Identity Theft and Best Practices to Protect Against It

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Abstract

Identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes in the world and the US. An unauthorized person who knows your Social Security number could use it to obtain other personal information about you. Identity thieves can use your number and good credit to apply for more credit in your name. If you then fail to pay your bills using your credit card, your credit score will suffer. You may not realize that someone is using your number until your credit application is denied or you receive a call from an unknown creditor demanding payment for items you did not purchase. In this paper, we study the identity theft, how to prevent it, warning signs and Tips.

Index Terms: Identity Theft, security, privacy, trust, Social Security Number, SSN, Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3), The Federal Bureau of Investigation.

1. Introduction

Identity theft is when someone uses your information (such as your name, social security number, date of birth, etc.) to impersonate you and typically uses that information to steal from you. The Federal Trade Commission says in 2021 it received 1.43 million consumer identity theft complaints. Freeze your credit with all three major credit bureaus. Protect your social security number. Please be careful about phishing and spoofing, and do not respond to unknown calls or emails. Be careful with attachments. Use strong passwords and add authentication steps. Use a digital wallet when needed Make payments online or in-store, protect your mobile and electronic devices with electronic device passwords, conduct banking transactions using banking apps instead of your mobile browser, and check your credit report regularly to make sure your account is safe. Protect against healthcare fraud by properly reporting and monitoring financial and medical reports.

Victims of identity theft can change their social security number by just proving their identity, age, and U.S. citizenship or immigration status., and evidence that they`re having ongoing problems because of the misuse. Generally speaking, issuing a new number probably won`t solve all problems. This is because other governmental agencies (such as the IRS and state motor vehicle agencies) and private businesses (such as banks and credit reporting companies) will have records under your old number. Along with other personal information, credit reporting companies use the number to identify your credit record. So, using a new number won`t guarantee you a fresh start. If victims think they have been scammed, several federal government agencies should be contacted such as the Social Security Administration and the FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3). The Social Security Administration publishes a useful booklet called "Identity Theft and Your Social Security Number." In addition to basic protection tips. The easiest way to contact Social Security, you visit IdentityTheft.gov to report identity

theft and, more importantly, set up a recovery plan. The Federal Bureau of Investigation provides a convenient avenue to report suspected criminal or illegal civil acts at the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3). Once you report a crime, the site then alerts appropriate law enforcement or regulatory agencies that would have jurisdiction over the matter.

2. **Cautions to Protect Your Identity.**
   o In general, don't give your SSN to anyone unless you're sure that person has a reason and right to give it to him/her.
   o Do not use the entire SSN or any part of it as a password. Password files can be stolen and decrypted. It's also possible that someone will just be looking over your shoulder as you enter your password file.
   o Do not enter your SSN in emails or instant messages. Most of these messages can be intercepted and read.
   o Monitor your bank and credit card accounts. You will receive a text message or phone call if your transactions exceed a certain amount or if someone tries to access your account using your SSN.
   o To store your identity and important information, consider identity protection services like IdentityForce, LifeLock, and Identity Guard.

Conclusion

Identity theft is the crime of obtaining another person's personal or financial information to use that identity for fraudulent purposes, such as making fraudulent transactions or purchases. Identity theft occurs in a variety of ways, and victims typically suffer damage to their credit, finances, and reputation. For future, we plan to extend the current work with the interested studies introduced in [2-76].

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