

What We Know

ARTICLES & INSIGHTS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

“I have a judgment...now what?”

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Someone owes you money. They don't pay. You take them to court. You win your case! You think, “Great! We've reached the end. Victory!” Unfortunately, it's not that simple.

The fact is, a judgment can be the beginning of a long and frustrating road for a lot of people. Here's why:

When you win your case against someone who owes you money, you come away with a legal, public document called a *judgment*. This public document serves as an official record stating who owes whom and by how much. It's an important document to have if you ever hope to collect, but it isn't enough to enforce the actual collection – and that's an important distinction to remember. Nine times out of ten, a debtor doesn't come forward willingly, and in those cases, the plaintiff will have to take additional steps to recover the debt. There are several legal mechanisms an attorney who is experienced in creditors rights will be able to use in order to collect on your judgment. These include attaching the judgment to the debtor's bank accounts, forcing the sale of the debtor's personal property, and possibly sometime in the not-so-distant future, the garnishment of wages – an option that current isn't available in the state of North Carolina.

Your best bet – prepare yourself for the wait. These are complicated legal processes and you should always consult an attorney prior to considering these options.

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