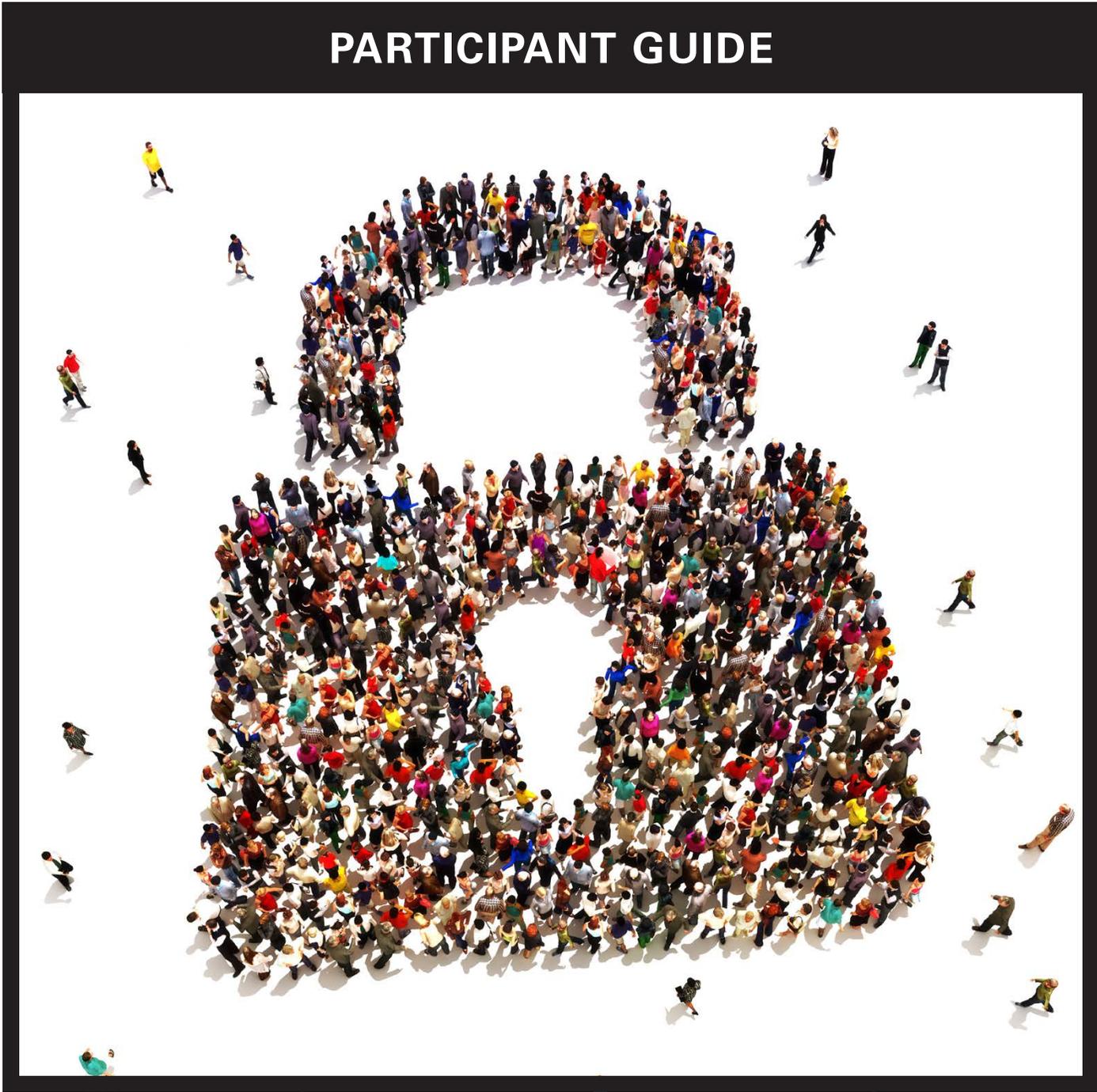




# MODULE 11: Protecting Your Identity and Other Assets

## PARTICIPANT GUIDE



The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation is an independent agency created by the Congress to maintain stability and public confidence in the nation's financial system. One way we do that is by providing free, non-biased financial education materials, including this Participant Guide. For more information about our family of Money Smart products, visit [www.fdic.gov/moneysmart](http://www.fdic.gov/moneysmart).

