



Identity Theft Worksheet

Developed to assist victim recovery, enhance investigation/prosecution, and inform community.

How Are Identities Stolen?

Thieves use various methods to steal personal identifying information.

The most common methods include:

- Stealing mail such as credit card statements, bank statements, pre-approved credit card applications, checks, and tax-related documents from residential mailboxes.
- Stealing purses and wallets from homes, businesses, and vehicles.
- “Dumpster diving” or rummaging through the trash of homes and businesses.
- Digging through the trash at dumps.
- Stealing information from their place of employment.
- Bribing others to steal information from their place of employment.
- “Phishing” or sending emails claiming to be from a legitimate business or bank asking for personal information.
- “Hacking” or breaking into databases to access information.
- “Skimming” customers’ credit card numbers by swiping the cards through a small data device that captures all the information on the cards.
- Planting devices on ATM machines to capture debit and credit card information.
- “Shoulder-surfing” or observing another person’s actions in order to obtain information such as account numbers, passwords, and PINs.
- “Pre-texting” or making telephone calls claiming to be a legitimate business, bank, or credit card company representative and asking for personal information.
- Accessing credit bureau reports by pretending to be a business owner or employed by an organization having legal right to request credit bureau reports.
- Pretending to be a business owner or employed by an organization having the legal right to “run background checks” on customers or employees.
- Changing addresses on accounts to divert the mail to a location where they can retrieve it.