

Experian's credit fraud services

Fighting the crime and helping victims recover



Credit fraud is a crime that can leave its victims emotionally devastated. Prosecution is difficult because law enforcement lacks the resources to pursue most cases. The consumer's monetary losses usually don't exceed a financial threshold that makes it cost-effective to investigate. Yet, credit fraud's overall costs are borne by us all. Because financial institutions must pass fraud losses along to their good customers, in a sense we all are victims of credit fraud.

Experian®, in its role as a nationwide consumer credit reporting company, continuously seeks innovative ways to aid consumers recovering from credit fraud and to help businesses detect and prevent fraud.

Experian's fraud victim assistance process

If you are a victim of fraud or identity theft, or have reason to believe you are at increased risk, simply take the following steps to protect your credit history.

Step 1

Contact Experian's National Consumer Assistance Center

- You can visit Experian's online fraud center or call its automated voice attendant 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Experian's Web site address is www.experian.com. Its toll-free telephone number is 1 888 EXPERIAN (1 888 397 3742).

- A temporary Initial Security Alert can be added immediately to your credit file. This alerts creditors to take additional precautions before extending new credit. You also may provide a telephone number at which a lender can contact you before granting credit.
- When you add an Initial Security Alert, Experian removes your name from prescreened credit solicitation lists for six months.
- You may request a free credit report to be mailed, or you can access your credit report immediately if you add the Initial Security Alert online.
- A Federal Trade Commission–approved summary of identity theft victims' rights is provided.



Be aware that the presence of a security alert or victim statement should not interfere with your daily use of a credit card or banking checking accounts. A security alert or victim statement may limit your ability to obtain instant credit for in-store purchases. If you prefer to purchase items on a new line of credit established at a retail store and you must take possession of those items immediately, your request for credit may be delayed because of the additional authentication steps needed to verify your identity and prevent fraud.

- Experian notifies the other nationwide consumer credit reporting companies that you requested an Initial Security Alert. The other companies then add a similar alert to their files and send a confirmation directly to you.

Step 2

Review your credit report; add a fraud victim alert

- Once you get your credit report, review it carefully for fraudulent information.
- If there are signs of fraud, you can dispute the information immediately online or you can call the telephone number provided with the report. When you call, you can enter disputes using the automated system or say “agent” to receive assistance.
- The Experian credit report also includes creditor contact information to help consumers remove the fraudulent account information from the creditor’s records.
- Upon submitting an Identity Theft Report and documentation to verify your identity and telephone number, you may have an Extended Fraud Victim Alert added to your credit file. The Extended Fraud Victim Alert remains for seven years. It tells creditors that you are a fraud victim and asks that creditors contact you at a telephone number you specify before granting credit.
- When you add an Extended Fraud Victim Alert, your name will be removed from prescreened credit solicitation lists for five years, and you can ask for up to two complimentary credit reports within 12 months after you request the alert.
- Experian notifies the other nationwide consumer credit reporting companies that you requested an Extended Fraud Victim Alert. Equifax and TransUnion then add similar alerts to their files.

Step 3

Experian initiates an investigation and removes fraudulent information

- Experian notifies the creditors or data furnishers of alleged fraudulent

items, typically through an immediate, electronic information transfer.

- Experian must complete an investigation involving fraudulent information within 30 to 45 days. If the data contributor cannot verify information as accurate within the statutory deadlines, Experian’s systems delete or update the information and prevent reappearance of the data disputed by the consumer as inaccurate. However, information can be replaced as allowed by law if the creditor certifies the information was correct as reported.
- Experian blocks any information in a consumer’s credit file that resulted from alleged identity theft when the consumer supplies appropriate proof of identity, a copy of a valid Identity Theft Report, identification of the specific disputed information and a statement that the information is not related to a transaction made by the consumer.

Step 4

Experian notifies creditors and other nationwide credit reporting companies

- Experian notifies the creditor if data the creditor reported is blocked, deleted or modified as the result of a request accompanied by an Identity Theft Report. The Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACT Act) requires creditors to take steps to prevent reinserting the data.
- Experian shares requests to block fraudulent data and information disputed as fraudulent with the other nationwide credit reporting companies.

Experian’s fraud prevention and detection tools

- **Initial Security Alert** — Experian offers consumers who have reason to believe they may be victims of fraud the ability to place a temporary fraud alert statement on the file. This alert is transmitted to all users of consumer credit reports. Its purpose is to alert creditors that a consumer recently has been victimized or has a



time-sensitive concern about identity theft. The alert will be deleted automatically when it expires. This type of fraud prevention may be extended to a seven-year fraud victim alert.

