



## Early debt warning signs for individuals

Dealing with financial problems is one of the most stressful experiences we ever face. Since they most often evolve over a period of time, the key to working through financial problems is to recognize them early and seek advice while you still have options available to you.

Some typical warning signs for individuals include:

- > Are you always at the limit on your credit card or bank overdraft? Do you only make minimum payments?
- > Do you use one means of credit to pay off the minimum on another?
- > Are you using credit to buy necessities, such as groceries or fuel?
- > Are you avoiding opening your mail or answering your phone calls?
- > Are you paying only the interest on your credit?
- > Are you losing sleep?
- > Has there been a change in your family circumstances? Separation or divorce?
- > Are you writing NSF cheques?
- > Are assets or bank accounts being seized or garnished?
- > Do you suffer from critical health issues? Is your health, job or marriage being affected by your financial situation?
- > Have you gone through a loss of employment or reduction in pay?
- > Have you had a significant assessment or reassessment by Canada Revenue Agency?
- > Are you paying excessive interest rates?
- > Do you require frequent loan consolidations?
- > Are you cancelling insurance policies because you can't afford the premium?
- > Do you spend impulsively?
- > Do you have a filing system or keep track of your records? Do you know how much you owe each creditor, including the tax department?
- > Do you have a substance abuse or gambling problem?

Resolving your insolvency issues on your own can be very difficult unless you know what your options are. If any of these warning signs sound familiar, you should contact a Trustee to seek professional advice. It's never too late to get sound advice.

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*Meyers Norris Penny Limited Advisory Services will be providing a series of 10 articles relating to insolvency, bankruptcy and consumer proposals. This is the first article in the series. Raising awareness and educating the public is the best way to prevent consumers and businesses from serious financial dilemmas. Our series of articles will address the early warning signs to flag, explore options in a financial crisis and explain the truth behind bankruptcy, proposals and legal actions. If you miss any of these published articles in the series, you can visit our website [www.mnpdebt.ca](http://www.mnpdebt.ca) where we will have an archive of all previously published articles.*