

LAW OFFICES OF ERIC F. FAGAN

www.efaganlaw.com

Eric F. Fagan, Esq.
Jeremy S. Golden, Esq.
Mary G. Thompson, Esq.

Dorian Hudson, Paralegal

The Importance of Checking Your Credit Report By Jeremy S. Golden

A 2004 study by the United States Public Interest Research Group found that nearly 80% of the consumer reports studied contained errors of some kind. Alarming, 25% of the reports contained errors sufficiently serious to cause the denial of credit.

A credit report includes information on where you live, if you pay bills on time or late, whether you have accounts with debt collectors, and whether you've been sued or filed for bankruptcy. Nationwide consumer reporting companies sell the information in your report to creditors, insurers, employers, and other businesses that use it to evaluate your applications for credit, insurance, employment, or renting a home.

Checking your credit report and disputing inaccurate items can help to raise your credit score. This in turn can help you to receive more favorable loans which saves you money. People who frequently check their credit report are more likely to discover if they were victims of identity theft. The quicker you discover that you are the victim of identity theft the easier it is to resolve.

Getting a Free Credit Report

The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) requires each of the nationwide consumer reporting companies — Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion — to provide you with a free copy of your credit report, at your request, once every 12 months.

The most efficient way to obtain your free credit report is online at the official government website at www.annualcreditreport.com. Or you can also call 1-877-322-8228 or mail a request to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281.

When you order, you need to provide your name, address, Social Security number, and date of birth. To verify your identity, you may need to provide some information that only you would know, like the amount of your monthly mortgage payment.

Watch Out For "Imposter" Websites

[Www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) is the **only** official website sponsored by the government to obtain a free credit report. Double-check that you spelled the website correct. At least 233 impostor sites exist.

2300 BOSWELL RD. SUITE 211
CHULA VISTA, CA 91914
PHONE 619-656-6656 FAX 775-898-5471

Many of the imposter websites have a domain name very similar to the official website and rely on typos to snare unwitting consumers. If you end up on an imposter website and reveal personal information you may become a target for marketing pitches or even identity theft.

Now that you know where to go (and where not to go) to get your free credit report go get one and check it for accuracy.

-Jeremy S. Golden