# Contents

<b>Welcome</b> .....	2
Module Purpose.....	2
<b>Section 1: Risks to Your Assets</b> .....	3
Assets and Risks .....	3
<i>Try It: Spotting Risks to Assets</i> .....	4
Reducing Risks to Your Assets .....	5
<i>Apply It: Risks to My Assets</i> .....	5
<b>Section 2: Identity Theft and Fraud</b> .....	6
Identity Theft Basics .....	6
Warning Signs of Identity Theft .....	8
<i>Try It: Spotting Warning Signs of Identity Theft</i> .....	9
Steps to Minimize Identity Theft .....	10
<i>Apply It: My Action Plan to Reduce Risks of Identity Theft</i> .....	11
Reporting Identity Theft and Getting Help .....	13
<b>Section 3: Insurance and Record-Keeping</b> .....	15
How Insurance Works.....	15
Types of Insurance.....	16
Getting Insurance .....	16
<i>Apply It: Insurance—Do I Have It? Do I Need It?</i> .....	17
Keeping Accurate Records .....	18
<b>Module Closing</b> .....	19
Remember the Key Takeaways .....	19
Take Action .....	19
Where to Get More Information or Help.....	20
<b>Pre-Training Survey</b> .....	21
<b>Post-Training Survey</b> .....	23

# Welcome

Welcome to the FDIC's Money Smart for Adults!

This is the Participant Guide for **Module 11: Protecting Your Identity and Other Assets**. Use it during and after training. Mark it up, write in it, take notes—it is yours to keep.

## Module Purpose

This module covers how to protect your identity and other assets.

This module also:

- Discusses what to do in the event of identity theft or fraud
- Explains how insurance can help protect you from financial loss, and the importance of keeping good records

## Section 1: Risks to Your Assets

We will discuss how to identify risks to your assets and ways you can reduce those risks.



### Assets and Risks

An **asset** is something you own that has value. **Risk** is the potential for harm. You can protect the value of your assets by taking steps to reduce risks.

**Asset = Something you own that has value**

**Risk = Potential for Harm**



## Try It: Spotting Risks to Assets

List the risks associated with one of these common assets.

### Cash

### Home

### Car

### Job

## Reducing Risks to Your Assets

You cannot eliminate all risks, but you can reduce some of them.

- Make informed choices that anticipate risks
- Be careful with personal information
- Know your rights and responsibilities
- Get insurance



### Apply It: Risks to My Assets

You can complete this worksheet to identify risks to your assets and what steps you may want to take to reduce those risks.

My Assets	Risks to My Assets	How I Can Reduce Those Risks



### Remember the Key Takeaway

Being aware of risks to your assets prepares you to take steps to reduce those risks.

## Section 2: Identity Theft and Fraud

We will discuss identity theft and fraud, steps you can take to reduce the risks of identity theft and fraud, and what to do if it happens to you.



### Key Takeaway



You can reduce your risk of identity theft. Help is available if it happens to you.

### Identity Theft Basics

Your identity is an asset.

**Identity theft** is a crime that happens when someone uses a person's identifying information without authority.

**What are some examples of documents that have information about identity?**

**What other pieces of information can thieves use to impersonate someone?**

How could you be harmed if someone were able to get some of that information?

Criminals use many techniques to try to trick you into giving them personal information, including:

- **Phishing:** criminals trick you into giving them information, often through email
- **Vishing:** phishing by phone
- **Smishing:** phishing by text
- **Spear phishing:** targeted form of phishing in which criminals try to trick groups of people that have something in common
- **Pharming:** criminals trick you by setting up fake websites that appear legitimate
- **Skimming:** criminals steal your credit or debit card number
- **Social media approaches:** criminals trick you into giving them personal information on social media sites, chat rooms, bulletin boards, mobile apps, photo sharing sites, and similar places

