



**Harassed By Debt
Collectors?**

Rules of The Road

On What Debts To Pay First

**South Carolina Legal Services
Consumer Law Unit**



1. Always pay family necessities, like food and shelter first.

2. Pay what you must to keep essential utility service

3. Pay car payments next, if you really need your car.



4. You must pay child support debts.

5. Income tax debts are also high priority

6. Loans without collateral are low priority

7. Loans with only household goods collateral are also low



8. Do not pay a debt because the creditor threatens a lawsuit

9. Do not pay when you have good legal defenses to repayment

10. Court judgments against you do not necessarily make a debt more important



11. Student loans are medium priority debts

12. Debt collection calls should never make you pay a debt that is not essential

13. Threats to ruin your credit record should never cause you to pay a debt that is not essential



14. Cosigned debts should be treated like your other debts

15. Refinancing is rarely the answer—especially if you get a loan on your house to consolidate credit card and other unsecured debt. This could cause you to lose your house.