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[Home](#) > What is Credit Counseling and Personal Financial Management?

Answer:

[Credit Counseling](#)ⁱ is conducted by a [United States Trustee](#)ⁱ authorized credit counselor. ALL individual debtors must complete credit counseling **before** filing for bankruptcy. After completing credit counseling, the credit counselor will issue a certificate that must be filed with the bankruptcy court. When spouses file a bankruptcy case together (referred to as a jointly filed case) each spouse must complete credit counseling. Failure to timely file a properly issued credit counseling certificate will result in the dismissal of your bankruptcy case. If applicable, the credit counselor may issue a proposed budget and repayment [plan](#)ⁱ (if one is prepared, it is to be filed along with the certificate).

Personal Financial Management is a course a [debtor](#)ⁱ takes from an agency authorized by the United States Trustee **after** filing a bankruptcy case. Only [chapter 7](#)ⁱ and 13 individual debtors are required to take a personal financial management course. After completion of the course a debtor must file [Official Form B 423](#). If a personal financial management course certificate is provided it must be submitted at the time of filing the B 423 form. In chapter 7 cases, the certificate regarding completion of a financial management course must be filed within 60 days of the first scheduled 11 U.S.C. §341 [Meeting](#)ⁱ of Creditors. In [chapter 13](#)ⁱ cases, the certificate of course completion is due prior to the completion of all plan payments so that a [discharge](#)ⁱ may be obtained. The failure to timely file the certificate of course completion in either a chapter 7 or 13 case could result in a case being closed without the issuance of a discharge. If this occurs a fee must be paid to reopen the case.

Please visit the [United States Trustee](#) website for the most recent information on approved credit counseling agencies and personal financial management instructional course providers.

FAQ Category:

General Bankruptcy

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