

BANKRUPTCY CHECKLIST

WHAT'S NECESSARY TO COMPLETE YOUR BANKRUPTCY FILING

Thank you for choosing the **Law Office of Glenn S. Kessler**.

Please bring at least 2 (TWO) COPIES of each of the following items or documents to your first visit with Mr. Kessler. (And note: This material will become a part of your court submission and cannot be returned to you.)

1. IDENTIFICATION

Copies of your Social Security Card and either your NYS Driver's License, NYS Non-Driver's ID (preferably reflecting your current address), or a valid, current U.S. Passport (the originals of these documents will be required for presentation at your mandatory court appearance).

2. MARITAL STATUS

If you are married, copies of your marriage certificate. If divorced, copies of your divorce decree. If legally separated, copies of your legal separation agreement. These documents are not essential but are helpful so, if you have them handy, please bring them.

3. PAY STATEMENTS/ PROOF OF INCOME

Copies of each pay statement received over the 6 (six) month period immediately leading up to your first appointment with our office; these are needed for you and any other working member(s) of your household. (Household members include those who contribute to, and share in, your common household expenses and live with you). Please arrange these statements in chronological (time) order (most recent on top) and make sure you have ALL statements for the past six months. NOTE: Each time you visit Mr. Kessler, before the actual filing of your case, you must update your pay stubs so that we have all the stubs for the 6 (six) months leading up to that appointment date. We can't do our work if even one statement is missing! If you, or a 'household member' have not worked for each of the past six months, then provide pay statements for any work performed for compensation during this period.

If you do not receive pay statements, or no longer possess the statements that you received, you will need to provide a substitute, such as a letter or printout, from the source of your income or, if funds were regularly deposited into your bank account (e.g. direct deposit), bank statements that show the deposits. (Note: Any pay stub 'substitute' must specifically reflect withholding taxes and other deductions made from your salary for each pay period; bank statements are acceptable only if your source of employment does not 'withhold' from your pay, e.g. independent contractor, '1099' employee, etc.)

4. TAX RETURNS

Copies of your personal federal and state/city tax returns for the past two years for you and any other working member(s) of your household. (If you haven't filed and are required to do so, you must do so now!) You cannot file for bankruptcy without providing the court with a copy of your most recently filed tax return.

If you own a business that is required to file tax returns, will need copies of returns for at least the last 2 (two) years of business as well.

5. BOOKS AND RECORDS (Businesses Only)

Copies of the books and records for any business(es) in which you held an ownership interest in any of the 6 (six) years leading up to your appointment with Mr. Kessler. Records should include, for the year leading up to your anticipated bankruptcy filing (or the last year of business), ledgers, checkbooks, bank statements, profit and loss statements, balance sheets, inventories, cash flow statements/records of cash receipts and disbursements, etc.

6. BILLS

Copies of current statements from anyone to whom you owe money (e.g. bills/statements for credit cards, personal loans, mortgages, car loans, health and medial services, tax debts, student loans, etc.). Anyone to whom you owe money must be accounted for. You cannot pick and choose whom you list in your bankruptcy filing; anyone to whom you owe money must be listed, regardless of what you may have heard regarding the ability to 'wipe them out' in bankruptcy.

The minimum information needed in order to include a creditor in your filing is the following: name of creditor; account number (if applicable); address for mailing purposes; and amount owed.

If you have received collection notices on behalf of creditors, please attach them to the statements to which the notices apply and bring them as well. We understand that it is sometimes difficult to pair collection notices with the actual bills due to changes in account numbers and/or multiple agencies on one matter so, do your best!

7. CREDIT REPORTS

In order to insure inclusion of all debts, a required supplement to your bills is a recent, "merged" credit report, or a report from each of the three credit reporting agencies by visiting <http://www.annualcreditreport.com/>. You can print out copies and provide these to us. If you cannot access the Internet, call 1-877-322-8228 to order your free reports by phone.

Note: Be very careful to answer each credit reporting agency's security questions accurately. Failure to do so may result in your being 'locked out' of their systems. In such event, the only way to obtain your reports free of charge will be to order them by phone, a method that can take several weeks for the reports to arrive by mail.

8. WAGE GARNISHMENT or FROZEN BANK ACCOUNT INFORMATION

If your wages have been garnished by a creditor, or a bank account(s) has/have been frozen, please provide information regarding wage garnishment or frozen bank account(s). We need to know which law firm(s) or creditor(s) is/are taking this action so that we may intervene. If a bank account(s) has/have been frozen, we need to know specifically where the account(s) is/are located, account number(s), contacts, etc., as available; the more information you can provide, the more quickly we can obtain release of your assets.

