

Rhode Island Consumers Have the Right to Obtain a Security Freeze

You may obtain a security freeze on your credit report to protect your privacy and ensure that credit is not granted in your name without your knowledge. You have a right to place a “security freeze” on your credit report pursuant to the R.I.G.L. chapter 6-48 to the Identity Theft Prevention Act of 2006.

The security freeze will prohibit a consumer reporting agency from releasing any information in your credit report without your express authorization or approval.

The security freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in your name without your consent. When you place a security freeze on your credit report, within five (5) business days you will be provided a personal identification number or password to use if you choose to remove the freeze on your credit report or to temporarily authorize the release of your credit report for a specific period of time after the freeze is in place. To provide that authorization, you must contact the consumer reporting agency and provide the following:

- (1) The unique personal identification number or password provided by the consumer reporting agency.
- (2) Proper identification to verify your identity.
- (3) The proper information regarding the period of time for which the report shall be available to users of the credit report.

A consumer reporting agency that receives a request from a consumer to temporarily lift a freeze on a credit report shall comply with the request no later than three (3) business days after receiving the request.

A security freeze does not apply to circumstances where you have an existing account relationship and a copy of your report is requested by your existing creditor or its agents or affiliates for certain types of an account review, collection, fraud control or similar activities.

If you are actively seeking a new credit, loan, utility, telephone, or insurance account, you should understand that the procedures involved in lifting a security freeze may slow your own applications for credit. You should plan ahead and lift a freeze – either completely if you are shopping around, or specifically for a certain creditor – with enough advance notice before you apply for new credit for the lifting to take effect.

You have a right to bring a civil action against someone who violates your rights under the credit reporting laws. The action can be brought against a consumer reporting agency or a user of your credit report.

Unless you are sixty-five (65) years of age or older, or you are a victim of identity theft with an incident report or a complaint from a law enforcement agency, a consumer reporting agency has the right to charge you up to ten dollars (\$10.00) to place a freeze on your credit report, up to ten dollars (\$10.00) to temporarily lift a freeze on your credit report, depending on the circumstances, and up to ten dollars (\$10.00) to remove a freeze from your credit report. If you are sixty-five (65) years of age or older or are a victim of identity theft with a valid incident report or complaint, you may not be charged a fee by a consumer reporting agency for placing, temporarily lifting, or removing a freeze.