

— *Credit Restoration* —

— **5 Easy Steps** —

**TO**

**START RESTORING**

**YOUR CREDIT**



# INTRODUCTION

RESTORING YOUR CREDIT MAY FEEL OVERWHELMING, BUT IT'S ABSOLUTELY ACHIEVABLE WITH THE RIGHT PLAN, CONSISTENCY, AND UNDERSTANDING OF HOW CREDIT WORKS. THIS SHORT E-BOOK BREAKS THE PROCESS INTO FIVE CLEAR, MANAGEABLE STEPS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE. WHETHER YOU'RE RECOVERING FROM PAST CHALLENGES OR SIMPLY TRYING TO STRENGTHEN YOUR CREDIT PROFILE, THESE STEPS WILL GUIDE YOU TOWARD MEANINGFUL, LASTING IMPROVEMENT.

## STEP 1: KNOW WHERE YOU STAND

### CHECK YOUR CREDIT REPORTS

YOUR CREDIT RESTORATION JOURNEY BEGINS WITH UNDERSTANDING YOUR CURRENT CREDIT PROFILE. YOU ARE ENTITLED TO A FREE CREDIT REPORT FROM EACH OF THE THREE MAJOR BUREAUS—EQUIFAX, EXPERIAN, AND TRANSUNION—EVERY YEAR.

### WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- INCORRECT PERSONAL INFORMATION
- ACCOUNTS THAT DON'T BELONG TO YOU
- DUPLICATE ACCOUNTS
- INCORRECT BALANCES OR PAYMENT HISTORIES
- OUTDATED NEGATIVE ITEMS

### WHY THIS MATTERS

ERRORS ON YOUR CREDIT REPORT CAN SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER YOUR SCORE. IDENTIFYING THEM EARLY GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO CORRECT THEM AND REGAIN LOST POINTS.

## STEP 2: DISPUTE ERRORS AND INACCURACIES

### FILE DISPUTES PROMPTLY

IF YOU FIND INACCURACIES, YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DISPUTE THEM WITH THE CREDIT BUREAUS. DISPUTES CAN BE SUBMITTED ONLINE, BY MAIL, OR BY PHONE.

### REASONS FOR COMMON DISPUTE

- ACCOUNTS YOU NEVER OPENED
- INCORRECT LATE PAYMENTS
- PAID ACCOUNTS STILL SHOWING AS UNPAID
- JUDGMENTS OR COLLECTIONS THAT DON'T BELONG TO YOU

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

THE CREDIT BUREAU TYPICALLY HAS 30 DAYS TO INVESTIGATE YOUR DISPUTE. IF THE FURNISHER OF THE INFORMATION CANNOT VERIFY THE ACCURACY, THE ITEM MUST BE CORRECTED OR REMOVED.

## STEP 3: BUILD POSITIVE CREDIT HABITS

### PAY ON TIME—EVERY TIME

PAYMENT HISTORY IS THE LARGEST FACTOR IN YOUR CREDIT SCORE. EVEN ONE LATE PAYMENT CAN HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT.

### TIPS TO STAY ON TRACK

- SET UP AUTOMATIC PAYMENTS
- USE REMINDERS OR CALENDAR ALERTS
- PRIORITIZE ESSENTIAL BILLS FIRST

## REDUCE CREDIT CARD BALANCES

YOUR CREDIT UTILIZATION RATIO—HOW MUCH OF YOUR AVAILABLE CREDIT YOU'RE USING—SHOULD IDEALLY STAY BELOW 30%.

### STRATEGIES TO LOWER UTILIZATION

- PAY DOWN BALANCES AGGRESSIVELY
- REQUEST CREDIT LIMIT INCREASES
- AVOID CLOSING OLD ACCOUNTS UNLESS NECESSARY

## STEP 4: REBUILD WITH NEW CREDIT (STRATEGICALLY)

### CONSIDER CREDIT-BUILDING TOOLS

IF YOUR CREDIT IS DAMAGED OR THIN, ADDING NEW POSITIVE ACCOUNTS CAN HELP.

#### OPTIONS TO EXPLORE

- SECURED CREDIT CARDS
- CREDIT-BUILDER LOANS
- AUTHORIZED USER STATUS ON A TRUSTED PERSON'S ACCOUNT

### USE NEW CREDIT RESPONSIBLY

THE GOAL IS TO DEMONSTRATE CONSISTENT, RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR.

#### BEST PRACTICES

- KEEP BALANCES LOW
- MAKE SMALL PURCHASES YOU CAN PAY OFF MONTHLY
- AVOID APPLYING FOR TOO MANY ACCOUNTS AT ONCE

## STEP 5: STAY CONSISTENT AND MONITOR PROGRESS

### TRACK YOUR CREDIT REGULARLY

MONITORING YOUR CREDIT HELPS YOU STAY AWARE OF CHANGES, CATCH ERRORS EARLY, AND MEASURE YOUR PROGRESS.

#### WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- SCORE IMPROVEMENTS
- NEW NEGATIVE ITEMS
- CHANGES IN BALANCES OR UTILIZATION
- IDENTITY THEFT INDICATORS

#### BE PATIENT AND PERSISTENT

CREDIT RESTORATION IS A MARATHON, NOT A SPRINT. WITH CONSISTENT EFFORT, YOUR SCORE WILL IMPROVE OVER TIME.

## CONCLUSION

RESTORING YOUR CREDIT DOESN'T REQUIRE PERFECTION—JUST COMMITMENT AND A CLEAR PLAN. BY UNDERSTANDING YOUR CREDIT, CORRECTING ERRORS, BUILDING POSITIVE HABITS, ADDING STRATEGIC NEW CREDIT, AND MONITORING YOUR PROGRESS, YOU CAN REBUILD YOUR FINANCIAL FOUNDATION AND OPEN THE DOOR TO BETTER OPPORTUNITIES.

YOUR CREDIT STORY IS STILL BEING WRITTEN. TODAY IS THE PERFECT DAY TO START A STRONGER CHAPTER.

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