

Alabama Consumers Have the Right to Obtain a Security Freeze

You have a right to place a security freeze on your credit report, which will prohibit a consumer reporting agency from releasing information in your credit report without your express authorization. A security freeze must be requested in writing by certified mail or by electronic means as provided by a consumer reporting agency. The security freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in your name without your consent. If you are actively seeking a new credit, loan, utility, telephone, or insurance account, you should understand that the procedures involved in lifting a security freeze may slow your applications for credit. You should plan ahead and lift a freeze in advance of actually applying for new credit. When you place a security freeze on your credit report, you will be provided a personal identification number or password to use if you choose to remove the freeze on your credit report or authorize the release of your credit report for a period of time after the freeze is in place.

To provide that authorization you must contact the consumer reporting agency and provide all of the following:

- (1) Your personal identification number or password.
- (2) Proper identification to verify your identity.
- (3) The proper information regarding the period of time for which the report shall be available.

A consumer reporting agency must authorize the release of your credit report no later than 15 minutes after receiving the above information if the request is by electronic means or by telephone, or no later than three business days when a written request is submitted.

A security freeze does not apply to a person or entity, or its affiliates or collection agencies acting on behalf of the person or entity, with which you have an existing account, that requests information in your credit report for the purposes of reviewing or collecting the account. Reviewing the account includes activities related to account maintenance. Unless you are a victim of identity theft with a police report or other official document acceptable to a consumer reporting agency to verify the crimes, or you are 65 years of age or older, a consumer reporting agency has the right to charge you a fee of no more than ten dollars (\$10) to place a freeze on your credit report.