waiving certain fees, including ATM fees and evaluating credit line increases," the company said.

**U.S. Bank:** The bank is "reactively waving credit card fees and are working to enhance our skip-a-pay and payment deferral programs to meet U.S. Bank cardholders' needs during this pandemic," said a statement sent to USA TODAY. Those measures are taken in addition to "several options regularly available" including increased credit limits, waived fees and expedited card replacement. In the COVID-19 notice on [its website](#), U.S. Bank also is offering reduced prices of some loans for consumers and small businesses.

**Wells Fargo:** The financial services company is working with customers on fee waivers, payment deferrals and other credit card measures. "Wells Fargo is working on a daily basis to ensure we are putting measures in place to support the needs of our customers impacted by COVID-19 in the most effective ways," the company said in a statement sent to USA TODAY. Wells Fargo is "currently providing assistance (to) ... credit card, auto, mortgage, small business and personal lending customers who contact us, and we will continue to communicate with customers as the situation evolves."