

SAMPLE COPY OF A LETTER OF PRE-ADVERSE ACTION

(Please consult your attorney for proper verbiage)

Under the new revisions of the Fair Credit Reporting Act, a notice must be sent if any information from a consumer credit report is used, in whole or in part, in the selection process for employment.

Dear Applicant,

A decision is currently pending concerning your application for employment at (employer/company). Enclosed for your information is a copy of the consumer report that you authorized in regard to your application for employment, together with a "Summary of Your Rights" Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act.

If there is any information that is inaccurate or incomplete, you should contact this office as soon as possible so an employment decision may be completed.

Sincerely yours,

The purpose is to give an applicant the opportunity to see the report that contains the information that is being used against them. If the report is inaccurate or incomplete, the applicant then has the opportunity to contact the Consumer Reporting Agency to dispute or explain what is in the report. Otherwise, applicants may be denied employment without ever knowing they were the victims of inaccurate or incomplete data.

As a practical matter, by the time an applicant is the subject of a Consumer Report, an employer has spent time, money and effort in recruiting, and hiring. Therefore, it is in the employer's best interest to give an applicant an opportunity to explain any adverse information before denying a job offer. If there was an error in the public records, giving the applicant the opportunity to explain or correct it could be to the employer's advantage.

Even if there are other reasons for not hiring an applicant in addition to matters contained in a consumer report, the adverse action notification procedures still apply. If the intended decision was based in whole or part on the Consumer Report, the applicant has a right to receive the report. In fact, these rights apply even if the information in the consumer report used against an applicant is not even negative on its face. For example, an applicant may have a perfect payment record on his or her credit report, but an employer may be concerned that the debt level compared to the salary, is too high. The applicant still is entitled to a notice of pre-adverse action, because it is possible that the credit report is wrong about the applicant's outstanding debts. In a situation where the employer would have made an adverse decision anyway, regardless of the background report, following the adverse action procedures is still the best practice for legal protection.

Para informacion en espanol, visite www.ftc.gov/credit o escribe a la FTC Consumer Response Center, Room 130-A 600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580.

A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act

The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. There are many types of consumer reporting agencies, including credit bureaus and specialty agencies (such as agencies that sell information about check writing histories, medical records, and rental history record). Here is a summary of your major rights under the FCRA. **For more information, including information about additional rights, go to www.ftc.gov/credit or write to: Consumer Response Center, Room 130-A, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20580.**

- **You must be told if information in your file has been used against you.** Anyone who uses a credit report or another type of consumer report to deny your application for credit, insurance, or employment – or to take another adverse action against you – must tell you, and must give you the name, address, and phone number of the agency that provided the information.
- **You have the right to know what is in your file.** You may request and obtain all the information about you in the files of a consumer-reporting agency (your “file disclosure”). You will be required to provide proper identification, which may include your social security number. In many cases, the disclosure will be free. You are entitled to a free file disclosure if:
 - A person has taken adverse action against you because of information in your credit report
 - You are a victim of identity theft and place a fraud alert in your file
 - Your file contains inaccurate information as a result of fraud
 - You are on public assistance
 - You are unemployed but expect to apply for employment within 60 daysIn addition, by September 2005 all consumers will be entitled to one free disclosure every 12 months upon request from each nationwide credit bureau and from nationwide specialty consumer reporting agencies. See www.ftc.gov/credit for additional information.
- **You have the right to ask for a credit score.** Credit scores are numerical summaries of your credit-worthiness based on information from credit bureaus. You may request a credit score from consumer reporting agencies that create scores or distribute scores used in residential real property loans, but you will have to pay for it. In some mortgage transactions, you will receive credit score information for free from the mortgage lender.
- **You have the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information.** If you identify information in your file that is incomplete or inaccurate, and report it to the consumer-reporting agency, the agency must investigate unless your dispute is frivolous. See www.ftc.gov/credit for an explanation of dispute procedures.
- **Consumer reporting agencies must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information.** Inaccurate, incomplete or unverifiable information must be removed or corrected, usually within 30 days. However, a consumer reporting agency may continue to report information it has verified as accurate.
- **Consumer reporting agencies may not report outdated negative information.** In most cases, a consumer-reporting agency may not report negative information that is more than 7 years old, or bankruptcies that are more than 10 years old.

- **Access to your file is limited.** A consumer-reporting agency may provide information about you only to people with a valid need -- usually to consider an application with a creditor, insurer, employer, landlord, or other business. The FCRA specifies those with a valid need for access.
- **You must give your consent for reports to be provided to employers.** A consumer-reporting agency may not give out information about you to your employer, or a potential employer, without your written consent given to the employer. Written consent generally is not required in the trucking industry. For more information, go to www.ftc.gov/credit.
- **You may limit “prescreened” offers for credit and insurance you get based on information in your credit report.** Unsolicited “prescreened” offers for credit and insurance must include a toll free phone number you can call if you choose to remove your name and address from lists these offers are based on. You may opt-out with the nationwide credit bureaus at 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688).
- **You may seek damages from violators.** If a consumer reporting agency, or, in some cases, a user of consumer reports or a furnisher of information to a consumer reporting agency violates the FCRA, you may be able to sue in state or federal court.
- **Identity theft victims and active duty military personnel have additional rights.** For more information, visit www.ftc.gov/credit.

States may enforce the FCRA, and many states have their own consumer reporting laws. In some cases, you may have more rights under state law. For more information, contact your state or local consumer protection agency or your state Attorney General. Federal enforcers are:

TYPE OF BUSINESS:	CONTACT:
Consumer reporting agencies, creditors and others not listed below	Federal Trade Commission: Consumer Response Center – FCRA Washington, DC 20580 1-877-382-4357
National Banks, federal branches/agencies of foreign banks (word “National” or initials “N.A.” appear in or after bank’s name)	Office of the Comptroller of the Currency Compliance Management, Mail Stop 6-6 Washington, DC 20219 800-613-6743
Federal Reserve System member banks (except national banks, and federal branches/agencies of foreign banks)	Federal Reserve Board Division of Consumer & Community Affairs Washington, DC 20551 202-452-3693
Savings associations and federally chartered savings banks (word “Federal” or initials “F.S.B.” appear in federal institution’s name)	Office of Thrift Supervision Consumer Complaints Washington, DC 20552 800-842-6929
Federal credit unions (words “Federal Credit Union” appear in institution’s name)	National Credit Union Administration 1775 Duke Street Alexandria, VA 22314 703-519-4600
State-chartered banks that are not members of the Federal Reserve System	Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Consumer Response Center, 2345 Grand Avenue, Suite 100 Kansas City, Missouri 64108-2638 1-877-275-3342
Air, surface, or rail common carriers regulated by former Civil Aeronautics Board or Interstate Commerce Commission	Department of Transportation, Office of Financial Management Washington, DC 20590 202-366-1306
Activities subject to the Packers and Stockyards Act, 1921	Department of Agriculture Office of Deputy Administrator – GIPSA Washington, DC 20250 202-720-7051