



PROTECTING YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION 'ON LINE'

When you access the Internet it's important to protect your personal information.

Steps to keep your personal information secure while conducting online transactions

- Know who you're dealing with.
- Use common sense and be aware of potential security leaks. You wouldn't give information to just anyone in the off-line world. Apply the same discretion online.
- Change your passwords regularly, use hard-to-guess passwords (e.g. using a combination of letters and numbers), and never share your password with anyone.
- Look for a company's privacy policy or link to its privacy statement when you visit its website. Pay attention to what information the company gathers, how it's used, and with whom it's shared.
- Always ensure you're in a safe environment. Look for the closed-lock or unbroken-key icons on your browser when entering your credit card number or other sensitive data. If you don't see the unbroken key or closed lock, or if the key is broken or the padlock is open, your transaction is not being securely transmitted across the Internet. When you send messages insecurely, someone outside of the organization you are sending to could intercept your information.
- Clear the cache of your browser after visiting secure sites. This will ensure that nobody else can view any confidential information you may have transmitted.
- Be familiar with the encryption level of your browser and what it

means to your privacy. Many businesses require that you use 128-bit encryption to access secure websites. Update your Web browser on a frequent basis to ensure you are using the latest browser technology and the highest encryption level.

- Install and maintain a firewall to guard against unwanted access to your computer.
- Install and frequently update proven anti-virus software.
- Use caution if you receive e-mail from a business or person requesting personal information. Be suspicious of e-mails that direct you to websites that request your password, Social Insurance Number, or other highly sensitive information. You may wish to call the organization to verify the legitimacy of the request.
- Use care when downloading files from the Internet and installing programs. Also, take care when reading e-mail with attachments, e-mail is often used to transmit viruses.