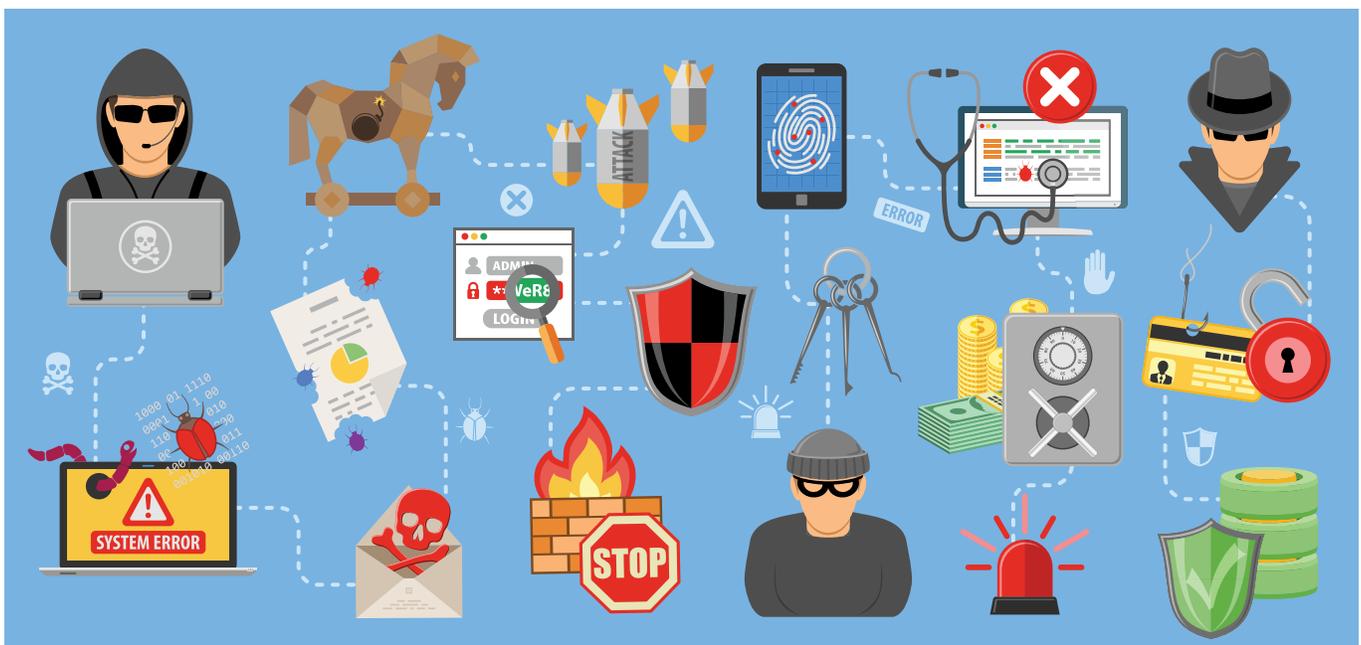


## Warning Signs of Identity Theft

Watch for unexpected transactions or communications that could indicate your identity has been stolen.

Warning signs of identity theft include:

- Withdrawals from your bank account that you didn't make
- Missing bills and statements
- Merchants refusing your checks
- Credit card transactions that don't go through
- Letters about accounts you didn't open
- Emails about purchases you didn't make
- Statements for credit cards you don't have
- Debt collectors calling about debts that aren't yours
- Passwords or usernames that suddenly don't work
- Unfamiliar accounts on your credit reports
- Medical bills for services you didn't receive
- Health records for conditions you don't have
- The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) notifies you that more than one tax return was filed in your name, or that you have income from somewhere you never worked
- Notification about a data breach





## Try It: Spotting Warning Signs of Identity Theft

Read the scenario and then answer the questions.

### Scenario: Kareena Spots Warning Signs of Identity Theft

On her way home after work, Kareena stops by her mailbox to pick up her mail. As she walks to her apartment, she begins reading her mail. She's happy to see a letter from her daughter, and a wedding invitation from her nephew. But she also notices the following pieces of mail:

- An envelope from her place of worship
- An envelope from a dentist's office
- An envelope from her bank
- A thick envelope with coupons
- An envelope from the county government



Here is more information about each piece of mail Kareena notices. Are there warning signs of identity theft? Be ready to explain your answers.

Piece of Mail	Are there Warning Signs of Identity Theft?
<p><b>An envelope from her place of worship.</b> On the reverse of the envelope, it says, "Contribute to the Renovation Fund this month and we will match your donation!"</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>An envelope from a dentist's office.</b> It looks like a bill, yet Kareena doesn't remember going to the dentist recently.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>An envelope from her bank.</b> It's marked, "Make the most of your new EasyCard Express!" Kareena doesn't remember applying for anything new.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>A thick envelope with coupons.</b> It's addressed to "Resident."</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p><b>An envelope from the county government.</b> It's marked "citation notice." It looks similar to a speeding ticket she got two years ago.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## Steps to Minimize Identity Theft

