

## Family Breakdown and Debt

This fact sheet is for information only. You s

### Main ideas

- You are not usually responsible for your partner's debts.
- You are usually responsible for joint contracts, or if you are a guarantor. You may also be responsible if you are a partner or a director in a family business.
- Get legal advice if you feel you were pressured into signing loan documents.
- If you don't formally separate your finances, you could lose your share if your ex-partner has financial difficulties.
- Family law is a complex area. Get legal advice from a family law specialist.
- Free financial counsellors can help if you having problems with debts or dealing with lenders. Their services are free.

### In this fact sheet:

#### [Protect yourself by separating your finances](#)

Joint savings and transaction accounts  
Joint loans and mortgages  
Linked credit cards  
Utility accounts  
Rent agreements

#### [Get a property settlement](#)

#### [If you felt pressured or forced into loans, experienced family violence, or felt financially abused](#)

## Protect yourself by separating your finances

Chapter 10: Debt and credit  
**Joint savings and transaction accounts**

Open bank and credit accounts in your own name. Credit cards should be in your name.  
**Joint loans and mortgages**

Keep your own credit cards and loans in your own name. Do not be a guarantor for your partner's debts.  
**Linked credit cards**

Check your credit report regularly. If you have a joint credit card, it is important to know what your partner is doing with it.

## Debts in the other person's name

If you have a debt in someone else's name, you are not responsible for it.

### Utility accounts

If the accounts are in your name and you are not paying them, you are responsible.

### Rent agreements

You are responsible for rent if you are the tenant.

## Get a property settlement

It is possible to get a property settlement if you are in a relationship with someone who has a property.

## If you felt pressured or forced into loans, experienced family violence, or felt financially abused

There are legal options available if you have been pressured or forced into loans, experienced family violence, or felt financially abused.

## Need more help?

Separating with debt is a complex process, so it's important to get legal advice.

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