

**Citizens
Advice &
Rights
Fife**



Independent advice for our community

The Money Advice Guide

**Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct
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MONEY ADVICE

Money Advice offered by Citizens Advice & Rights Fife is free, confidential and is provided by a skilled team. In order to assist you with your debts, we need to assess your financial position.

For you to gain the maximum benefit from our advice it is essential that you have an understanding of what we are able to do and what will be expected from you.

You will be expected to –

- Attend all appointments (telephone, virtual or face to face) or advise us if you are unable to attend with sufficient notice.
- Supply accurate details of your circumstances, including all income and expenditure along with verification of same.
- Keep us informed of any change in your circumstances or difficulty in maintaining any agreed repayments.
- Not enter into separate agreements with creditors and crucially, not to take out further credit whilst we are assisting you.
- Provide your written permission to contact creditors and other relevant parties and act on your behalf. This may be obtained digitally.
- Respond timeously to requests for contact and/or information.

We will –

- Assess your circumstances and check your entitlement to benefits

- Help you prepare a Financial Statement
- Provide advice applicable to your circumstances to allow you to make an informed decision on how to deal with your debts
- Contact creditors if appropriate
- Keep you informed of the progress we are making on your case

IS THERE AN EMERGENCY?

Evictions: Contact Money Advice on 0345 1400 094 if you are at risk of eviction or have a pending court date for eviction. A Money Adviser will be able to clarify what steps you need to take.

Court: Contact Money Advice on 0345 1400 094 if you have court documentation relating to your debts. You may need assistance to complete the documentation. A Money Adviser will be able to clarify what steps you need to take.

Disconnection: Contact Money Advice on 0345 1400 094. A Money Adviser will be able to clarify what steps you need to take.

Priorities: When waiting for an appointment you should prioritise rent/mortgage, council tax and other essential bills, e.g. fines, TV licence, HP, Utilities

How to deal with Creditor contact/harassment

Advise the creditor you are seeking advice and will not enter into a separate arrangement until you have had independent advice.

A creditor may ask you to pay a token payment, such as £5 or £10 if affordable until a formal offer is made.

Telephone Calls: In many instances it is an automated computer dialling system which may result in phone calls at the same time each day.

Where it is a person that calls you and they continue to call despite having been updated already, you should stop answering or trying to explain.

What can the creditor do? Unless Court action has already been taken, immediate action is unlikely. A Money Adviser will be able to clarify what steps you need to take.

Continuous Payment Authority: If you have a Payday Loan, these payments are likely to be deducted from your debit card via Continuous Payment Authority. Information on stopping this can be obtained via <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/debt-and-money/banking/stopping-a-future-payment-on-your-debit-or-credit-card/>

BANK ACCOUNT

An overdraft is a debt like a loan.

If you have income paid into a bank account and have other debt with that bank, such as a loan, credit card, overdraft, the bank can use that income to pay the debt. One way to ensure this does not happen is to get a new bank account elsewhere with no overdraft. You cannot close an account when there is an outstanding overdraft.

Where to get a bank account*:

Barclays, branch in St Andrew or Dunfermline – will give anyone at least a basic account.

Nationwide, Lloyds TSB, Santander – branches throughout Fife - should not close the account if a client subsequently files for Bankruptcy / sign a Trust Deed.

Bank of Scotland, Royal Bank of Scotland, Clydesdale – branches throughout Fife may close the account if a you subsequently file for Bankruptcy or sign a Trust Deed and are unlikely to offer an account if a client is subject to either.

Credit Unions – can offer savings as well as borrowing facilities.

****Disclaimer – this information should be clarified with each individual organisation. CARF is not responsible for any changes in practice or service offered by the Banks / Building Societies, the Post Office or the Credit Unions in Fife.****

APPOINTMENTS

Your initial appointment with a Money Adviser will take 60-90 minutes. We ask that you are somewhere comfortable and quiet.

We will contact you a few days before your appointment to remind you of your appointment.

The following information is required for your appointment, this can be provided prior to your appointment when returning your client form pack or completing your entry on our digital site www.moneyadvice.cabfife.org.uk This can also be provided during your appointment.

- Proof of income – last 3 months/13 weeks wage slips or benefit award letter
- 3 months bank statements
- Pension letter confirming occupational pension, pension credits or State Retirement Pension
- Details of maintenance received/paid
- Details of all debts – Experian Report, statements, letters from creditors or collection agencies or original agreement, outstanding balance and details of any weekly/monthly repayment
- Copies of HP, conditional sale, lease agreements
- Mortgage statement (where applicable) showing payments and type of mortgage (e.g. endowment, repayment, capital and interest etc.)
- Tenancy agreement (where applicable)
- Any legal notices

If you are going to be late for your appointment, please telephone 0345 1400 094 as soon as you can. If you are going to be a few minutes late we will try to keep your appointment available.

If you are going to be more than 15 minutes late it is likely that we will need to reschedule it for another day.

If you are not able to attend your appointment, please telephone 0345 1400 094 as soon as you can. This could allow us to give it to someone else.

If it is your first cancelled appointment then we will try and give you another appointment as soon as possible.

If you consistently fail to attend our appointments, or if you continually ignore the advice that we have given, we may be unable to offer you any further appointments or assistance. This will only be done in the most serious of circumstances and we will always notify you in writing if we intend to do this.

PLEASE NOTE: All our offices are closed at present for drop in. For all enquiries please call the numbers listed on the next page or visit our website.

Money Advice Line:

0345 1400 094

Open 9am-4pm Mon-Fri

General Enquiries Line:

0345 1400 095

Open 10am-3pm Mon-Fri

For more information visit our website:

www.cabfife.org.uk