Identity Theft (“ID Theft”) is one of the fastest growing crimes in New York City. Each year, at least 8,000 New York City residents report being victims of ID Theft. Countless others are also victims but do not know it yet. ID Theft is a serious and insidious crime that often leaves its victims penniless, with damaged credit, and without recourse. In New York State, where prospective employers and landlords routinely pull credit reports to screen applicants, ID Theft can also threaten residents’ ability to secure gainful employment or safe housing. In a time of high unemployment and an astonishingly tight housing market, New Yorkers need all the help they can get to protect their credit profile.

Identity Theft is the wrongful use of another person’s identifying information (such as credit card, Social Security Number, or driver’s license number) to commit financial and other crimes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enact rules or regulations permitting ID Theft victims to use complaints filed with local, state, and federal administrative agencies instead of police reports to absolve themselves of responsibility for criminally incurred charges;
- Enforce existing legislation requiring police officers to issue reports to victims of ID Theft; and
- Create public awareness campaign reminding New Yorkers how to recognize and report ID Theft.

SOURCES