

Identity Theft Victim's Packet

Information and Instructions

This packet is to be completed once you have contacted Scranton Police Department and obtained a police report number related to your identity theft case. To obtain a police report number call Central Records Division at 570-348-4150. Please keep track of your report number as creditors, financial institutions and credit reporting agencies will ask for it.

My Scranton Police Department Report is:

This packet contains information to assist you in the correction of your credit and to help ensure that you are not responsible for the debts incurred by the identity thief. In addition, this packet includes information that will allow you to obtain financial records related to the fraudulent accounts and provide those records to law enforcement, without which we cannot conduct an investigation for prosecution. We recognize that some victims are only interested in the correction of their credit and do not necessarily wish for prosecution; therefore, we request that you only submit this packet to Scranton Police Department if you desire prosecution. *It is important to understand that in the event that a suspect is identified and arrested and the case proceeds to court, you as the victim would be required to appear and testify.*

Completion of dispute letters that provide us with necessary documentation is required before we can begin investigating your case for prosecution. In identity theft cases it is difficult to identify the suspect(s) as they often use inaccurate information such as addresses and phone numbers. Often, the cell phones that identity thieves use are non-traceable prepaid phones or opened with fraudulent information. Frequently the investigator cannot find evidence to prove who actually used the victim's name and/or personal information over the phone or internet. *** It is important to note that even if the suspect cannot be identified for prosecution, it will not affect your ability to correct the fraudulent accounts and remove them from your credit. Furthermore, when you report your identity crime to the Scranton Police Department, all of the relevant information from your case is entered into our database which will allow us to cross-reference your report with potential suspects who are involved in or arrested on other cases.***

NOTE:

- If you suspect someone is using your personal information for employment and there is no evidence of other identity fraud, please see the section for contacting the Social Security Administration under Additional Useful Information. Do not contact the employer directly as they may warn the suspect employee. It may not be necessary to complete this packet.
- If your name and/or information is used by someone else to avoid a traffic ticket or any criminal prosecution, please contact the agency investigating the original crime. It may not be necessary to complete this packet.

Helpful Hints:

- Remember that each creditor has different policies and procedures for correcting fraudulent accounts.
 - Do not provide originals and be sure to keep copies of everything you provide to the creditors or companies involved in the identity theft.
 - Write down all dates, times and the names of individuals you speak to regarding the identity theft and correction of your credit.
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Step 1: Contact your bank and other credit card issuers.

If the theft involved **existing bank accounts** (checking or savings accounts as well as credit or debit card) you should do the following:

- Close the account that was used fraudulently or put stop payments on all outstanding checks that might have been written without your knowledge.
- Close all credit card accounts that were used fraudulently.
- Close any account accessible by debit card if it has been accessed fraudulently.
- Open up new accounts protected with a secret password or personal identification number (PIN)

If the identity theft involved the creation of **new bank accounts**, you should do the following:

- Call the involved financial institution and notify them of the identity theft.
 - They will likely require additional notification in writing. (see step 4)
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Step 2: Contact all three (3) major credit reporting bureaus.

First request the credit bureaus place a "Fraud Alert" on your file. A fraud alert will put a notice on your credit report that you have been the victim of identity theft. Merchants and financial institutions **may** opt to contact you directly before any new credit is taken out in your name. **Some states allow for a Security Freeze in which a PIN can be designated on your credit file and subsequently the PIN must then be given in order for credit to be extended. Ask the credit reporting bureaus if your state is participating in the Security Freeze Program.**

www.scamsafe.com – provides useful information related to identity theft and indicates which states participate in the Security Freeze program.

www.annualcreditreport.com – provides one free credit report, per credit bureau agency, per year, with subsequent credit reports available at a nominal fee.

The following is a list of the three (3) major credit reporting bureaus for victims to report fraud:

Equifax	TransUnion	Experian
Consumer Fraud Division	Fraud Victim Assistance Dept	Nat. Consumer Assist
800-525-6285	800-680-7289	888-397-3742
P.O. Box 740256	P.O. Box 6790	P.O. Box 9530
Atlanta, GA 30374	Fullerton, CA 92834	Allen, TX 75013

Step 3: File a report with the Federal Trade Commission.

