



Cape & Islands District Attorney's Office

District Attorney
Michael D. O'Keefe

IDENTITY THEFT

Don't let it happen to you!

Website: www.mass.gov/da/cape



District Attorney Michael D. O'Keefe suggests that you take these precautions to avoid becoming a victim:

- ♦ Do not give your personal information, i.e. social security number, mother's maiden name, to anyone unless you have initiated the contact and know who you are dealing with.
- ♦ Do not respond to phone, e-mail or mail solicitations from businesses attempting to confirm your personal information in exchange for an offer of something that seems too good to be true.

- Destroy, tear up or shred any credit applications or any documents with your personal information before you throw them away.
- Review your monthly statements and report any unauthorized charges.
- Order yearly credit reports and check your credit history for fraudulent activity. Contact one of these three national credit reporting agencies:

EQUIFAX
800-270-3435 or 800-525-6285

TRANSUNION
800-680-7289

EXPERIAN
888-397-3742

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE THE VICTIM OF IDENTITY THEFT?

Step 1. Close any problem account

Contact the credit card companies, banks or any other creditors to close the accounts that you know have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.

Step 2. Contact the Credit Bureaus

Contact the fraud department of any one of the three major credit bureaus to place a fraud alert on your credit file. The fraud alert requires that creditors contact you before opening any new accounts or making any changes to your existing accounts. When you place a fraud alert on your credit file, all three credit bureaus are required by law to automatically send a credit report free of charge to you.

This “one-call” fraud alert will remain on your credit file for at least 90 days.

Step 3. Contact the Fraud Department of each of your Creditors

Make sure that each of your creditors are aware that an identity thief may have your account information. Ask each of your creditors to place a “fraud alert” on your account.

Step 4. Promptly make a report with your local police department

File a police report with your local police department, keep a copy for yourself, and give a copy to your creditors and the credit bureaus.

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