

## Check Your Credit

### The Situation

Credit is a tool many of us use for managing our financial lives. We use credit to achieve not only long-term goals such as higher education and home ownership but also shorter-term goals. A credit report is an explanation of an individual's credit history. Lenders and creditors use the information in this report when deciding whether or not to lend to us, how much credit to extend and what interest rate to charge. Landlords and utility companies use the information in credit reports to make decisions about deposits. Employers use the information prior to hiring or before allowing employees to access company-sponsored credit cards for company business expenses. In addition, regularly checking our credit reports is one way to identify and guard against identity theft. It is recommended that consumers check their credit reports annually.

The three national credit reporting agencies are required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act to provide a consumer with a free copy of his or her credit report each year. Despite this, according to the most recent data available, only one in three Kansans check their credit report annually and Kansas adults rank at or near the bottom of the 50 states in checking their credit reports each year.

### Short-Term (Knowledge)

Through this educational campaign, participants will learn:

- the importance of regularly checking their credit reports, and
- where to go to access their free credit reports.

#### Indicators

Participants will be asked to rate the change in their level of knowledge and understanding.

### Medium-Term (Behavior)

Participants will check their credit reports at each of the three credit bureaus.

#### Indicators

Participants will be asked in March, July, and November whether or not they checked their credit reports.

### Long-Term (Change in Condition)

The percentage of Kansas adults checking their credit report annually will increase. Kansas consumers will correct incorrect or incomplete information found in their credit reports.

### Indicators

The percentage of Kansans who check their credit reports after participating in the campaign will be greater than the percentage who had checked their credit reports before participating.

Participants will report an increase in their feelings of financial capability when it comes to credit report after participating in this campaign.

### **Outputs**

Check Your Credit campaign