9. RECURRING MONTHLY BILLS

Copies of representative current monthly bills for your household. Such bills include rent or mortgage, telephone service (landline(s) and cell phone(s)), electricity, gas, cable TV, water, etc. If you are living with others in a 'household', bring copies of bills that may be obligations of other members.

10. BANK and/or FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Copies of the last 12 (twelve) months' bank/financial statements from any and all accounts (e.g., checking, savings, money market, investment, 401(k)/403(b), individual retirement (IRA), pension, annuity, etc.) in your name, or jointly held with another, and/or in the name of your business, if applicable - even if account balance(s) is/are now zero. Please include cancelled checks, as applicable.

11. LIFE INSURANCE STATEMENTS

In the case of life insurance, bring a dated letter or statement from your broker/insurance company setting forth the "cash surrender value" of the policy, if any; if none, be sure the letter so states. As to all types of insurance, be prepared to discuss what you pay in premiums for your insurance policy(ies), as applicable.

12. VEHICLE INFORMATION

Copies of the title (any vehicle you own, even if you do not drive and merely co-signed a loan, or if the vehicle is in your name for 'convenience purposes' only) and proof of insurance.

- Year, make and model of vehicle with approximate current mileage.
- For a financed vehicle(s), copies of statement(s) showing who holds the lien(s), and balance(s) due on the vehicle loan(s), or remaining obligation(s).

13. PENSION or RETIREMENT ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Current, dated statements showing the value of any 401(k)/403(b) account(s), IRA account(s), pension plan(s), annuity(ies), etc.

14. REAL PROPERTY (real estate, including house, vacant land, co-op, condo or commercial property)

Copies of deed (or, for a co-op only, copies of the stock certificate and proprietary lease

Appraisal of property. (At this stage, you need only obtain a verbal or informal written estimate of value from a local real estate professional, unless you already have a recent appraisal; ultimately, you will need to obtain an official statement/appraisal of the value of your property, but we do not want you to spend the money for same until after you have met with us and we can verify your eligibility for bankruptcy.)

Payoff amount on any existing mortgage(s). (Recent statement or letter reflecting the balance due and owing to the mortgage lender or other lienholder.)

15. PERSONAL INJURY ACTION

If you have a personal injury action or case, please provide the following: Name, address, and phone number of attorney handling the matter. Copies of pleadings (summons and complaint) in the case.

16. PRE-BANKRUPTCY DEBT COUNSELING CERTIFICATE

Prior to your case filing, federal law requires that you complete a pre-bankruptcy debt counseling session and receive a certificate confirming that you have participated. Nevertheless, we recommend that you discuss with Mr. Kessler your eligibility to file bankruptcy before you spend money on this course.

Our office recommends a non-profit organization called GreenPath Debt Solutions. It is known to be trustworthy, caring and pleasant in approach. GreenPath's website URL is: <http://www.greenpath.com/home.htm>. Its phone number is 1-866-332-8435. The counseling session can be completed over the phone, computer or in-person. (You may choose any similarly-qualified credit counseling organization, but you should confirm your selection with the court prior to enrollment to insure that the provider has been approved by the bankruptcy court.)

Upon completing the course, please ask GreenPath, or your preferred provider, to send notice to our email address, glenskessler@yahoo.com so that we may receive your certificate. (Please do not attempt to contact our offices through this email address.)

(Please note that, after you file your bankruptcy case, the law requires that a second, brief, pre-discharge education session be undertaken before you are eligible to receive a discharge. Mr. Kessler strongly recommends that this session be completed as soon as possible after your bankruptcy filing so as to avoid forgetting this essential step in your bankruptcy filing process. Failure to timely participate in this course, receive your completion certificate and have same filed with the court may result in the dismissal of your case without the benefit of a discharge.)

17. PAYMENT (Fees and Costs)

Although your fee, including court filing costs, will be determined following Mr. Kessler's review, you should bring a minimum of \$250.00 to your initial free consultation in the event you choose to retain our office to handle your case. Let us reassure you, however, that there is no obligation to retain our firm to represent you.

If you have any questions about the documents that are required, or about any other aspect of filing for bankruptcy under Chapter 7, 11 or 13, we welcome your inquiry. Our main number is 718-488-9100. The Law Offices of Glenn S. Kessler is centrally located in downtown Brooklyn, at 32 Court Street, Suite 704, Brooklyn, NY 11201.

We close by reminding you that our nation's bankruptcy laws are in place to provide Americans with the means and structure for a Fresh Start. Thank you for your assistance in making the bankruptcy application process timely and productive - and as painless as possible! For more than 20 years, we've helped people like you triumph over stressful financial circumstances. It will be our pleasure to see you succeed!

With best wishes.

Your attorney,
Glenn S. Kessler, Esq.

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