

Tennessee Consumers Have the Right to Obtain a Security Freeze

You have a right to place a "security freeze" on your credit report, which will prohibit a consumer reporting agency from releasing information in your credit report without your express authorization. A security freeze must be requested in writing by certified mail or by electronic means as provided by a consumer reporting agency. The security freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in your name without your consent. If you are actively seeking a new credit, loan, utility, or telephone account, you should understand that the procedures involved in lifting a security freeze may slow your applications for credit. You should plan ahead and lift a freeze in advance of actually applying for new credit. When you place a security freeze on your credit report, you will be provided a personal identification number or password to use if you choose to remove the freeze on your credit report or authorize the release of your credit report for a period of time after the freeze is in place. To provide that authorization you must contact the consumer reporting agency and provide all of the following:

- (1) The personal identification number or password;
- (2) Proper identification to verify your identity; and
- (3) The proper information regarding the period of time for which the report shall be available.

A consumer reporting agency must authorize the release of your credit report no later than fifteen (15) minutes after receiving the above information.

A security freeze does not apply to a person or entity, or its affiliates, or collection agencies acting on behalf of the person or entity, with which you have an existing account, that requests information in your credit report for the purposes of fraud control, or, reviewing or collecting the account. Reviewing the account includes activities related to account maintenance.

You should consider filing a complaint regarding your identity theft situation with the Federal Trade Commission and the Tennessee department of commerce and insurance, division of consumer affairs, either in writing or via their websites.

You have a right to bring civil action against anyone, including a consumer reporting agency, who improperly obtains access to a file, misuses file data, or fails to correct inaccurate file data.

Unless you are a victim of identity theft with a police report, or other official document acceptable to a consumer reporting agency to verify the crimes, a consumer reporting agency has the right to charge you up to seven dollars and fifty cents (\$7.50) to place a freeze on your credit report, but may not charge you to temporarily lift a freeze on your credit report. A consumer reporting agency may charge a consumer a reasonable fee not to exceed five dollars (\$5.00) to permanently remove a security freeze, or to replace a personal identification number or password. A consumer reporting agency may increase these fees annually based on changes to a common measure of consumer prices. A consumer reporting agency may not charge a Tennessee consumer to place or permanently remove a security freeze if that Tennessee consumer is a victim of identity theft as defined in Tennessee law or federal law regarding identity theft and presents to the consumer reporting agency, at the time the request is made, a police report or other official document acceptable to the consumer reporting agency detailing the theft.