



## **IDENTITY THEFT**

Identity theft is one of the fastest growing crimes in California. Most cases involve suspects stealing key pieces of someone's identifying information, such as their name, address, date of birth, social security and mother's maiden name and using that information to impersonate the victim, usually for financial gain. Once the suspect obtains the information, he can access the victim's financial accounts, apply for credit cards, purchase automobiles, receive social security benefits and even establish services with utilities and phone companies. Victims can suffer financial ruin and experience trauma and frustration while trying to reclaim their good name.

### **What to do if someone steals your identity**

- Call the police non-emergency line to report the crime
- Keep a log of all your contacts and make copies of all documents.
- Contact all creditors to inform of the crime
- Notify the US Postal Inspector if your mail has been tampered with or stolen
- Alert your banks to flag your accounts to detect any unusual activity
- Call the DMV to make sure another license hasn't been issued in your name

### **How to protect yourself on the Internet:**

- Use caution when disclosing checking account numbers, credit card numbers, or other personal financial data at any website or on-line service.
- When you subscribe to an on-line service, you may be asked to give credit card information. When you enter any interactive service site, beware of con artists who may ask you to "confirm" your enrollment service by disclosing passwords or the credit card account number used. Don't **give** them out!

### **How reduce your chances of becoming a victim**

- Promptly remove delivered mail from your mailbox.
- Deposit outgoing mail in official mailboxes or at your local post office.
- Never give personal information over the telephone (social security number, date of birth, mother's maiden name, credit card number, or bank PIN code) unless you initiated the phone call.
- Shred unwanted pre-approved credit applications, credit card receipts, bills, and other financial information.
- Order your credit report from the three credit bureaus once a year to check for fraudulent activity or other discrepancies.
- Always take your credit card receipts after transactions.

- Memorize your social security number and all of your passwords.
- Notify your credit card companies and financial institutions in advance of any change of address or phone number.
- Never put your credit card or any other financial account number on a postcard or on the outside of an envelope.
- Report all lost or stolen credit cards immediately.
- Contact the issuer if replacement credit cards are not received.
- Beware of mail or telephone solicitations disguised as promotions offering instant prizes designed solely to obtain your personal or credit card information.

### Credit Reporting Agencies:

#### TransUnion

www.transunion.com  
 PC Box 6790  
 Fullerton, CA 92834  
 (800) 680-7289

#### Experian

www.experian.com  
 PO Box 1017  
 Allen, TX 75013  
 (888) 397-3742

#### Equifax

www.Equifax.com  
 PC Box 740256 Atlanta, GA 30374

### Check Reporting Agencies

Atlanta, GA 30374  
 (888) 766-0008

Check Rite (800) 766-2748:

E-Funds (800) 328-5121

Certegy Check Services: (800) 437-5120

International Check (800) 526-5380

Services:  
 SCAN (800) 262-7771

Telecheck; (800) 366-2425

### Resources and Contacts Agencies

US Postal Inspection Service, Federal and Local [www.usps.gov/postalinspectors](http://www.usps.gov/postalinspectors)

Social Security Administration Fraud Hotline (800) 269-0271

Federal Trade Commission (877) IDTheft

Office of Privacy Protection

[www. privacyprotection.ca.gov](http://www.privacyprotection.ca.gov) (866) 785-9663

The San Diego County Sheriff's Department is committed to stopping Identity Theft.

### What is C.A.T.C.H.?

CATCH is the San Diego's Computer and Technology Crime High Tech Response Team is a multi-jurisdictional investigative task force for San Diego, Riverside, and Imperial Counties, CATCH is a cooperative law enforcement effort that includes investigators from 6 Federal, State and local agencies who investigate high technology and ID theft crime. The San Diego District Attorney's Office is the lead agency. On-line service, you may be asked to give credit card information. When you enter any interactive service site, beware of con artists who may ask you to "confirm" your enrollment service by disclosing passwords or the credit card account number used. Don't give them out.

