



## **Vehicle Repossessions**

If you are behind on your vehicle payments, you might be at risk of losing your vehicle. In some situations, you can lose your vehicle and still be sued. This section will give you information about the vehicle repossession process.

### Overview

If you are behind on your vehicle payments, your creditor has the right to repossess the vehicle. This means the creditor can take the vehicle away from you. A “voluntary repossession” is when you choose to give the vehicle back to your creditor. An “involuntary repossession” is when the finance company or creditor takes the vehicle from you.

Repossession of the vehicle may not take care of all the debt you owe to the creditor. Sometimes, creditors sell the repossessed vehicles at auctions. If the vehicle is sold for less than the amount you owe on the loan, you will have to pay the difference. The creditor will give you a “deficiency balance.” The “deficiency balance” is the amount you still owe after the money from the sale is applied to your total loan balance plus reasonable repossession fees. If you don’t pay it, you may be sued on a “deficiency balance.” If you have questions about vehicle repossessions, please call the Legal Services for Maine Elders Helpline at 1-800-750-5353.

### What to do if you are being sued on your debt

This Guide will give you an idea of what will happen if you are sued for your debt. It provides a brief description of the steps a debtor will face in a typical debt collection case in a Maine court. It covers only debt collection actions for **unsecured** debt, such as credit card and medical debt.

Click here to get the "[Guide to Debt Collection Actions in Maine Courts](#) ", or find the Guide in the Quicklinks menu to the left.

If you are being sued on a debt or if you have any questions about a debt, call the Legal Services for Maine Elders Helpline at 1-800-750-5353 to talk to an attorney for free.

### Money that is protected from being used for debt repayment

If you are sued on a debt, there are laws that say what can, or cannot be used to pay your debt. Certain income sources and certain equity in property are protected from collection. You need to talk to an attorney to find out if you are protected by these laws. Call the Legal Services for Maine Elders Helpline at 1-800-750-5353 to talk to an attorney for free.

### Resources

#### **Legal Services for Maine Elders**

If you are a Maine resident who is 60 or older and you have a debt problem, or if you have questions about your debt, call the Legal Services for Maine Elders Helpline at 1-800-750-5353 to speak to an attorney for free.

**The Office of the Maine Attorney General**

For helpful information on several consumer topics, [check out the “Consumer Law Guide” by clicking here.](#)

**Maine Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection**

If you want to get answers to general debt questions, or to file a complaint, call the Maine Bureau of Consumer Credit Protection at 1-800-332-8529; TTY for hearing impaired at 1-888-577-6690; or [visit the Bureau’s website by clicking here.](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://mainelse.org/handbook/managing-your-debt/vehicle-repossessions>