



How To Initiate a Dispute

The Fair Credit Report Act allows consumers to dispute accounts to the credit bureaus if they believe it contains inaccurate information. Consumers do not have to pay someone to dispute, they can do it themselves or with the assistance of a financial coach.

There are two main ways in which you can dispute inaccurate information – by mail or online. If you dispute online the process tends to be quicker but the client needs to have an email address that they check to receive the results.

How to dispute online

1. To dispute online, first identify which, if not all three credit bureaus is reporting (seemingly) inaccurate information. If the inaccurate account is with TransUnion, the client will need to set up an account at <http://www.transunion.com/personal-credit/credit-disputes/credit-disputes.page>. If with Experian and/or Equifax, go to www.annualcreditreport.com and request a copy of the client's credit report from the appropriate bureau(s).
2. Print and/or save the report from Annual Credit Report or write down the Report Number on the credit report. This number will be needed (make sure you have this information) to to start the dispute and when the results come in. For TransUnion, make sure that the client writes down the user name and password as this will be needed to access the results later.
3. For Experian and Equifax, once you pull the client's Annual Credit Report there will be a button that will say "Initiate Online Dispute". Click that to get started. For TransUnion, once the account has been activated, a credit report will show. Under each section or tradeline, the client can dispute inaccurate information by clicking on the "Request an Investigation" button.
4. With each item disputed, there should be a comment box allowing you to explain the situation. You can also just click on the box indicating why you are disputing.
5. If the client has any supporting documentation to upload with the dispute, they will be given the chance to upload those documents.
6. The client will receive an email stating that the dispute process is complete. They can check the dispute status online using their credit report number (from the report they pulled – Experian and Equifax) or by logging into their TransUnion account. Make sure they save that information and/or send it to their financial coach. It should take no more than 30 days for the dispute process to be complete. Clients usually receive dispute results via email when the dispute is done online.

How to dispute by mail

1. If you use the template provided on the resource page, you can see that you are able to dispute collections, civil judgments and late payments.
2. Fill in the appropriate creditors and account numbers as well as the reason for why the information is disputed. If it's a civil judgment, you will need to indicate the docket number (as opposed to the account number).
3. If the client has proof, include that information along with the reason why the client is disputing and enclose it with the letter.
4. Print out four copies, have the client sign three; the last one is for their file. Attach any supporting documentation as well as a state issued ID and mail one to each of the three credit bureaus. The three credit bureaus' addresses are:

TransUnion Consumer Solutions
PO Box 2000
Chester, PA 19022-2000

Experian
PO Box 4500
Allen, TX 75013

Equifax
PO Box 740256
Atlanta, GA 30374

The credit bureaus have 30 days to respond from the date that the dispute has been received. The credit bureaus will verify with the source of the information (creditor or court). The source verifies, corrects or updates the information. Creditors are required to report corrections to all bureaus. Consumers must allow up to 30 days for processing of the dispute. Once the dispute process is complete, the credit bureau(s) will send the consumer a letter via mail to inform them if the information disputed was updated, deleted or left unchanged. In some cases, the consumer will receive an updated credit report.