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ID Theft Red Flag Rules & Your Consumer Reports

Identity Theft Red Flag Rules Help Protect Consumers' Identities

Effective November 1, 2009, all federally regulated banks, credit card companies and other financial institutions are required to be in full compliance with federal "Red Flag" Rules. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the federal bank regulatory agencies, and the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) have issued these regulations to help banks and financial institutions protect customers against identity theft. The goal of the rules is to "flag" attempted and actual identity theft early, thereby reducing consequences associated with identity theft.

Under the Red Flags Rules, financial institutions and creditors must develop a written program that identifies and detects the relevant warning signs – or "red flags" – of identity theft. These may include, for example, unusual account activity, fraud alerts on a consumer report, or attempted use of suspicious account application documents.

The Red Flag Rules also address the incidence of requests for a change of address, followed by requests for additional or replacement cards. (This is a common technique that identity thieves use to take over victims' accounts.) Further, the rules require users of consumer reports to develop reasonable policies and procedures to utilize when reviewing a notice of address discrepancy from a consumer reporting agency. Moreover, the red flags include additional guidelines to help institutions spot other suspicious activity.

The Red Flag Rules signal greater identity theft awareness by industry and consumers. While these new protections are a positive step forward, consumers should not rely on them alone to safeguard their financial accounts and credit cards from identity theft. Consumers should remain vigilant, paying attention to their bank and credit card accounts, and checking credit reports regularly.

If consumers notice anything unusual, or any discrepancies, they should contact an Identity Fraud, Inc. FCRA Certified Case Manager at 866-443-3728 and the financial institution or creditor of the unauthorized activity.

For more information on the "Red Flag" Rules, visit the Federal Trade Commission website at:

<http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/business/alerts/alt050.shtm>

Specialty Credit and Financial Data Reports Could Be Free To You

The federal law that grants consumers free credit reports, also allows consumers free access to other credit, financial and personal records used by insurance companies, landlords, employers and others to determine your creditworthiness.

Your Credit Report

www.annualcreditreport.com
877-FACT-ACT
877-322-8228

Credit reports track credit consumers' payment records on individual credit accounts and reveal how well or how poorly each account is being paid. The reports also document credit requests and notices of liens, judgments and other "derogatory" remarks as well as remarks from the consumer, among other information.

Your credit report is also free if you are denied credit, if you want to challenge an entry because of fraud, if you are unemployed or if you are on welfare.

Your C.L.U.E. Report

<http://www.choicepoint.com/consumer/index.html>
888-497-0011

C.L.U.E stands for Claims Loss Underwriting Exchange, and is a database that reports homeowners and auto insurance claims. ChoiceTrust was also offering consumers free annual pre-employment screening records and tenant-history reports, data it also collects.

Your MIB Consumer File

http://www.mib.com/html/request_your_record.html
866-692-6901

A MIB Consumer File provides life insurance companies with medical data.

Your ChexSystems Report

<https://www.consumerdebit.com/consumerinfo/us/en/index.htm>
800-428-9623

ChexSystems, Inc provides deposit account verification services to its financial institution members to aid them in identifying account applicants who may have a history of account mishandling.

**If you think you are a victim of
identity theft, please contact
Identity Fraud, Inc. at:**

**1-866-4-IDFRAUD
(1-866-443-3728)**