



DEBT TEST ALERTS CONSUMERS OF FINANCIAL DANGER

Helping Consumers to Recognize a Problem Before It's a Crisis

Debt problems frequently develop over a period of time and consumers are often unaware they are in serious trouble until it's too late. The National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) and Consumer Credit Counseling Services (CCCS) have formulated the following test to help consumers know if they should be concerned.

Consumer Credit Counseling Service Debt Test

1. Are you borrowing to pay for items you used to pay for with cash?
2. Is an increasing percentage of your income going to pay off debts?
3. Is your savings cushion inadequate or nonexistent?
4. Can you only make the minimum payments on your revolving charge accounts?
5. Are your lines of credit at or near the limit on your credit cards?
6. Have circumstances forced you to take out a loan to make payments on a previous loan?
7. Are you unsure about how much you owe?
8. Are your monthly credit bills more than 20 percent of your take-home pay (excluding rent or mortgage payments)?
9. If you lost your job, would you be in immediate financial difficulty?

If you answer "yes" to two or more of these questions, you should seek the assistance of the nonprofit consumer Credit Counseling Service.

The NFCC serves as the umbrella group for the more than 850 Consumer Credit Counseling Service offices in the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico. NFCC is a non-profit membership organization whose purpose is to educate, counsel, and promote the wise use of credit.

CCCS offices are also non-profit and offer free or low-cost professional financial guidance and budget counseling to consumers across the country. However, CCCS offices never turn away consumers because of an inability to pay. **In Madison, the NFCC affiliated Consumer Credit Counseling Service is CREDIT COUNSELING CENTERS, INC.** (located in the Bank One Building on Broadway). **Call (608) 221-2811 or (800) 547-5005.**