You can never completely eliminate all risks. However, you can take steps to minimize some of them:

- Guard your personal information closely.** If someone asks for your Social Security number or other personal information, ask why they need it, how it will be used, how they will protect it, and what happens if you don't share it.
- Don't respond to unsolicited requests.** They may be text messages, emails, or phone calls asking you for sensitive information, such as your Social Security Number or date of birth.
- Protect your mail.** Your mail is often an easy target for an identity thief because you likely receive and send personal information that way.
- Sign up for direct deposit.** This gives thieves less access to your information because paychecks and checks for public benefits do not go through the mail.
- Clean up your financial trash.** Destroy all pieces of paper containing your personal information before recycling them.
- Review your financial accounts regularly and carefully.** Contact your financial institution immediately if there is a discrepancy in your records or if you notice something suspicious.
- Beware of identity theft on the Internet.** Be cautious about providing bank account or other personal information online.
- Protect your devices, such as computers, phones, and tablets.** Find more information on staying safe online at [www.OnGuardOnline.gov](http://www.OnGuardOnline.gov), a Federal Trade Commission (FTC) resource.
- Review your credit reports at least once every 12 months.** Carefully check your credit reports for activity you don't recognize. You can request a copy at [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com). Ordering your own credit reports does not affect your credit scores.
- Keep your important documents secure.** This applies to both paper and electronic documents.
- Beware of disaster-related scams.** Con artists take advantage of people after disasters by claiming to be from legitimate charitable organizations.
- Read scam alerts.** The FTC maintains a running list of scams at [www.consumer.ftc.gov/scam-alerts](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/scam-alerts). You can report scams on the FTC site, too.



## Apply It: My Action Plan to Reduce Risks of Identity Theft

You can use this worksheet to list what you want to start doing or do more of to reduce your risk of identity theft.

### Guard my personal information closely

### Don't respond to unsolicited requests

### Protect my mail

### Sign up for direct deposit

### Clean up my financial trash

### Review my financial accounts regularly and carefully

**Apply It: My Action Plan to Reduce Risks of Identity Theft *continued***

**Beware of identity theft when I use the Internet**

**Protect my devices, such as computers, phones, and tablets**

**Review my credit reports at least once every 12 months**

**Keep my important documents secure**

**Beware of disaster-related scams**

**Read scam alerts**

**Can you think of anything else?**

## Reporting Identity Theft and Getting Help

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is a great source of information on identity theft and fraud. Visit [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov).

### Create an Identity Theft Report with the FTC

If your identity has been stolen, you are not alone. One of the best steps you can take is to create an identity theft report with the FTC. It proves to businesses that someone stole your identity and makes it easier to correct problems caused by identity theft.

### Work with Credit Reporting Agencies

Credit reporting agencies, also called credit bureaus or credit reporting companies, make credit reports.

You can work with them to:

- Place a fraud alert on your credit reports—it's free
- You can place a one-year initial fraud alert. You can do this if your identity has been stolen or if you think it might be stolen. An identity theft report is not required. When it expires, you can place another one.
- If you have filed an identity theft report, you can place a seven-year extended fraud alert.

You can contact one of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies at:

- Experian: [www.experian.com/fraudalert](http://www.experian.com/fraudalert), 1-888-397-3742
- TransUnion: [www.transunion.com/fraud](http://www.transunion.com/fraud), 1-800-680-7289
- Equifax: [www.equifax.com/creditreportassistance](http://www.equifax.com/creditreportassistance), 1-888-766-0008

Whichever one you contact to place the fraud alert must contact the other two.

Dispute inaccurate information on your credit reports.

You can also consider placing a freeze on your credit reports. A credit freeze makes it less likely an identity thief can open a new account in your name.

To learn more, visit the Federal Trade Commission website at [ftc.gov](http://ftc.gov) and search for “fraud alerts” and “credit freeze.”

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION  
**Identity Theft Report**  
FTC Report Number: 665-783

I am the victim of identity theft. This is my official statement about the crime.

**Contact Information**

Jane May Smith  
100 Main Street  
Washington, DC 20405

202-876-5309  
jane.smith@email.com

**Personal Statement**

I received a credit card bill from Chase, even though I've never had a credit card with Chase. I called and the bank said I needed to fill out an identity theft report. Just a few days later, I got a call from Verizon about buying a new iPhone. I told them I didn't buy an iPhone. Someone else had gone to a store in New Jersey and added two new lines to my account.

