



***PROTECT  
YOURSELF FROM  
IDENTITY  
THEFT***

***Consumer  
Protection  
Department  
State Bank of  
Pakistan  
Karachi***

## **IDENTITY THEFT**

Identity theft is a form of fraud or cheating of another person's identity in which someone pretends to be someone else by assuming that person's identity, typically in order to access resources or obtain credit and other benefits in that person's name. The victim of identity theft (here meaning the person whose identity has been assumed by the identity thief) can suffer adverse consequences if he or she is held accountable for the perpetrator's actions. Organizations and individuals who are duped or defrauded by the identity thief can also suffer adverse consequences and losses, and to that extent are also victims.

### **Warning Signals for Identity Theft**

There are many warning signs to tell that your identity has been stolen, such as:

- denied credit or loans for no apparent reason.
- monthly credit card statements, etc. stop arriving.
- receive a credit card you did not apply for.
- you get collection calls about unknown debts.
- receive bills from places you never spent at to; receive bills from the collection agency.
- you notice some of your mail is missing.
- your consumer credit information report contains financial facility you didn't availed.

### **Types of identity theft**

#### **Character identity theft:**

Someone impersonates you and commits a crime in your name resulting in warrants issued in your name, arrests made, and time spent in jail.

#### **Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) identity theft:**

Someone steals your CNIC and may use it fraudulently. CNIC is a key document and might be used in:

- account opening at banks,
- obtaining credit/debit card,
- preparing property documents,
- obtaining mortgage and other types of financial facilities,

#### **Credit identity theft.**

Someone uses your information to obtain loans, goods, or services and does not pay the bills. The accumulating unpaid bills end up going to collection, which can affect your credit worthiness.

## **SAFETY MEASURES TO AVOID IDENTITY THEFTS AND FRAUDS:**

### **Internet Safety**

Make sure your computer is secure if you plan to do anything personal on the Internet. Don't use a credit card online to pay bills or do any shopping unless it is a secure site. Select difficult passwords for any sites that contain personal information. These include: credit card, bank, phone, Internet, and insurance accounts. Use a combination of letters, numbers, and special characters to make stronger passwords.

### **Personal Information**

Use care when giving out any personal data. If anyone calls and asks for personal information, do everything to verify the caller's identity. For example, your bank will not call and ask for any personal information because that is all on file/record of the bank. Try to limit the amount of information you have listed on personal cheques to your name and address. Never give your CNIC or any other personal information to someone who calls and offers you a credit card, prize, or other valuable item over the phone. You can always ask for a written request.

### **Banking**

When you receive bank and credit card statements every month, look each one over to make sure there is no unusual information. Keep copies of your monthly statements and checks for one year. This will be useful if you ever have to dispute a financial issue. Make sure no one is standing behind you when you use your ATM card. Identity thieves can steal information by taking a picture of a person's card or password information by fixing skimming devices and camera at ATMs. If you see anything unusual associated with the ATM, immediately inform the bank.

### **Mail and Trash**

Use extra care in depositing your credit cards bills in specified drop box. Make sure you don't write any account information on the outside of envelopes with bill payments. Shred any personal information you throw away. This includes: charge receipts, copies of credit applications, insurance forms, bank statements, and expired credit cards or credit offers you get in the mail.

If you have become a victim of identity theft, report it to your credit issuer as soon as possible so that steps can be taken to control the damage.