

## Identity Theft

### 329.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Identity theft is a growing trend that frequently involves related crimes in multiple jurisdictions. This policy is intended to provide guidelines for the reporting and investigation of such crimes.

### 329.2 REPORTING

- (a) In an effort to maintain uniformity in reporting, officers presented with the crime of identity theft (Penal Code § 530.6) shall initiate a report for victims residing within the jurisdiction of this department when the crime occurred. For incidents of identity theft occurring outside this jurisdiction, officers should observe the following:
  1. For any victim not residing within this jurisdiction, the officer may either take a courtesy report to be forwarded to the victim's residence agency or the victim should be encouraged to promptly report the identity theft to the law enforcement agency where he or she resides.
- (b) While the crime of identity theft should be reported to the law enforcement agency where the victim resides, officers of this Department should investigate and report crimes occurring within this jurisdiction which have resulted from the original identity theft (e.g., the identity theft occurred elsewhere, but the credit card fraud occurred and is reported in this jurisdiction).
- (c) Officers should include all known incidents of fraudulent activity (e.g., credit card number applied for in victim's name when the victim has never made such an application).
- (d) Officers should also cross-reference all known reports made by the victim (e.g., U.S. Secret Service, credit reporting bureaus, U.S. Postal Service and DMV) with all known report numbers.
- (e) The reporting officer should inform victims of identity theft that the California Identity Theft Registry is available to help those who are wrongly linked to crimes. The registry can be checked by law enforcement and other authorized persons to investigate whether a criminal history or want was created in the victim's name (Penal Code § 530.7). Information regarding the California Identity Theft Registry can be obtained by calling toll free (888) 880-0240.
- (f) Following supervisory review and departmental processing, the initial report should be forwarded to the appropriate detective for follow up investigation, coordination with other agencies and prosecution as circumstances dictate.

### 329.3 EVIDENCE

When an officer takes an initial identity theft or financial crime report, all evidence should be seized and booked into evidence by that officer. In some circumstances, particularly major, complex fraud cases, it may not be practical to seize large quantities of documents and business records. The officer may then leave all evidence with the victim for inspection by the follow-up investigator at a later time. This action should be noted in the original report.

# Redding Police Department

## RPD Policy Manual

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With identity theft cases involving obtaining credit, using credit cards, debit cards, checks or obtaining credit and/or bank account information; renting property, obtaining utilities or other services; or opening any account without the permission of the victim, it may not be necessary to obtain credit reports, bill, statements, or other written documentation as evidence. If there is no information which might identify a suspect, such cases should be listed as inactive. The victim should be advised to retain the above documents which are evidence of the crime.

Forgery cases will be initially handled by Field Operations personnel and ensure that appropriate action is taken; i.e., arrest, seizure of evidence, report. The case may be forwarded to the Investigations Division if further follow-up is necessary. In most cases, complete and comprehensive arrest reports will not require investigator follow-up.

The Redding Police Department does not accept check cases written by the account holder(s) on closed accounts, or accounts containing non-sufficient funds, 476(a) PC. These matters should be referred to the Shasta County District Attorney's Bad Check Unit.

Counterfeit currency reports shall be taken by Field Operations personnel and evidence should be seized and booked into property. The Investigations Division may forward the report and evidence to the nearest U.S. Secret Service field officer for their review and investigation.