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Reestablishing Credit

If you have a low credit score because of past problems, it may feel like it will haunt you forever. However, most negative information drops off of your credit report after seven years. Fortunately, positive information tends to remain on your credit report indefinitely.



When reestablishing good credit the best place to start is with a review of your credit report. You cannot remove timely and accurate negative information, but you can correct mistakes. It is important to request that any inaccuracies be removed from your report. Errors on your credit report lower your credit score, making credit more difficult to obtain and expensive to use. If you have negative information on your report:

- Catch up delinquent accounts – making timely payments going forward will improve your credit standing.
- Pay collection accounts – if you can't afford to pay a balance in full, try requesting payment arrangements.



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If you're just seeking to establish or even reestablish credit, a secured credit card might be a good option for you. Some financial institutions will issue you a credit card if you put a specified dollar amount on deposit with them. These funds are held as security, and a credit card is issued with a line of credit equal to the amount you have on deposit. If you keep up a good payment history the creditor may eventually release the funds and issue an unsecured card.



Another option when reestablishing credit is a cosigner.

Be especially careful when asking a friend or family member who has a good credit history to cosign for you – any late payments you make will not only reflect poorly on your credit report, but your cosigner's as well. After six months to a year, reapply for credit on your own.

WECU® wants to help you master your money. We've partnered with BALANCE, a financial education and counseling service that can help you get your finances in order – all at no charge to you. Call 888-456-2227 or log on to www.balancepro.net for more information.

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Report lost or stolen cards as soon as you notice they are missing!

Within the USA:

Monday–Friday 8:00am–6:00pm Pacific Time:
Call 360.676.1168 x7360 or 800.525.8703 x7360
TTY 800.833.6388

After hours and weekends: **Call 800.682.6075**
 Outside the USA call collect any time: **206.352.3482**