

## IDENTITY THEFT

Identity theft is one of the leading cybersecurity crimes today and is only continuing to increase. The personal insurance industry has responded to this growing problem in various ways. Many insurance carriers have created endorsements adding coverage for the following to their homeowner's policies:

- Costs associated with notarizing affidavits and sending these affidavits via certified mail
- Lost income due to insured's time off of work to deal with the consequences of the loss
- Loan re-application fees and long distance fees
- Attorney's fees
- Services aimed at assisting insureds by directly contacting credit bureaus, creditors, etc.

While the insurance industry continues to improve coverage for identity theft, the best "medicine" is prevention and mitigation of the exposure. Here are some steps that can be taken to minimize one's exposure to identity theft loss:

- Never place outgoing mail in your mailbox
- Never give any personal information such as your social security number to anyone unless absolutely necessary and the firm is trusted and reputable
- Always shred credit card offers received in the mail
- Obtain a credit report every year to ascertain that no one is damaging your credit
- Always use passwords to protect all of your accounts
- Be extremely vigilant about checking backgrounds of anyone with whom you propose to do business

### Should your client become the victim of identity theft, here is a list of actions to take:

- Contact the "Big Three" credit bureaus to alert them to place a "fraud alert" on your account: **Equifax** - 800.525.6285 **Experian** - 888.397.3742 **Transunion** - 800.680.7289
- File a report with your local police - this will help you deal with creditors who need proof of a crime
- Close any accounts tampered with or opened fraudulently
- Notify your bank of check theft and close the account immediately
- Contact your attorney immediately to obtain professional advice
- Contact your insurance agent for possible coverage

**For more information or  
to receive a quote contact  
Craig Johnson today!**



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