

## Minimizing the Risk of Identity Theft

We understand the importance of protecting information submitted to Business Services on behalf of Berkeley Law faculty, students and staff. By following these guidelines, you can help us guard against the risk of identity theft when compiling documentation for reimbursement requests.

**Social security numbers should be carefully safeguarded** – use the employee ID number instead on check requests and other forms sent to Business Services. Employee social security numbers are never required by Business Services for purchasing, staff reimbursement, or payroll transactions.

**Obtain receipts for expenditures** – a “receipt” is any document that contains the following five IRS-required elements. **When receipts are available, no other proofs of payment are required.**

1. Name of vendor (person or company you paid)
2. Transaction date (when you paid)
3. Detailed description of goods or services purchased
4. Amount paid
5. Form of payment (cash, check, credit card)

**Carefully redact personal information on proof-of-payment documents** – these are needed only when receipts don’t exist and there is no other way to support a claim for reimbursement.

- **Cleared check** – obliterate the bank routing and account numbers printed on the bottom of the check, leaving any numbers in the lower right corner visible. Check the endorsement side of the check and obliterate any legible numbers. Most cleared checks are available as scanned images from your online bank account.
- **Credit card statement** – obliterate cardholder address, account number, summary of account information (payment due, balance, etc.) and all other details not relevant to the particular transaction for which reimbursement is requested. If you can still read information through the obliteration, make a copy of the redacted document and submit the copy instead.

**Monitor your credit reports** – everyone is entitled to one free yearly report from each of the three major credit-reporting bureaus as a result of the Fair and Accurate Credit Transactions Act (FACT Act) of 2003 – [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com)

UCPD offers a helpful *safe Bulletin* on identity theft - <http://police.berkeley.edu/safetyinfo/>  
Enter “identity theft” in the search box for a two-page PDF on this topic. Additional information is also available on the FACT Act website.