

Debt Validation

Debt and your credit report: Your debt should fall away from your credit report after seven years, even if the debt was sold to other collection agencies within those seven years. From Experian.com: “If you have a late payment and never bring the account current, it will eventually be written off as a loss. The debt then could be sold or transferred to a collection agency. In this case, the entire account will be removed seven years from that original delinquency date, along with the subsequent collection account.”

Debt Validation: If someone calls or writes to you about a debt, and you are uncertain whether it is legitimate, challenge the claim of a debt. Ask for Debt Validation; in other words, ask them to verify that you really owe this money. They are required by law to prove that you owe the debt. But your request must be sent within 30 days of their contact with you about the debt owed.

Below is a sample letter that you can send to challenge a debt. (From TheBalance.com)

How to Write a Debt Validation Letter

In the letter, reference the date of the initial contact and the method, for example, “a phone call received from your agency on April 25, 2019.” You also need to provide a statement that you're requesting validation of the debt. Do not admit to owing the debt or making any reference to payment. If the debt has passed the [statute of limitations](#) and is no longer legally enforceable, making promises to pay or acknowledging the debt is yours could restart the clock.

Send your letter via certified mail, so you have proof of when the letter was mailed and received.

Date
Your Name
Address
City, State Zip

Debt Collector's Name
Address
City, State Zip

Re: Account Number

This letter is sent in response to [a letter/phone call] received by you on [date you received the letter/call]. I am requesting that you provide verification of this debt.

Send the following information:

- The name and address of the original creditor, the account number, and the amount owed.
- Verification that there is a valid basis for claiming I am required to pay the current amount owed.
- Details about the age and amount of the debt including a copy of the last billing statement from the original creditor; a detailed explanation of any interest added or payments made since the last billing statement and the legal authorization for this interest; the date the original creditor claims this debt became delinquent.
- Whether this debt is within the statute of limitations and how that was determined.
- Details about your authority to collect this debt: whether you are licensed in my state and if so provide the date of the license, name on the license, license number, and the name, address and telephone number of the state agency issuing the license. If you are contacting me from outside my state, provide the licensing information from your state as well.

I need more details about what you claim I owe so that I can make an informed decision.

Sincerely,

Your Name

The Debt Collector's Response to Your Validation Request

If the debt collector does not send you proof of the debt, any future collection efforts are in [violation of the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act](#). Note that your account may be assigned or sold to a new debt collection agency. In that case, your validation request from the previous collection agency does not apply.

Otherwise, if the debt collector does send proof, make sure the debt is not within the statute of limitations, then decide how you want to proceed. [Paying the debt](#), especially if it's yours, takes care of the obligation for good. You may be able to [negotiate a settlement](#) for less than the full balance due.”

(The above information was taken from <https://www.thebalance.com/sample-debt-validation-letter-for-debt-collectors-960597>)

The creditor isn't allowed to include a debt on your credit report if it has been disputed (until the dispute is resolved). However, remember that if the debt is legitimate, it will reappear on your credit report, once the dispute is resolved.