



State of Connecticut
Attorney General William Tong

Quick Tips

Lost and Stolen Credit or ATM/Debit Cards

If you lose your credit/debit card or it is stolen:

You should immediately:

- Report the loss or theft to the card issuer and follow up with a letter stating the account number, when you noticed the card was missing and the date you first reported the loss or theft.
- Report the loss or theft to your local police.
- Review all charges on your statement beginning with the period you first noticed the card missing.
- Monitor your credit report for any unauthorized activity.

Keeping a close eye on your billing statements and credit report can help you to identify unauthorized credit, ATM or debit card use as soon as it happens.

Learn the Facts: Unauthorized Use

- The Electronic Fund Transfer Act (EFTA) prohibits card issuers from holding you responsible after you give them notice of possible unauthorized charges or they become aware of them. However, if a thief uses your card before you have reported it missing, the card issuer is allowed to charge you the lesser of \$50 or the amount the thief charges to the card before the issuer is notified of, or has reason to believe, an unauthorized use of the card has taken place.
- Thus if your card is stolen, or if you notice unauthorized purchases on your card, you should immediately call your card issuer. Follow up with a letter to the card issuer explaining the date your card was lost or stolen, or when you first noticed unauthorized charges and when you first reported the problem. This letter should be sent to the address the card provider designates for billing errors, which is usually different than the address to which you send payments.
- Under the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (EFTA), your liability for unauthorized ATM or debit transfers depends on how fast you report a loss or theft. If you report any unauthorized activity within two business days of when you learn of it, federal law prohibits card issuers from holding you responsible. If you report the loss or theft after more than two business days, you are liable for up to the lesser of \$500 or the losses that occur between the two-day period and when you report the loss or theft to the card issuer. But if you fail to report unauthorized activity for more than 60 days after it appears on your card statement, your liability becomes unlimited and you could lose all of the money in your account.
- Never share your ATM or debit Personal Identification Number (PIN). You should never use easily guessed numbers for your PIN, including birthdates, phone or Social Security numbers.

Resources: Monitoring Your Credit

- You can obtain free copies of your credit report from the three major credit reporting bureaus by writing to: Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281. Make sure to specify which bureau you want your report from or use the form available at <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0155-free-credit-reports>. You can also visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228.
- For additional information, call the Office of the Attorney General Consumer Assistance Unit at 860-808-5420.