**Accounts Affected by the Crime**

Credit card opened by the thief		
Company or Organization: Chase		
Account Number: 988899888		
Date fraud began	Date that I discovered it	Total fraudulent amount
1/15/16	3/15/16	\$400

Mobile phone with fraudulent charges (account takeover)		
Company or Organization: Verizon Wireless		
Account Number: 54-70000089		
Date fraud began	Date that I discovered it	Total fraudulent amount
1/15/16	3/15/16	\$900

### Communicate with Creditors and Debt Collectors

If your identity has been stolen, the FTC advises that you communicate with your creditors and debt collectors:

- Alert them about fraudulent accounts
- Get copies of documents related to the theft of your identity
- Ask them to stop contacting you about fraudulent accounts
- Get written information about fraudulent debts.

### Know and Exercise Your Other Rights

You have other federal rights related to identity theft. See [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.ftc.gov) for more details. In many states, businesses or organizations that lose or misplace certain types of personal information must tell you if that has happened. To learn more, go to [USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov) and search for "data breach your-state-name" (for example, if you lived in Indiana, type "data breach Indiana").



### Remember the Key Takeaway

You can reduce your risk of identity theft. Help is available if it happens to you.

## Section 3: Insurance and Record-Keeping

We will discuss how insurance can reduce the financial impact of a loss and the importance of keeping accurate records.



### Key Takeaway



Insurance provides protection from financial loss. Keep accurate records of your assets and damages to your property.

### How Insurance Works

Insurance can reduce the financial impact of a loss or event covered by the insurance policy. Insurance is an important way to protect yourself from financial catastrophe.

Insurance policies provide definitions of terms used and their meanings. Here are some general definitions of some key terms related to insurance:

<b>Insurance premium:</b>	When you take out an insurance policy, you agree to pay this amount of money on a regular basis to the insurance company.
<b>Covered loss:</b>	These are the losses or events that the insurance policy will cover.
<b>Coverage limit:</b>	The maximum amount of money the insurance company will pay.
<b>Deductible:</b>	You agree to pay up to this amount of money per year or per covered loss.
<b>Copayment:</b>	This is the dollar amount you have to pay each time you receive services or file a claim for a covered loss.
<b>Coinsurance:</b>	This is the percentage of each claim you must pay before the insurance will pay.

- Exceptions or Exclusions:** These are limits on insurance coverage or situations the insurance will not cover. They will be stated in the written insurance policy.
- Claim:** This notifies the insurance company you have incurred a loss that you believe is covered by your insurance policy.
- Adjudicate:** This means review. The insurance company reviews your claim and determines if the loss is covered by your insurance policy, what you owe, and what they will pay.

## Types of Insurance

You can review information and tools on various types of insurance from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners at [www.insureuonline.org](http://www.insureuonline.org) and [www.naic.org](http://www.naic.org).

## Getting Insurance

The types and amounts of insurance you need will depend on your individual situation. Purchasing insurance is about managing risks to your assets.

Periodically review all your insurance coverages. That way, you will be familiar with what is and is not covered, see if you need to change your insurance coverage, and know if you can get a better deal elsewhere.

### Shop Around

- Review state-specific shopping tips at [www.naic.org](http://www.naic.org) and search for “state map.”
- Check out insurance companies. Research a company’s complaint record at <https://eapps.naic.org/cis/>. Also, find out what others think about a company’s customer service by reading online reviews from current customers.
- Ask for discounts.
- Compare quotes from several insurance companies.
- Consider tradeoffs between deductibles, coinsurance, coverage limits and premiums.



## Apply It: Insurance—Do I Have It? Do I Need It?

Review the list of types of insurance and check if you have it or might need it.

Type of Insurance I Might Need	Do I Have It?			Do I Need It?		
	Yes	No	Don't Know	Yes	No	Don't Know
Health insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Long term care insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Dental insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Vision insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Disability insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Life insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Pet insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Identity theft insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Vehicle insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Renter's insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Homeowners insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Flood insurance	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/>					

## Keeping Accurate Records

Keeping accurate records is an important part of making sure insurance adequately covers your risks.

