

## What is identity theft?

**I**dentify theft occurs when someone uses your personal identity information without your knowledge or consent to commit a crime, such as fraud or theft.

### How can I avoid becoming a victim?

#### At home:

- Always store any cards and documents containing personal information in a secure place, and shred them after they expire.
- Review the balances on your statements from banks and credit card companies regularly and report any discrepancies right away.
- Keep your computer and its contents secured.
- Shop and bank safely online. Most Internet browsers indicate when you are using a secure link.
- Keep a list of the names, account numbers and expiration dates of your cards in a secure place.

#### In the marketplace:

- Carry as few cards and identity documents as possible, and always check to see the credit card you get back is your own.
- Beware of mail, phone or Internet promotions that ask for personal information.
- Never tell anyone the password or PIN you use at the Automated Banking Machine, and always make sure no one is watching when you use an ABM.
- Cut up expired and unused credit and debit cards. The card may have expired but the number may still be valid.

## What if I am a victim?

To help protect your identity, Ontario has introduced a new *Identity Theft Statement*.

**Step 1:** Contact each company that provided the identity thief with unauthorized credit, money, goods or services. Ask them to investigate the occurrence, cancel and reissue any cards that were affected and close any fraudulent or affected accounts.

**Step 2:** Complete and send Ontario's new standard **Identity Theft Statement** to quickly notify credit issuers and financial institutions of your loss. Companies that accept this statement will use the information to begin an investigation into the incident.

**Step 3:** Contact Canada's two national credit reporting agencies, TransUnion Canada and Equifax Canada. Ask each agency to send you a copy of your credit report, and discuss whether you should have a fraud alert placed on your file. There is no charge for obtaining a copy of your credit report.

**Step 4:** Report the incident to your local police department and ask them to take a report.

**Step 5:** Report the incident to PhoneBusters National Call Centre toll free at 1-888-495-8501.

**Step 6:** If your driver's licence, birth certificate, social insurance card, passport or any other government-issued documents have been lost or stolen, notify the appropriate government office immediately so the document can be cancelled and a new one issued.

For more information, call 416-326-1234 or 1-800-267-8097, click on Ontario's Life Event Bundle at [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca) or visit your nearest Government Information Centre.

### For more information:

#### Office of the Registrar General:

1-800-461-2156 or 416-325-8305

[www.cbs.gov.on.ca/mcbs/english/births&marriages.htm](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca/mcbs/english/births&marriages.htm)

#### ID theft statement and info package:

[www.cbs.gov.on.ca/mcbs/english/id\\_theft\\_statement.htm](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca/mcbs/english/id_theft_statement.htm)

#### Lost wallet:

[www.gov.on.ca/MBS/english/myontarioweb/wallet.html](http://www.gov.on.ca/MBS/english/myontarioweb/wallet.html)

#### Ministry Information:

Ministry of Consumer and Business Services  
250 Yonge Street, 35th Floor  
Toronto ON M5B 2N5

In Toronto: 416-326-8555

Toll Free: 1-800-268-1142

For the hearing/speech impaired: 416-326-8566

E-mail: [cbsinfo@cbs.gov.on.ca](mailto:cbsinfo@cbs.gov.on.ca)

Web site: [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca)

#### PhoneBusters:

[www.phonebusters.com](http://www.phonebusters.com)

#### Equifax Canada:

1-800-465-7166

[www.equifax.ca](http://www.equifax.ca)

#### TransUnion Canada:

1-877-525-3823

[www.tuc.ca](http://www.tuc.ca)

#### Reporting Economic Crime Online (RECOL):

[www.recol.ca](http://www.recol.ca)

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# Keep Your Identity Safe



## What you need to know to protect yourself

visit [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca)

## Protecting your identity

The Government of Ontario is working to help you keep your identity safe. By understanding how to protect your identity you can help prevent crime.

### Birth Certificates: Your Identity

Your Ontario birth certificate is proof of your identity. It is an important way to prove your name, age and where you were born. You need a birth certificate to apply for most government identification and services, including your health card, driver's licence, passport and social benefits.

#### *To help protect your birth certificate Ontario has put strict rules in place:*

Ontario now requires a guarantor to sign your birth certificate application. A guarantor will confirm that all statements made by you are true. A guarantor is a Canadian citizen who:

- currently serves in a recognized profession such as a judge, teacher, doctor, police officer, mayor, lawyer or pharmacist;
- has known you personally for at least two years, and;
- is confident that the statements made by you are true.

Ontarians should only have one birth certificate at any time. For example, separated parents may not each have a copy of their child's birth certificate.

## How can I help protect my identity?

- Get a guarantor to sign your application for a birth certificate and know the rules to complete the application properly.
- Store your birth certificate and other vital documents, such as your passport, in a safe place.
- Do not carry your birth certificate or a photocopy of your birth certificate in your wallet or purse.
- Confirm whether you need your birth certificate when you plan to travel outside Canada.
- Report a lost or stolen birth certificate to the Office of the Registrar General (ORG) immediately, by calling 416-325-8305 in Toronto, or toll free at 1-800-461-2156. Your lost birth certificate will be cancelled so no one else can use it.
- If you find a birth certificate, notify the ORG or deliver it to the police at once.

## Your Identity

### STEP 1:

#### Apply for a birth certificate

Birth certificates can only be issued for births that occurred in Ontario and have been registered.

The same application is used whether you need a birth certificate, a certified copy of a birth registration or a search for a birth record.

Forms are available:

**Online:** [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca)

**By mail:**

Office of the Registrar General  
P.O. Box 4600  
189 Red River Road  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6L8

Government Information Centres are found in more than 50 communities across Ontario. Call 416-326-1234 or 1-800-461-2156 for the location nearest you or visit [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca).

### STEP 2:

#### Get a guarantor

The birth certificate application requires the signature of a guarantor. A guarantor is a Canadian citizen in a recognized profession, such as a judge, teacher or doctor who has known the applicant personally for at least two years, and is confident that the statements made on the application are true.

For a full list of eligible guarantors, visit the Ministry of Consumer and Business Services Web site at [www.cbs.gov.on.ca](http://www.cbs.gov.on.ca) or refer to the birth certificate application form.

### STEP 3:

#### Include proper payment

You may pay by:

- Credit card (VISA, MasterCard or American Express) if you wish to apply by fax to 1-807-343-7459.
- Credit card, cheque or money order if you apply by mail to:  
Office of the Registrar General  
P.O. Box 4600  
189 Red River Road  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 6L8

### STEP 4:

#### Plan ahead!

If you plan to travel abroad or require a birth certificate for any reason, apply for your birth certificate well in advance.

For current information on processing times for regular service, visit our web site or call 416-325-8305.

Expedited service requires 10 days and proof of urgency.

#### What is proof of urgency?

In order to qualify for expedited service, proof of urgency must be provided. This proof may include:

- proof of a medical emergency;
- a letter from a consulate, embassy confirming an appointment;
- airline tickets;
- a letter confirming an appointment for an immigration hearing;
- the applicant's wedding invitation.