

Identity Theft

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Identity Theft is the unauthorized collection of personal information and its subsequent use for criminal reasons such as to open credit cards and bank accounts, redirect mail, set up cellphone service, rental vehicles, and even get a job. These actions can mean severe consequences for the victim, who will be left with bills, charges, and a damaged credit score.

There are many ways in which an individual's identity can be stolen, but people may be particularly vulnerable to this crime online, where savvy criminals can gain access to personal information through a number of avenues. According to the U.S. Federal Trade Commission, approximately nine million Americans have their identities stolen each year. This theft is increasingly being perpetrated electronically.

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