- **Extended Fraud Victim Alert** — Experian offers consumers who are victims of fraud the opportunity to place a long-term fraud prevention statement on their consumer file when they submit a valid Identity Theft Report. The Extended Fraud Victim Alert warns creditors that the consumer has been victimized. Experian offers consumers the ability to place two telephone numbers in the victim statement so creditors can call the consumer at a designated daytime or evening number when the creditor is processing a potentially fraudulent credit application.
- **Active Duty Alert** — Experian offers members of the U.S. military who are on active duty the opportunity to add an Active Duty Alert to their credit history to help protect them from potential fraud and identity theft. An Active Duty Alert remains for one year and notifies creditors that the consumer is a member of the U.S. military currently

on active duty, enabling them to take appropriate precautions to prevent fraud. When an Active Duty Alert is added, the credit report is removed from prescreen solicitations for two years.

- **Security Freeze** — Consumers nationwide can now freeze their credit files. Doing so will prevent businesses, with some exceptions, from accessing a consumer's credit report unless the consumer first removes the freeze using a personal identification number provided by Experian. Fraud victims can freeze their credit files free of charge. There is a nominal fee for nonvictims. Prices and requirements vary by state.
- **Triple Advantage**SM — This online credit monitoring and notification product alerts consumers within 24 hours to activity in their credit reports that could signal fraud. Members receive daily monitoring of their credit reports from the three national credit reporting companies, e-mail alerts of key changes to their credit reports, unlimited access to their Experian credit report and Experian's PLUS Score,[®] and other credit and financial management resources and information. Visit www.experian.com for more information. An add-on feature allows monitoring of the identifying information of minor children and seniors. Visit www.FamilySecure.com for details.
- **National Fraud Database**SM — Experian created and hosts an industrywide database of known and verified records of fraudulent activities identified by National Fraud DatabaseSM subscribers and consumer fraud victims. The database is used for credit applications, checking accounts and account reviews. The National Fraud Database relies on data reciprocity among the subscribers to obtain and update fraud records.
- **Fraud Shield**SM — This fraud detection and prevention tool alerts creditors to specific areas on a credit application that may require closer review, including inconsistencies or discrepancies found in the Social

Security number, address and other information. Fraud ShieldSM consists of a series of searches and checks, with the consumer's address and Social Security number as the critical identifiers.

- **Precise ID**SM — Experian's comprehensive suite of fraud prevention tools works transparently to protect businesses and consumers from fraud. Precise IDSM combines Experian's National Fraud Database with identity verification tools, Fraud Shield consumer credit data and business-provided information to identify fraud attempts and prevent victimization.

Continuous improvement of Experian's fraud victim assistance

- Educational materials from Experian help consumers better understand how credit reporting works and how to prevent identity theft or recover from victimization.
- Experian's Internet Fraud Center at www.experian.com provides a wealth of information to consumers and fraud victims. Visitors to the Internet Fraud Center can view frequently asked questions and learn more about identity theft and the processes involved with victim assistance, as well as add an Initial Security Alert or Active Duty Alert.
- An automated telephone attendant provides customer service 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. This system allows victims to notify Experian and initiate protection regardless of the time of day.
- Assistance is offered when new types of victimization occur, such as fraud victim assistance for immigrants and minors, or when organizations are struck by "mass fraud."
- Experian guards information on personal credit reports so the reports cannot be used to commit fraud. Those measures include truncating account numbers and omitting correct Social Security numbers from reports when they are sent to consumers so that the information cannot be used to commit fraud if it is intercepted.



- Experian employees who express a desire to advance within the National Consumer Assistance Center must enter into a career progression program. One of the first steps in the program is fraud victim assistance training. This training provides an incentive for consumer assistance personnel to understand and better address concerns of fraud victims and expands our pool of highly qualified resources available to help consumers.
- From consumer advocates to frontline law enforcement officers, Experian works proactively with organizations dealing with the crime of identity theft.

About Experian

Experian is a global leader in providing information, analytical and marketing services to organizations and consumers to help manage the risk and reward of commercial and financial decisions.

Combining its unique information tools and deep understanding of individuals, markets and economies, Experian partners with organizations around

the world to establish and strengthen customer relationships and provide their businesses with competitive advantage.

For consumers, Experian delivers critical information that enables them to make financial and purchasing decisions with greater control and confidence. Clients include organizations from financial services, retail and catalog, telecommunications, utilities, media, insurance, automotive, leisure, e-commerce, manufacturing, property and government sectors.

Experian plc is listed on the London Stock Exchange (EXPN) and is a constituent of the FTSE 100 index. Experian has corporate headquarters in Dublin, Ireland, and has operational headquarters in Costa Mesa, Calif., and Nottingham, UK. The Group employs approximately 15,500 people in 38 countries worldwide, supporting clients in more than 65 countries around the world. Continuing sales for the year ended March 31, 2008, were in excess of \$4 billion.

For more information, visit www.experianplc.com or e-mail us at consumer.education@experian.com.