

Introduction

A credit reporting agency is a private company that collects data and maintains historical information on consumer and business credit records. Credit reporting agencies provide credit providers with access to individual and company credit reports enabling them to assess the risk involved in a lending decision.

In Australia, you are entitled to get a free copy of your credit report from each agency every three months. In New Zealand, there are no limits to how often you can request a copy of your credit report. A credit report provides a 'picture' of how you use your credit. As an example, if you have ever owned a credit card, taken out a loan, or applied for a mobile phone plan you will probably have a credit history. Your credit history may include information such as enquiries by companies that you have made an application for credit with, current loans, any defaults, bankruptcies, and details about whether you pay your bills on time. This 'picture' is used by credit providers when deciding whether or not to approve an application for credit.

Why do I need a credit report?

By getting a copy of your credit report you will be able to see which lenders have made an enquiry on your credit file and what information is being uploaded to your file from lenders that you have a current loan facility with. You will be able to check that all the information uploaded on your file is accurate or make a request for an amendment if you believe there are any errors.

Importantly, it is also a means to assess whether someone has attempted to obtain credit in your name. Requesting a copy of your credit report on a regular basis is a way you can monitor your file to ensure no errors are on your report.

How do I obtain a credit report?

Request a free credit report from ALL relevant agencies as some may load credit information on your file that is not provided to others:

- **Australia - Equifax (formerly Veda), Experian**
- **New Zealand – Centrix, Equifax**

Have sufficient identification ready in order to obtain your credit history.

What if my identity has been compromised?

We recommend that you report the matter to police and notify your financial institution(s) to begin with. If there is risk that your identity may be fraudulently used, it is recommended that a **ban** (also known as a suppression) be placed on your file – this is a free service.

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Credit Bans and Suppressions

In Australia – you may apply a ban which lasts for 21 days. In New Zealand, this is called a suppression and lasts between 10 and 20 days. During a ban or suppression period, credit providers will not be able to access your credit file.

A ban or suppression may be extended indefinitely but you will need to provide proof of fraudulent activity (or risk thereof), for example a police report or if it's an online crime and, if you're in Australia, a [cyber.gov.au](https://www.cyber.gov.au) report number.

Additional information

In Australia, you may be charged a fee if you have already obtained a report from the same credit reporting agency within the last three months. However, you cannot be charged if you have evidence that you have been refused credit within the past 90 days, or your credit-related personal information has been changed. **In New Zealand**, the credit bureaus will provide a copy of your report at no charge, although Equifax may charge a fee for the report if you require it sooner than ten days from your application date. Centrix does not charge for credit reports.

Credit Reporting Agency websites

Australia

- Equifax - www.equifax.com.au
- Experian - www.experian.com.au/consumer-services

New Zealand

- Equifax - www.equifax.co.nz/personal
- Centrix - www.centrix.co.nz/my-credit-score

Relevant IDCARE fact sheets

- [Credit Reports - Australia](#)
- [Credit Reports - New Zealand](#)
- [Credit Bans - Australia](#)
- [Suppressions - New Zealand](#)

If you would like help understanding the process or need assistance in obtaining or interpreting your credit report, please contact IDCARE:

Submit [Get Help Form](#) | 1800 595 160 (Aus) | 0800 121 068 (NZ)

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