You can go on-line to file an identity theft complaint with the FTC www.consumer.gov/idtheft.com or by calling **1-877-IDTHEFT**.

Step 4: Contact creditors involved in the Identity Theft by phone and in writing.

This step involves contacting all the companies or institutions that provided credit or opened new accounts for the suspect or suspects. Some examples include banks, mortgage companies, utility companies, telephone companies, cell phone companies, etc. Provide the creditors with the completed Identity Theft Affidavit (some may require that you use their own affidavit), Letter of Dispute, and a copy of the FACTA Law.

FTC Identity Theft Affidavit

A copy of the FTC Identity Theft Affidavit can be found at the end of this packet. This is the same affidavit that the FTC makes available to victims of identity theft. The affidavit requests information regarding you as the victim, how the fraud occurred, law enforcement's actions, documentation checklist and Fraudulent Account Statement. NOTE. Some creditors, financial institutions, or collection agencies have their own affidavit that you may have to complete.

Letters of Dispute

Sample copies of the Letters of Dispute can also be found at the end of this packet. This letter needs to be completed for every creditor involved in the identity theft. The letter of dispute should contain information related to the fraudulent account(s), your dispute of the account(s), and your request for the information to be corrected. In addition, the letter should reference FACTA and make a request for copies of any and all records related to the fraudulent accounts be provided to you and made available to the Scranton Police Department.

FACTA Law

A portion of the FACTA Law can also be found at the end of this packet. As previously discussed in this packet, FACTA allows for you to obtain copies of any and all records related to the fraudulent accounts. You are then permitted to provide law enforcement with copies of the records you received related to the fraudulent accounts; thereby allowing us to bypass the sometimes difficult process of obtaining subpoenas for the very same information. It also allows you to request the information be made available to the Scranton Police Department. We have found it useful to provide a copy of the FACTA Law with the submission of the Identity Theft Affidavit and Letter of Dispute to the individual creditors.

Step 5: Submit the Identity Theft Affidavit and copies of all information and records obtained from the creditors with regard to the fraudulent accounts to:

**Scranton Police Department – Detective Division
100 South Washington Avenue
Scranton, PA 18503**

To avoid confusion and to ensure that all items are forwarded to the assigned detective, we request that you submit everything at once and if possible do not send items separately. Be sure to reference your police report number on all items submitted. The information can be hand delivered or mailed. **Please remember that some victims are only interested in the correction of their credit and do not necessarily wish for prosecution. Therefore, we request that you only submit this packet to Scranton Police Department if you desire prosecution and would be willing and available to appear and testify should a suspect be identified and arrested.**

Additional Useful Information -

Other entities you may want to report your identity theft to:

- ✓ **Post Office** – If you suspect that your mail has been stolen or diverted with a false change-of-address request, contact your local postal inspector. You can obtain the address and telephone number of the postal inspector for your area at United States Postal Service website: <http://www.usps.com/ncsc/locators/findis.html> or by calling 800-275-8777.
- ✓ **Social Security Administration** – If you suspect that someone is using your social security number to obtain employment, contact the Social Security Administration's fraud hotline at 1-800-269-0271. Order a copy of your Personal Earnings and Benefit Estimate Statement (PEBES) to check the accuracy of your work history on file with the Social Security Administration. You can obtain a PEBES application at your local Social Security office or at <http://www.ssa.gov/online/ssa-7004.pdf>.
- ✓ **State Department** – If your passport has been stolen, notify the passport office in writing. You can obtain additional information from the State Department's website: <http://travel.state.gov/reportppt.html>.
- ✓ **If you are contacted by a collection agency** - about a debt for which you are not responsible, immediately notify them that you did not create the debt and that you are a victim of identity theft. Follow up with the collection agency and creditor in writing and include a copy of your police report, ID Theft Affidavit, Letter of Dispute and a copy of the FACTA Law.