

Fact Sheet: Identity Theft and Cybercrime Victimization



**CRIME VICTIMS'
INSTITUTE**

COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Executive Director: Mary M. Breaux, Ph.D.

Identity Theft and Cybercrime Victimization: The Facts

Taylor D. Robinson, M.S.

What is Identity Theft and Cybercrime Victimization?

Identity theft and cybercrime victimization can be considered crimes that include the illegal use of another individual's personal identifying information. [1]

Have you Heard?

- Approximately 847,376 complaints of cybercrime were reported to the FBI in 2021, a 7% increase from 2020 [2]
- Identity theft can cost Americans up to \$5.8 billion [3]
- Imposter scams resulted in \$2.8 billion in losses and consumer online shopping \$392 million [3]
- Fraud cases have increased by 70% since 2020 [3]

Risk Factors[4]

Men, older individuals, and individuals with high incomes are at an increased risk for identity theft. Additionally, increased use of online banking programs, online shopping, and social media can increase an individual's chances of experiencing identity theft or cybercrime victimization. Further, if an individual's information was accessed via hacking or phishing fraud increases the risk of identity theft.

What are the Consequences? [4]

Identity theft and cybercrime victims suffer various consequences, such as monetary loss, credit damage, and emotional distress.



March/Volume 3 Issue 13

How to Prevent Identity Theft/ Cybercrime and What to do if You're a Victim [5]

- Place a fraud alert or security freeze on your credit report
- Ask questions before giving out personal identifying information
- Do not share any information over the phone, via mail, or the Internet unless it is a trusted relationship
- Use strong and different passwords for all accounts
- Clear all electronic devices of personal information before discarding them

Resources

9-1-1

Texas

- Office of Texas Attorney General--
<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/consumer-protection>--(800)-621-0508
- Houston Police Department Cyber and Financial Crimes Division--<https://www.houstontx.gov/police/divisions> (713)-884-3131
- Austin Police Department Financial Crime Division--
<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/financial-crime>--(512)-974-5290

National

- FBI Internet Crime Complaint Center
<https://www.ic3.gov>
- Federal Trade Commission
<https://www.identitytheft.gov>

References

- [1] Bellah, J. (2001). Training; Identity theft. *Law and Order*, 49(10), 222-226.
[2] Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2021). *Internet crime report 2021*. FBI.
https://www.ic3.gov/Media/PDF/AnnualReport/2021_IC3Report.pdf
[3] Federal Trade Commission. (2022). *Consumer sentinel network: Data book 2021*. FTC.
https://www.ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/CSN%20Annual%20Data%20Book%202021%20Final%20PDF.pdf
[4] Navarro, J. N., & Clevenger, S. (2017). Why me: Understanding cybercrime victimization. In C. Roberson (Ed.), *Routledge handbook on victims' issues in criminal justice* (pp. 88-101). Routledge
[5] Office of Texas Attorney General. (2023). *Help prevent identity theft*.
<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/consumer-protection/identity-theft/help-prevent-identity-theft>

Texas State University System Board of Regents

Duke Austin

Chairman
Houston

Garry Crain

First Vice Chairman
The Hills

Alan L. Tinsley

Second Vice Chairman
Madisonville

Don Flores

Regent
El Paso

William F. Scott

Regent
Nederland

Stephen Lee

Regent
Beaumont

Sheila Faske

Regent
Rose City

Gabriel Webb

Student Regent
The Hills

Charlie Amato

Regent
San Antonio

Resources

- Texas Abuse Hotline (suspicions of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children, adults with disabilities, or people 65 + <https://www.txabusehotline.org/Login/>
800-252-5400
- Texas Council on Family Violence <https://tcfv.org/survivor-resources/>
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault <https://taasa.org/get-help/>
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-7233
- National Sexual Assault Hotline 800-656-4673
- National Human Trafficking Hotline 888-373-7888
- Aging and Disability Resource Center 855-937-2372
- Victim Connect Resource Center 855-484-2846
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 988