

# Protecting yourself from identity theft

**Identity theft is when someone steals your name, personal information or banking details to try and get your money.**

*THERE ARE DIFFERENT WAYS THEY DO THIS, INCLUDING:*

- Tricking a person into handing over personal information, like credit card details.
- Hacking into a computer or phone to steal information.
- Setting up a pretend profile to convince a person to hand over information.
- Using a special computer program to get into private files.

*TIPS TO AVOID IDENTITY THEFT*

- **Don't open** emails or texts from numbers you don't recognise.
- **Don't click** on links in messages you receive, unless you're absolutely sure it's from someone you know.
- **Change your passwords** and banking PINs frequently and don't tell people what they are.
- If someone asks for private or banking information on the phone, **hang up or ask to call them back**. If they give you a number, double check it's from a real company and they are a real employee by calling the company directly.

*WHERE TO GET HELP*

If you think you have been a victim of identity theft, help is available.

If you are upset, distressed or worried, you can call **Lifeline on 13 11 14**.

If your identity has been stolen, there are a number of places to get help:

- If the scam relates to **Centrelink, Medicare, Child Support or MyGov**, you can call the Services Australia Scams and Identity Theft Helpdesk on 1800 941 126.
- IDCARE can help to **recover your identity for free**. Visit [idcare.org](http://idcare.org) or call 1800 595 160.
- If necessary, apply for a **Commonwealth Identity Theft Victims Card**. This can help to let other government agencies know that you don't have the paperwork you need to prove your identity, but are setting it up again. You can apply via [homeaffairs.gov.au](http://homeaffairs.gov.au)
- The **ACCC's Scamwatch** keeps an eye on scams, collects reports and provides information to other agencies which can shut the scams down. Visit [scamwatch.gov.au](http://scamwatch.gov.au)
- If you feel comfortable doing so, you can contact the police on 131 444.