



Prevent Identity Theft During Spring Vacation with DATCP's Travel Tips

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MADISON, Wis. – The last thing anyone wants to deal with while on a vacation is identity theft. Identity theft is often a crime of opportunity, and vacationers who are not looking out for it can become targets for fraudsters. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) recommends that consumers take a few simple precautions to protect their identity when traveling this spring.

- **Clean out your wallet.** Remove unnecessary cards and unneeded documents containing personal information. Never travel with your Social Security card.
- **Call your bank and credit card companies.** Let them know you will be traveling so they can watch for suspicious activity and fraud.
- **Have the post office hold your mail.** This prevents mail containing sensitive information from being left unsecured in your mailbox while you are away.
- **Use the safe in your rental room if available.** Lodging is not always secure, so do not leave your wallet or private documents out where they are vulnerable.
- **Be wary of public Wi-Fi networks.** These may be fake networks set up by criminals who use it to access your device and track your activity.
- **Use social media wisely.** You cannot guarantee that your friends are the only people who will access information showing you are away from home.

“Nobody wants to spend their vacation wary of identity theft, so it is important to prepare ahead of time,” said DATCP Secretary Randy Romanski. “Be careful where and with whom you share your information. Use practices and payment methods that protect you from fraud, and make a plan for what you will do if fraud occurs so you can respond quickly and minimize harm.”

Identity thieves know people let their guard down on vacation and often look for victims near popular destinations to take advantage of. Following these DATCP tips can help you make yourself a more difficult target for fraudsters.

For additional information and consumer protection resources or to file a complaint, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection webpage at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov. If you have questions or believe you are a victim of a scam, report it by contacting DATCP's Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 422-7128 or DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

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