Identity Threats to Military and Veterans

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According to the FTC, US military and veterans are twice as likely to suffer identity theft as the general public.

- Protect your personally identifiable information (PII)
- Older adults are more likely than the general population to be victims of white collar Internet fraud.
- 1.84 million Americans have been the victims of medical identity theft.
- The identities of 2.5 million deceased Americans are mis-used annually.
- Odds of being a victim of identity theft in a given year - 1 in 20.
- Odds of your child's personally identifiable information being misused before age 18 - 1 in 40.

Top Threats	Responses
Fake charity	Investigate charity before donating
Phone, email, letter phishing for PII	Never provide PII on phone or email; hang up if caller is suspicious; double check phone numbers with legitimate web site
Credit card theft	Shred documents with PII; check credit report frequently; credit freeze
Free membership; discounts	Nothing is free if traded for your PII
Fake survey with promised gift	Do not fill out survey or answer questions with PII

PII & Documents to Protect

- Name
- Birthdate
- Place of birth
- Mother's maiden name
- Vehicle registration, plate number
- Driver's license number
- Social Security Number
- Mailing and home addresses
- Email address
- Telephone number
- Credit card numbers
- Bank account numbers
- Medical insurance information
- Biometric attributes

Action to Take Online

- Avoid email scams
- Use strong passwords
- Use 2-factor authentication
- False answers to security questions
- Use secure websites
- No use of public WiFi
- Keep device's security software up-to-date
- Clear cookies and browser history frequently
- Understand privacy policies

Actions for the Physical World	
Be aware of your surroundings	Use a locked mailbox
Use checks sparingly	Check financial statements often
Invest in a home safe	Read medical statements
Shred documents and bills	Request credit report annually
Don't give out SSN	Use credit instead of debit cards
At ATMs look for skimmers & shoulder surfers	Force photo ID check - write "See photo ID" in place of signature on credit cards

Resources:

Veteran's Administration hotline for vet victims of identity theft – (855) 578-5492

Identity Theft Resource Center

Federal Trade Commission tax fraud assistance

Internal Revenue Service identity theft assistance

Federal Bureau of Investigation reporting internet fraud

Source: Center for Identity, University of Texas - Austin