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Business Identity Theft: Prevention Tips

Protect your business, your employees, and your customers from becoming victims of identity theft with the following tips from the Montana Secretary of State:

✓ **Check your business entity registration information.**

Protect your business records on file with the Montana Secretary of State. Check your business entity history and details periodically using the office's online resources:

Business Entity Search

Registered Principal Search

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Assign a trusted person to be responsible for maintaining and monitoring your business records, and file any changes to your record in a timely fashion. If changes have been made to your record without your permission, contact the Secretary of State's Office immediately.

✓ **Safeguard your business identifiers and employee information.**

Protect your business account numbers and employee information. Keep all documents containing business identifiers and personnel information in a secure location and limit the number of people who have access to these files. Shred unnecessary documents in a secure manner. If you must provide sensitive information over the Internet, ensure the site is secure. A secure website address is indicated with "https" at the beginning of the URL. ***Business information filed with the Montana Secretary of State is public record. Forms should never include unnecessary personal information such as a social security number or home address, when a business mailing address is available.***

✓ **Watch for suspicious activity.**

Closely review your accounts and bills. Promptly notify the creditor if you discover any unrecognized or fraudulent transactions. Misaddressed business mail, missing or unexpected account statements, or telephone calls and correspondence regarding unknown accounts are all potential indicators of identity theft.

✓ **Monitor your business credit reports.**

Request copies of your business credit reports and review them for accuracy and suspicious activity. Immediately report any issue to the credit reporting agencies and/or the fraud department at each credit bureau.

✓ **Report fraud to local and federal authorities.**

File a report with local law enforcement and the Montana Department of Justice. Contact creditors and billing companies to notify them of the identity theft. Correct any incorrect information filed with the Montana Secretary of State by filing an amendment form online at sosmt.gov