

A close-up, shallow depth-of-field photograph of a credit card. The focus is on the gold-colored microchip on the left and the embossed numbers '4511' in the center. The background is blurred, showing more of the card's surface and other embossed numbers.

A SECOND CHANCE AT CREDIT WITH THE UNITY VISA





It's a Wonderful Life is a perennial Christmas favorite, and one of the reasons people love it so much is the fact that George Bailey is a decent human being. He works at the Building and Loan, but his first duty is to his community. He wants people to succeed. If they are a little short on a mortgage payment or looking for credit redemption after a bad few months, he is always more than willing to help them out. That's because he believes in people and believes in second chances.

When he finds himself in trouble after Uncle Billy loses the money and Mr. Potter steals it, George Bailey receives help from the people he believes in the most. George Bailey is rewarded for his faith in people doing the right thing and learning from their finance mistakes, and this is why it's such a great Christmas movie. Unfortunately, though, situations like these often happen just in the movies

Your credit score is what banks, credit card companies, mortgage lenders, landlords and even HR recruiters use to determine your character. Even if you have done all you can to make up for past mistakes, a checkered financial past could make getting a loan or qualifying for a decent mortgage rate nearly impossible. Therefore, it's of the utmost importance to [restore your credit](#), but how does one go about doing this?

OneUnited Bank believes in the reliability of its customers and understands that the past can't define the present. We want our customers to earn the ability to buy that first home or get a new job, which is why we created the [UNITY Visa card](#). We will talk about the benefits of the card in a moment, but first let's discuss how credit works and how easy it is to hurt your credit score.



THE POWER OF CREDIT

Because not everyone lives in a town like Bedford Falls where everyone knows each other's dependability, companies and banks rely on your credit score to determine whether or not you'll be able to pay back a loan and make payments on time, or even how reliable you would be as an employee. There are a number of different elements that determine [your credit score](#):

Payment History: Do you pay your bills on time, and if so, do you pay more than the minimum?

Accounts Owned: How many accounts do you have? Is there still a lot of debt on them? Do you have more credit than debt?

Length of Credit History: How long have you had these accounts? In general, a longer credit history will improve your credit score.

Type of Accounts: The type of accounts on your credit history can have an impact on your account as well. A lot of new credit can represent a greater risk.

Delinquencies: Any history of delinquencies or collections will negatively affect your credit score.

Your credit score can range from 300-850. The closer you are to 850, the more likely you are to get approved for loan or mortgage at an affordable rate.

WHAT CAUSES BAD CREDIT?

We've already gone over the things that make up your credit score, so now let's discuss what some of the actions are that can lower your score. It only takes a few small errors for a credit score to lower 50 points, 100 points, or even more. If at all possible, avoid these actions or tendencies:

- **Missing the Payment Due Date:** Do you pay your bills late all of the time? If so, you're hurting your credit score. The number one factor in how credit reporting agencies determine your credit score is your payment history.
- **Missing Payments Altogether:** Any delinquencies or collections on your credit will cause a lender to take a second look.
- **Poor Credit Utilization:** Another way to earn a poor credit score is to always be near your credit limit. Poor credit utilization indicates your financial well-being and your ability to pay back your original loan or line of credit.
- **Too Many Credit Inquiries:** If you have had a number of hard inquiries on your credit in the past few months, this will negatively affect your credit score. It will signal to the credit reporting agency that you're a credit risk.

If you haven't done these things yet, don't do them. However, if you have made past mistakes like these, you know how difficult it can be to obtain new credit. Red marks take years before they're erased from your credit report, and it could be impossible to obtain new credit to [rebuild your credit history](#). It becomes a real Catch-22. This is where the UNITY Visa can make a huge difference.



ONE COMMUNITY, ONE BANK, ONE UNITED



At OneUnited, we support our local communities. We have the feel and compassion of a small town bank with the reach of a national one. Our mission is to [build these urban communities](#) and help our members when they need it the most. We understand that times can get tough and mistakes can be made, which is why we designed the UNITY Visa secured credit card program.

In addition to obtaining a free credit report and organizing your finances, [a secured credit card](#) can help you rebuild your credit. It works just like a regular credit card, and you'll have the opportunity to learn how to make sound personal finance decisions. You can learn more about the card on the next page. Like George Bailey, we understand the importance of community, and we'll always strive to help our neighbors in need.



One Community. One Bank. OneUnited.

100 Franklin Street
Boston, MA 02110
877-One-United (877-663-8648)

QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE ABOUT THE UNITY VISA

Q. *What is a secured credit card?*

A. A secured credit card is a credit card. In fact, no one can tell it's a secured card. It simply requires a cash collateral deposit, which sets your limit.

Q. *What are the interest rate and fees?*

A. The UNITY Visa® Card annual percentage rate (APR) is lower than most banks. Our rate is fixed – unlike many other cards, which have variable rates. There is no application fee, over the limit fee, or penalty interest rate.

Q. *What is the minimum or maximum credit limit?*

A. The minimum credit limit is \$250.00 and the maximum credit limit is \$10,000.00. Your limit is determined by your ability to pay and your security deposit.

Q. *I have bad credit. Will I qualify?*

A. Secured credit cards, like the [UNITY Visa Card](#), are designed to help people with less than perfect credit, or even bad credit. A secured credit card is a second chance and gives you the chance to learn how to rebuild credit. Secured credit cards are also good for people who have not established credit yet as well as people with high credit interest rates.

Q. *Can I use a secured credit card anywhere?*

A. Yes, the [UNITY Visa Card](#) can be used anywhere Visa credit cards are accepted. This differs from prepaid cards. Prepaid debit cards are not always accepted, depending on the institution or may require “excessive authorization.”

Q. *How much money do I need to provide as a security deposit?*

A. Your security deposit will be 100% of your credit limit, which is again determined by your ability to pay monthly payments. If you close your account and pay your balance in full, your security deposit is fully refundable.

Q. *How can I manage my account?*

A. Like any credit card, you can manage your account online. On our online platform, you can view your credit limit and account balance, set up alerts and view your account history and statements.

Q. *How are secured credit cards different from prepaid debit cards?*

A. Secured credit cards are credit cards, like any other credit card. Prepaid cards are debit cards, many with high fees, including opening & closing fees, monthly fees, and service fees. A secured credit card reports to the credit bureaus. A prepaid card does not. Therefore, unlike a prepaid card, a secured credit card can help build or rebuild your credit.

Q. *Who is offering this card?*

A. OneUnited Bank is offering the [UNITY Visa Card](#) because we believe it is a smarter choice than a prepaid debit card. Secure credit cards are educational tools that can allow you to recover from a bump in the road to establish and repair your credit. In addition, secure credit cards typically offer a lower rate and fees than subprime credit cards. We believe in our customers and know they can succeed with a little help. The UNITY Visa is the second chance they need to make the difference with their credit.