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Welcome! We're deep in the summer season when all the activity and fun of vacations and travel can take your focus away from protecting your personal property, making it prime time for identity theft.

Lost wallets, Medicare cards, and insurance – read on for some information that will help you stay *On Course* for a secure identity! Happy July 4th!

-Jennifer Lane, CFP

## Identity Theft - Three Things You May Not Know

We often discuss what identity theft is and how to prevent it. This month, we're delving deeper with insight on three different aspects of keeping your identity secure.

### Lost Wallets

Often times people recover lost wallets with only the cash missing. Think you're ok? Not so fast. The thieves may be trying to outsmart you by taking the credit card info and giving you the cards back to lull you into thinking you don't need to report anything. Here's what you should do:

- Make a list of what was in the wallet. It's always a good practice to keep copies of everything you carry in your wallet just in case.
- File a police report - your cash was stolen.
- Notify your banks and medical providers.
- Notify credit bureaus. Use [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com) to do that.

### Medicare Cards

Believe it or not, the government prints your entire Social Security number on your Medicare card! They have said that it's too expensive to fix so you will be at risk as long as you carry the card with you. Here's what to do:

- Photocopy the card front and back. This is what you'll carry.
- Block out the last four digits of your social security number. You might even consider cutting them out - never know what those thieves can do.
- Write your medical info and emergency contact name on the card. If something happens and you're unable to give your complete number to medical staff, your emergency contact will be able to provide it for you.

### Identity Theft Insurance

- Check your homeowner or renter's insurance policy if you do suffer from identity theft.
- Some endorsements reimburse you for your out-of pocket expenses.
- If your policy reimburses for time off from work, that money will be taxable as your income is.
- Some policies offer personal advocates at no charge to help you throughout the entire process of recovering your identity.
- If you have this rider on your homeowners or renter's insurance now, It's probably not necessary to pay additional money for supplemental id theft insurance.

## Q&A

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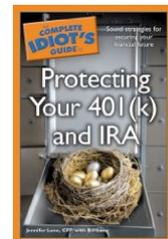


Jennifer's Hint

It's important to have your radar up for unsavory sales practices when you're shopping for investments, especially as you near retirement.

Many companies target those investors who are vulnerable and nervous about risk in their portfolios. Be wary of investments that promise stock market returns without stock market risks.

Get more tips in Jennifer's book



(click for link)

### Helpful Websites

[www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com)

[www.idtheftcenter.org](http://www.idtheftcenter.org)

[www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft)

[www.OnGuardOnline.gov](http://www.OnGuardOnline.gov)



**Q:** I've heard a lot about phishing, but I'm not sure what it is or how to recognize it. Can you help?

**- Maryann from Lowell**

**A:** Maryann, phishing is a term used to describe what happens when Internet fraudsters impersonate a business to trick you into giving out your personal information. When you receive emails that tell you've had unauthorized transactions or want to verify your account, they are trying to get you to reveal your personal info. They are masters at making the emails look as though they are actually from the business! So don't reply to email, text, or pop-up messages or click on links that ask for your personal or financial information. Legitimate businesses don't ask you to send sensitive information through insecure channels. If you have any doubts at all, no matter how small, trust your instinct and call the company directly.

## What's New

- **Jennifer is riding in the August Pan-Mass Challenge. 100 percent of every rider-raised dollar goes to the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Her rider profile page is here <http://www.pmc.org/profile/JL0348> if you would like to donate.**
- **Jennifer's Compass. Jennifer recently discussed different financial aspects of divorce. Check out her [blog](#) to see the video.**
- **We now have a Facebook page. Visit [www.facebook.com/AskJennifer](http://www.facebook.com/AskJennifer) and like us!**
- **Jennifer appears on NECN every other Monday morning at 9:30 am in addition to her Tuesday 6:30 pm appearance.**

Compass Planning Associates helps families, individuals, and small-business clients achieve financial security, knowledge, and control over their money. Our **fee-only, client-centered approach** provides education and guidance for achieving financial goals and dreams.

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