



**COMPASS**  
PLANNING ASSOCIATES

*Fee-Only Financial and Investment Planning*

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## The Equifax Data Breach

The Equifax breach is uncharted territory in terms of the scope of impacted Americans. Reports are estimating that this data breach has impacted an estimated 143 million Americans.

So...we can all assume that we were impacted by this breach and the result is that we all need to be even more diligent.

Here is a helpful article from the Federal Trade Commission:  
<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0235-identity-theft-protection-services>

If identity theft happens  
-[IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov) is an important free resource that can be a helpful in fixing the damage.

### Suggested Actions

#### **Fraud Alerts**

- These alerts will not stop/prevent new credit being obtained in your name, rather you will be notified of activity
- Sign up for fraud alerts both with your bank or credit card companies to alert you of any suspicious activity
- Sign up for alerts from the 3 credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian, TransUnion)

#### **Credit Freeze**

Questions? Email Us

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[-https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0279-extended-fraud-alerts-and-credit-freezes](https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0279-extended-fraud-alerts-and-credit-freezes)

- You need to place the freeze at all 3 credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian, Transunion)
- There is typically a fee to initially put the freeze in place
- You can lift the freeze at anytime
- Just remember you (or anyone else) can't obtain new credit in your name
- You can still however continue to use existing credit while a credit freeze is in place

### **Credit Monitoring**

- You can sign up for services to monitor your credit activity. These services do not come cheap.
- Services like [LifeLock.com](http://LifeLock.com) offers a \$300 per year (per person) service that will monitor your credit and give you a case manager to help you clean up to problems if your info is used fraudulently.
- See if your bank or credit card company offers a free monitoring service (ie Discover just introduced a free monitoring service for their primary cardholders that reports items beyond their Discover card)

### **Check Credit Reports**

- [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)
- Each individual is allowed 1 free credit report from each of the 3 credit reporting agencies per year
- Space these out and check your credit report throughout the year
- Report any issues IMMEDIATELY! There is a place to dispute information on the report while you are online.

### **Stop Credit Card Offers**

- [www.optoutprescreen.com](http://www.optoutprescreen.com)
- Sign up to 'opt-out' from receiving offers for credit cards, etc
- Good for 5 years

### **Do Not Call List**

- [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov)
- Make sure all of your phone numbers are registered with the Do Not Call registry
- Do not give out personal information on a sales call...even if it seems legit
- Call the company back directly on their known number if you receive a call from them

### **Equifax**

- If you are having trouble with their website, you can try calling them!

We hope you found this information helpful! If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to us!

Best,  
The Compass Team

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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