- **Create and maintain a list your assets:**
  - See guidance and tools on creating an inventory or list of your property from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. Visit [www.insureuonline.org](http://www.insureuonline.org) and search for “inventory.”
- **Document any damages and save receipts for related expenses:**
  - Take videos and/or pictures to record damage to your home, personal property, or vehicle.
  - Save receipts for any expenses you incur as a result of the damage or loss.
  - Keep copies for your records and share them with your insurance company.
- **File claims:**
  - If you’ve incurred a loss that you believe is covered by your insurance policy, file a claim as soon as you discover the loss.
  - Your policy might include a time limit on when you can file a claim.



### Remember the Key Takeaway

**Insurance provides protection from financial loss. Keep accurate records of your assets and damages to your property.**

# Module Closing

## ★ Remember the Key Takeaways

Section	Key Takeaway
1: Risks to Your Assets	Being aware of risks to your assets prepares you to take steps to reduce those risks.
2: Identity Theft and Fraud	You can reduce your risk of identity theft. Help is available if it happens to you.
3: Insurance and Record-Keeping	Insurance provides protection from financial loss. Keep accurate records of your assets and any damages to your property.

## Take Action

You are more likely to take action if you commit to **taking action now**. One way to commit is to think about what you plan to do because of what you learned today. Then write it down.

### What will I do?

### How will I do it?

**Will I share my plans with anyone? If so, who?**

## **Where to Get More Information or Help**

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is a great source of information on identity theft and fraud. Start to explore the information and tools they have at **IdentityTheft.gov**.

Find information and tools on insurance from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners at **www.insureuonline.org** and **www.naic.org**.

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If you have a question about a banking product, ask a customer service representative at the financial institution for help.

If you have a concern, explain to the customer service representative what happened and what you would like them to do to correct the situation. If that does not help, consider contacting the federal regulator for that financial institution.

To find out who regulates the financial institution, call the FDIC toll-free at 1-877-ASK-FDIC (1-877-275-3342) or visit **www.fdic.gov/consumers/assistance/filecomplaint.html**.

## Pre-Training Survey

Your instructor may ask you to complete this pre-training survey before the training begins.

Please answer these questions:

1. You can eliminate all risks by taking precautions to protect yourself.      True                      False
2. Both strangers and people you know can steal your identity.      True                      False
3. Why is insurance important?
  - a. It can reduce the financial impact of a covered loss
  - b. It prevents damage from natural disasters
  - c. It has federally insured deposit protection
  - d. It allows you to digitally encrypt your information to keep it safe
4. Which of the following are ways to reduce the risk of identity theft?
  - a. Protect your numbers (Social Security number, credit card numbers, bank account numbers, etc.)
  - b. Protect your mail
  - c. Sign up for direct deposit
  - d. All of the above

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# Post-Training Survey

Your instructor may ask you to complete this post-training survey after the training ends.

Please answer these questions:

1. You can eliminate all risks by taking precautions to protect yourself. True False
  
2. Both strangers and people you know can steal your identity. True False
  
3. Why is insurance important?
  - a. It can reduce the financial impact of a covered loss
  - b. It prevents damage from natural disasters
  - c. It has federally insured deposit protection
  - d. It allows you to digitally encrypt your information to keep it safe
  
4. Which of the following are ways to reduce the risk of identity theft?
  - a. Protect your numbers (Social Security number, credit card numbers, bank account numbers, etc.)
  - b. Protect your mail
  - c. Sign up for direct deposit
  - d. All of the above

## About the Training

Check the box that best describes your agreement or disagreement with each of these statements.

	Completely agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Completely disagree
5. I would recommend this training to others.				
6. I plan to apply what was discussed in this training to my life.				
7. The instructor used engaging training activities that kept me interested.				
8. The instructor was knowledgeable and well prepared.				
9. The Participant Guide is clear and helpful.				

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Visit the FDIC's website at [www.fdic.gov/education](http://www.fdic.gov/education) for more information and resources on banking-related issues. For example, FDIC Consumer News provides practical hints and guidance on how to become a smarter, safer user of financial services. Also, the FDIC's Consumer Response Center is responsible for:

- Investigating all types of consumer complaints about FDIC-supervised institutions
- Responding to consumer inquiries about consumer laws and regulations and banking practices

**You can also call the FDIC for information and assistance at  
877-ASK-FDIC (877-275-3342).**



**MONEY SMART for Adults**

**PARTICIPANT GUIDE**

**Module 11: Protecting Your Identity and Other Assets**

**September 2018**

**[www.fdic.gov/education](http://www.fdic.gov/education)**