



# Protect Yourself from Identity Theft

Identity theft and cyber crime are growing problems in our 21st century world. Find out what you can do to protect yourself, what to do if you have been a victim, and what to expect from OPD.

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## What is Identity Theft?

Identity theft is illegally using someone else's personal information (for example, a Social Security number) in order to obtain money or credit.

California Penal Code Section 530.5 (a) states that any person who **willfully obtains** personal identifying information of another person **without consent** and **uses it for an unlawful purpose** has committed identity theft.

Examples of unlawful purpose include:

- Taking over the victim's financial accounts.
  - Opening a new bank account.
  - Applying for loans, credit cards, and phone services by using the victim's personal information.
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## How to File an Identity Theft Report

Victims of identity theft who live or work in Oakland can make a report to the Oakland Police Department.

- Use the online reporting system to file your [Identity Theft Report](https://secure.coplogic.com/dors/startreport/160154901) (<https://secure.coplogic.com/dors/startreport/160154901>).
  - Once the report has been reviewed by an officer you will receive a copy via email.
  - The investigators may or may not investigate the case based on the information provided in the report. **INVESTIGATORS WILL ONLY CONTACT VICTIMS IF THEY ARE ASSIGNED THE CASE.**
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## Jurisdictional Limitations

A victim of identity theft may make a police report with the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction over his/her actual residency or place of business. The law enforcement agency is required to take the report.

- However, if the suspected crime was committed in a different jurisdiction (i.e., the suspect is using the victim's information to cash checks in other cities), the local law enforcement agency does not have to investigate the case.
  - That agency may refer the matter to the law enforcement agency where the suspected crime was committed for further investigation.
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## **What You Can Expect from the Oakland Police Department**

- In most cases, OPD will **not** conduct additional or follow-up investigations if the fraudulent activity occurred outside of the City of Oakland.
  - OPD will receive the report involving suspect activity and may forward a copy of this report to the agency or agencies with investigation jurisdiction where the identity theft or transaction(s) are believed to have occurred.
  - OPD will not have any information about investigations by other agencies. You must contact them directly.
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## **Protect Yourself from Identity Theft**

Minimize theft opportunities:

- Shred material with personal information on it before throwing it away.
  - Shred credit card offers.
  - Do not put your outgoing mail in your mailbox. Drop it off at the post office or in a street postal box.
  - Protect your incoming mail. Get a locked mailbox.
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## **How Can I Handle Phishing email?**

**What is "Phishing"?**

- "Phishing" is attempting to steal someone's identity using the internet or email.
  - Imposter e-mails may look like the real thing, but are actually from thieves masquerading as legitimate businesses.
  - You will be asked to disclose, on a phony web site or in a phony dialog box, personal information such as your account data or Social Security number.
  - Depending on the information you provide, thieves can access your accounts, open new ones, steal your funds, and even commit crimes . . . all in your name.
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## **Get Help – Learn More**

- If you have been the victim of identity theft, contact The Identity Theft Council at 1-888-771-0767.
- Get help or learn more:
  - Federal Trade Commission Identity Theft Site website.  
(<http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0014-identity-theft>)
  - Alameda County Identity Theft Council website.  
(<http://www.identitytheftcouncil.org>)
  - Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3).  
(<http://www.ic3.gov/preventiontips.aspx#item-2#item-2>)