

## Credit Counseling vs. Hiring an Attorney

“We’ll help eliminate your debt!” “Free credit counseling!”

“We’ll get you debt-free!” “Get relief for just pennies on the dollar.”

Sound familiar? If you are having money troubles, commercials and ads like these might seem like the answer to your prayers. But is there more to this story than meets the eye?

You might assume that because their name has “counseling” in it, they would provide counseling services—however this is often not the case. When you contact such an agency, you are asked to list your debts. They will then calculate the small amount they can save you with reduced interest rates, divide your payments by five years and provide you with the new payment. Then they ask, “...when would you like to get started,” as if there are no other options.

The reduction in payments from these types of plans may or may not be affordable. Often times, however, your new payment has not been reduced enough and the plan fails. Now you are back where you started—or worse, you could be looking into filing for bankruptcy. With a little more emphasis on counseling and a little more attention to the affordability of the plan, all of this could have been avoided.

One significant fact that should be highlighted about these types of “free” services—they are often largely funded by the banks and collection agencies. Someone has to pay to offer these services and the banks are more than happy to pay a credit counseling agency to work with you to make your payments a little longer before filing for bankruptcy. Every time you make a payment to your counseling agency and they make that payment to the bank, the counseling agency receives payment for a job well done in the transfer of that payment. You have just unknowingly signed up for a repayment plan that is paid for by the bank. Who do you think the credit counselor is truly working for?

If you are struggling with debt and are considering credit counseling, you should look into the benefits of hiring a debt relief attorney that will work on your behalf exclusively. They will know the different options that might work for you. Depending on your income and your debt they can steer you toward a solution that is both affordable for you and your budget, as well as effective in eliminating debt. Through the different debt relief options, your repayment amount could be significantly reduced, bringing real relief to your unique situation.

The old adage still rings true—“you get what you pay for.” Think of hiring a **bankruptcy** attorney as an investment in your future. You certainly wouldn’t hire the cheapest brain surgeon on the block if you needed brain surgery, so why would you hire the cheapest consumer credit counselor you find in the phone book?

Consult a knowledgeable attorney such as [Harold Shepley & Associates](#) to find out what options are really out there for debt relief.

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