

Introduction

Identity theft is a type of fraud that involves the unauthorised use of someone's personal information. Credentials that contain personal information such as driver licences and passports are of most value to criminals. This Fact Sheet provides information about what you can do to prevent the theft of your physical identity documents and steps you can take if it ever happens to you.

Quick facts

- There is the possibility that if your credentials are stolen you will experience identity theft.
- Targeted credentials include passports, driver licences, Medicare cards, credit/debit cards, bank statements, tax statements, and utility bills.
- Credentials may be stolen from cars, homes, unattended wallets, and/or unsecured or irregularly checked mailboxes.
- The most common identity misuses reported to IDCARE following theft of credentials are the creation of new accounts (such as credit card or transaction accounts) or gaining access to existing bank accounts.

Prevention checklist

How do I prevent my credentials from being physically stolen?

- ☐ Ensure your home has adequate physical security measures to deter thieves.
- ☐ Keep credentials in a secure place at home. If you can't lock them up, make sure that their storage location is not obvious or too easily accessible.
- ☐ Lock your letterbox and, if you are going away, arrange for someone to collect your mail and keep an eye out.
- ☐ Arrange for alternative ways to receive your credentials and statements than by mail (e.g. collecting in person or receiving statements by email).
- ☐ Avoid leaving your wallet and documents in your vehicle or highly visible locations.

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Detection and response

- ☐ Make a note of when you are likely to receive credentials and statements and don't delay chasing them up if they don't arrive.
- ☐ Check your credit report – it's free to do so every three months. Check out our fact sheets on [Credit Reports](#).
- ☐ If you suspect credentials and statements are stolen, let the issuing organisations know, notify your bank and ask for more security, and place a ban on your credit file (it's free to do this and it will prevent most criminals from getting credit in your name).

Relevant IDCARE fact sheets

- [Understanding Identity Theft](#)

For additional support or information, contact IDCARE:

Submit [Get Help Form](#) | 1800 595 160 (Aus) | 0800 121 068 (NZ)

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