



PRESS RELEASE



TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR
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Identify Theft Awareness Week Starts January 29 “Protect and Safeguard Your Personal Information”

(Santa Ana, Calif.) Orange County Treasurer Shari Freidenrich is kicking off Identity Theft Awareness Week by urging Orange County residents to take steps to safeguard their personal information. Identity Theft Awareness Week formally runs nationwide from January 29 through February 2, 2024, aiming to draw attention both to the ways that fraudsters operate and how to minimize the likelihood of becoming a victim. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) received over 2.4 million fraud reports in 2022 with \$8.8 billion in total fraud losses, of which 1.1 million were the result of identity theft fraud.

Research detailed in the FTC’s latest [Consumer Sentinel Network Data Book](#) found that the top fraud type was identify theft, with 41% of reported cases coming from new and existing credit card account fraud. These subtypes increased by 13% and 23% respectively from the prior year. Bank fraud was the second most common type of identity theft fraud at 15%, with new bank account fraud increasing by 32%. Lower down the list, but still increasing from the prior year, were email or social media fraud, mobile telephone new accounts fraud and driver’s licenses issued/forged fraud. The subtypes of identity theft fraud that are seeing a reduction in reported cases nationally are federal student loans, tax fraud and medical services fraud down more than 12% from the prior year. However, almost 80,000 cases of tax fraud alone were still reported, down from 110,000 in the prior year, and taxpayers are encouraged to remain vigilant and file their federal tax returns early to prevent this type of fraud.

“Requesting a copy of your credit report annually is an excellent way to combat identity theft,” said Treasurer Freidenrich. “Also, review the resources available on our Identify Theft Awareness Week flyer by scanning the QR code below or going to octreasurer.com/2024IdentityTheftWeek to become aware of ways to educate yourself about safeguarding your personal information.” This week, the Federal Trade Commission will be hosting a series of free online seminars, podcasts and other events educating the public on how to avoid and recover from identity fraud. For a full calendar of Identity Theft Awareness Week events, visit consumer.ftc.gov/features/identity-theft-awareness-week, and for more identity theft resources, visit consumer.ftc.gov/features/identity-theft. Resources for obtaining your free credit report can be found year-round at consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0155-free-credit-reports or calling 1-877-322-8228.

Treasurer Freidenrich partners with the FTC to provide a weekly Financial Tip of the Week, which you can subscribe to at octreasurer.com/financialtips. Printed copies of the Identity Theft Awareness Week Flyer are available at the County Service Center located at 601 N. Ross Street in Santa Ana with [free parking in Lot 4](#) for 15 minutes.



ftc.gov/idtheftweek



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