

**ACTIVITY #17: PROTECT MYSELF FROM IDENTITY THEFT**

How Can You Protect Your Identity?

- Never throw personal information in the trash, especially a public trash can. Always shred personal documents like credit card bills, ATM receipts, and bank statements. Be sure you shred items small enough that they cannot be put back together.
- Use only secure websites (https) when you make Internet purchases. Payment apps, like Venmo, Zelle, and PayPal are a fairly safe way to make online purchases and payments. When using any payment app, make sure you are sending it to the right person or business.
- Be aware of who is around and may be watching when you use an ATM machine.
- Be very cautious when giving out your Social Security number or financial information online or to someone over the phone.
- Stop before you click on links in an email or text. Instead, use a trusted email or a phone number to contact the business, financial institution, or government organization.
- Use a spam filter and antivirus software on your computer and set it to automatically update.
- When you create a User Identification (USER ID) and Personal Identification Number (PIN) code for an account, make it something that will be difficult to guess (don't use your birthday).
- Make sure that you keep a copy of all of your account numbers in a safe place.
- If you ask someone to get cash for you with your debit or credit card, always ask for a receipt to be sure that the amount you received is exactly the amount that was withdrawn. Make sure to monitor your account by reviewing your bank statements online or when they come in the mail.
- Never share financial information like account, credit card, or Social Security numbers over public Wi-Fi.

Make a list of things you can do right now to protect yourself from identity theft:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____