



What can I do to protect my identity?

Recent cybersecurity incidents, including the incidents affecting personnel and background investigations records on U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) systems, have highlighted concerns about how to maintain privacy online and guard against cybersecurity threats. OPM has set up a new online incident resource center at www.opm.gov/cybersecurity which offers information regarding the OPM incidents and directs individuals to materials, training, and useful information on best practices to secure data, protect against identity theft, and stay safe online. This document provides information from the website on steps you can take immediately to protect your identity.

Spot the warning signs of identity theft

Visit IdentityTheft.gov to learn how to set up protections. You can get a free credit report, set up fraud alerts on your accounts, and protect your children/minors from identity theft.

Be aware of phishing scams

Phishing is when a fraudster impersonates a business or someone you trust in order to get your private information. Never click on links you don't trust and don't give out your personal information. Legitimate organizations never ask for your information through texts, pop-up messages, or email. Scammers may call and pretend to be from the government or a business to try to get you to give them sensitive information. If a caller asks for your information, call back using a number you know to be legitimate.

Update your passwords

If the information in your background investigation forms could be used to guess your passwords or if you are using the same password that you did when you filled out your background investigation form, change them. Use complex passwords of 10-12 characters, combining letters, numbers, and special characters. Don't use something that is easily guessable for someone who knows you or has information about you. Don't repeat passwords for several accounts.

Get up to speed on computer security

Review and check up on your practices for safe, secure and responsible online activity. Onguardonline.gov lists helpful steps you can take to make sure your computer is as safe as possible.

If you think your identity has been stolen

If you are concerned that you are experiencing identity theft, visit IdentityTheft.gov. This site explains steps you can take to recover your identity. If you are concerned about your child's identity being stolen, the Federal Trade Commission has information and resources to know what to look for and how to get help.

Be aware of counter-intelligence threats

You can find an informational video, brochure and other information about the measures you can take to ensure the safety of your personal information at the National Counterintelligence and Security Center (NCSC) at <http://www.ncsc.gov>.

Visit www.opm.gov/cybersecurity for more information, or call our automated telephone line at (866)740-7153.