

## Credit Reporting Info Sheet 4 : **Checking your credit report**

Regularly check your credit report, especially if you're about to seek credit

*Your credit information is changing all the time and could have a big impact on you. It is free to check with a credit reporter so do it regularly*

You're entitled to ask credit reporters for a copy of the credit information they hold about you.

You can ask for just the information shown in your credit report or for all the information held about you. (Extra information not included in your credit report may include things like a complete list of people who have accessed your report.) If a credit reporter has generated a credit score about you, you have the right to be given an explanation of this score.

If you are willing to wait a short period, accessing your credit information is free. However, if you want immediate access a fee may be payable - a credit reporter may make a reasonable charge for an urgent request (that is to provide the information within 5 working days).

As the information on credit reports is constantly changing, it is recommended that you regularly check your credit report. How frequently you should do so is up to you – if you are especially credit active, you might

wish to do so more frequently than at other times. As there are several national credit reporters in New Zealand you might consider checking a different one, say, every six months or, alternatively, check all three at the same time once a year.

It can be particularly useful to see the information on your credit report before seeking credit. That gives you the chance to check that everything is accurate and, if necessary, to ask the credit reporter to correct any errors you may find.<sup>(1)</sup> If you do this in plenty of time any corrections that may be warranted may be completed in advance of consideration of a credit application.

If you discover credit accounts that you never applied for, defaults you didn't know about or credit enquiries you never authorised, then you might have been the victim of identity fraud. You can then ask the credit reporter to "freeze" your credit information.<sup>(2)</sup>

Before giving you a copy of your credit information, the credit reporter must be satisfied that you are who you say you are. This is to protect your information from unauthorised access requests.

