

## **New Mexico Consumers Have the Right to Obtain a Security Freeze or Submit a Declaration of Removal**

You may obtain a security freeze on your credit report to protect your privacy and ensure that credit is not granted in your name without your knowledge. You may submit a declaration of removal to remove information placed in your credit report as a result of being a victim of identity theft. You have a right to place a security freeze on your credit report or submit a declaration of removal pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting and Identity Security Act.

The security freeze will prohibit a consumer reporting agency from releasing any information in your credit report without your express authorization or approval.

The security freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans and services from being approved in your name without your consent. When you place a security freeze on your credit report, you will be provided with a personal identification number, password or similar device to use if you choose to remove the freeze on your credit report or to temporarily authorize the release of your credit report to a specific party or parties or for a specific period of time after the freeze is in place. To remove the freeze or to provide authorization for the temporary release of your credit report, you must contact the consumer reporting agency and provide all of the following:

- (1) the unique personal identification number, password, or similar device provided by the consumer reporting agency;
1. (2) proper identification to verify your identity;
2. (3) information regarding the third party or parties who are to receive the credit report or the period of time for which the credit report may be released to users of the credit report; and
3. (4) payment of a fee, if applicable.

A consumer reporting agency that receives a request from a consumer to lift temporarily a freeze on a credit report shall comply with the request no later than three business days after receiving the request. As of September 1, 2008, a consumer reporting agency shall comply with the request within fifteen minutes of receiving the request by a secure electronic method or by telephone.

A security freeze does not apply in all circumstances, such as where you have an existing account relationship and a copy of your credit report is requested by your existing creditor or its agents for certain types of account review, collection, fraud control or similar activities; for use in setting or adjusting an insurance rate or claim or insurance underwriting; for certain governmental purposes; and for purposes of prescreening as defined in the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act.

If you are actively seeking a new credit, loan, utility, telephone or insurance account, you should understand that the procedures involved in lifting a security freeze may slow your own applications for credit. You should plan ahead and lift a freeze, either completely if you are shopping around or specifically for a certain creditor, with enough advance notice before you apply for a new credit for the lifting to take effect. You should contact a consumer reporting agency and request it to lift the freeze at least three business days before applying. As of September 1, 2008, if you contact a consumer reporting agency by a secure electronic method or by telephone, the consumer reporting agency should lift the freeze within fifteen minutes. You have a right to bring a civil action against a consumer reporting agency that violates your rights under the Fair Credit Reporting and Identity Security Act.