

533A.9 Fee agreed in advance.

1. The fee of a licensee charged to a debtor shall be agreed upon in advance and stated in the contract and provision for settlement in case of cancellation shall also be clearly stated in the contract.

2. A debtor may be charged a one-time initiation fee for debt management services, which shall not exceed fifty dollars.

3. If a debt management program is based on a model that required the licensee or any other licensee to receive money or evidences thereof from the debtor to distribute to the debtor's creditors, the debtor may not be charged a fee exceeding the initiation fee permitted in subsection 2 plus a fee not to exceed fifteen percent of amounts actually applied to the debtor's accounts with the creditors. Other than the initiation fee, the debtor shall at no time be required to pay fees exceeding fifteen percent of amounts actually applied to the debtor's accounts with the creditors.

4. If a debt management program is not based on a model that requires the licensee or another licensee to receive money or evidences thereof from the debtor to distribute to the debtor's creditors, a debtor may not be charged a fee exceeding the sum of the following:

a. The initiation fee permitted in subsection 2.

b. An additional fee not to exceed eighteen percent of the total amount of the debtor's debts enrolled in the licensee's program at the time the debtor enrolled in the program. The additional fee shall not be collected pursuant to a method other than the percent of total debt method or the percent of savings method, as provided in subparagraphs (1) and (2), respectively.

(1) The percent of total debt method involves the additional fee being collected in equal monthly installments payable over the first two-thirds of the term of the contract between the debtor and the licensee. The debtor may elect to discontinue participation at any time during the program by providing written notice to the licensee at the address specified in the contract. Notice of discontinuance, if given by mail, is effective when deposited in the mail properly addressed with postage paid. If the debtor discontinues participation in the program, no future installments are due after the mailing of the notice. If participation is discontinued within the first twelve months of the contract, the licensee may retain only fifty percent of the installments it is scheduled to receive through the date the debtor gives the discontinuation notice and shall refund the excess to the debtor. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the licensee may collect a pro rata portion of the total fee upon completion of a settlement of a debtor's debt. The pro rata portion shall be calculated by multiplying the total dollar amount of the contracted additional fee by the percentage of debt settled of the original amount of debt enrolled in the program. In no event shall the additional fee exceed eighteen percent of the total amount of the debtor's debts enrolled in the licensee's program at the time the debtor enrolled in the program.

(2) The percent of savings method involves the additional fee being collected in monthly installments of fifty dollars per month, and the monthly fees collected shall be credited against any fees the licensee earns as the result of settlements. The debtor may elect to discontinue participation at any time during the program by providing written notice to the licensee at the address specified in the contract. Notice of discontinuance, if given by mail, is effective when deposited in the mail properly addressed with postage paid. If the debtor discontinues participation in the program, no future installments are due after the mailing of the notice. If participation is discontinued within the first twelve months of the contract, the licensee may retain only fifty percent of the installments it is scheduled to receive through the date the debtor gives the discontinuation notice and shall refund the excess to the debtor. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the licensee may collect a pro rata portion of the total fee upon completion of a settlement of a debtor's debt. The pro rata portion, which may be collected at the time of settlement, shall be calculated by multiplying the contracted savings percentage, not to exceed thirty percent, by the amount saved on settled debt. The amount saved on settled debt is the difference between the balance of that debt upon enrollment in the program and the amount settled. In no event shall the additional fee exceed eighteen percent of the total amount of the debtor's debts enrolled in the licensee's program at the time the debtor enrolled in the program.

5. Any services provided by a third party, other than the debtor's own banking fees, including lead generating, marketing, and selling services, shall be paid for by the licensee. Under no circumstances shall a debtor be required to pay a fee to a third party to obtain a licensee's services.

[C71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §533A.9]

90 Acts, ch 1100, §1; 2006 Acts, ch 1042, §7; 2009 Acts, ch 34, §6

Referred to in §533A.8