Federal Trade Commission Webinar



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Fighting Consumer Fraud & Identity Theft in Virginia

September 25, 2018

TO HEAR THE WEBINAR CALL 1-800-260-0702 Access Code: 453892

Welcome!

Presenters:

- Jon Miller Steiger, FTC East Central Regional Office
- **Richard S. Schweiker, Jr.** Virginia Office of the Attorney General
- **Kaitlin G. Cooke**, United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia
- James W. (Jay) Speer, Virginia Poverty Law Center
- Vee Johnson, Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Branch
- Debbie Feierman, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Patti Poss & Drew Johnson, FTC

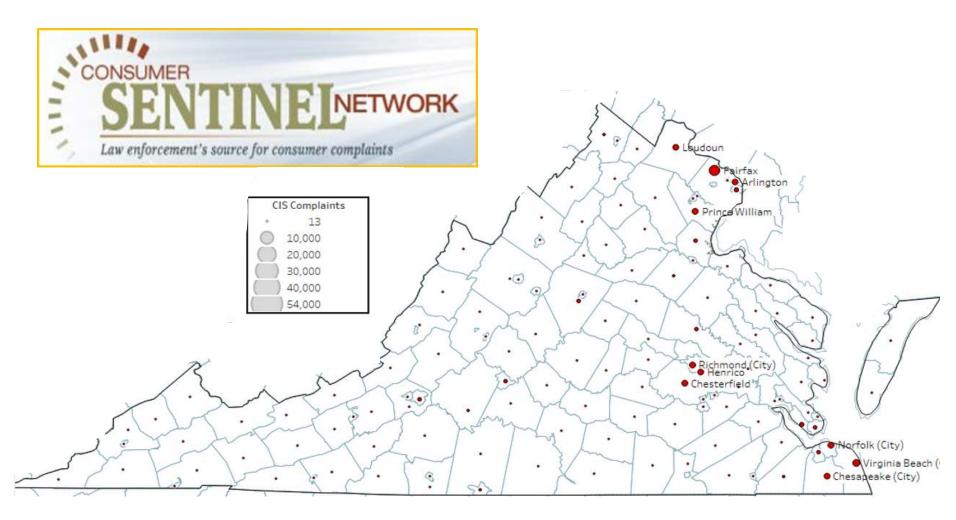
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Overview

- The Virginia landscape
- The latest scams
- Identity theft
- Working together to fight fraud and identity theft

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Fraud & Identity Theft Reports in Virginia for 2017



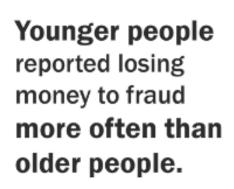
Virginia Top Reports - 2017

1. Debt Collection	11,539	6. Credit Bureaus, Information Furnishers and Report Users	2,570
2. Imposter Scams	9,677	7. Telephone and Mobile Services	2,549
3. Banks and Lenders	4,339	8. Auto-Related Complaints	2,518
4. Shop-at-Home and Catalog Sales	2,949	9. Credit Cards	1,421
5. Prizes, Sweepstakes and Lotteries	2,723	10. Mobile: Accessories, Devices, and Services	1,267

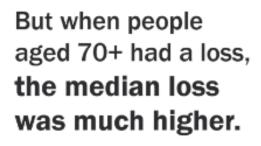
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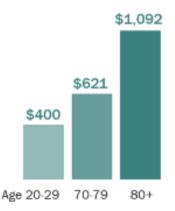
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Consumer Sentinel Network Data Book 2017









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For Consumers Who Have Been Scammed:

Contact the payment provider

- Tell them the transaction was fraudulent
- Ask for the money back

Report the fraud to law enforcement:
FTC.gov/complaint or *FTC.gov/queja*

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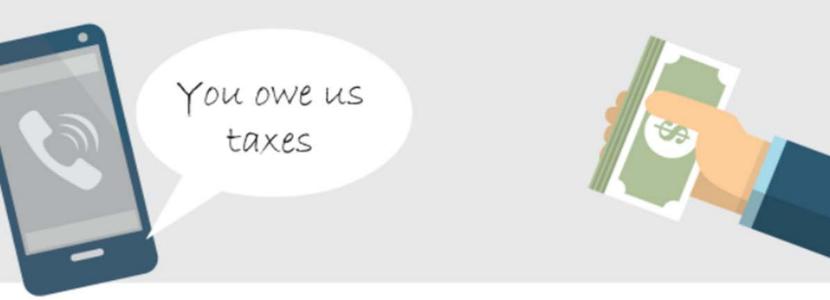
THE LATEST SCAMS

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IRS IMPOSTER SCAMS

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is the government agency that collects federal taxes.

Scammers pretend to be IRS officials to get you to send them money.



IRS Imposters

Tips for Consumers:

- Never send money to anyone who asks
- Requests to wire money or send prepaid cards or gift cards are always scams
- The IRS will never threaten to arrest or deport

<u>www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0519-irs-imposter-</u> <u>scams-infographic</u>

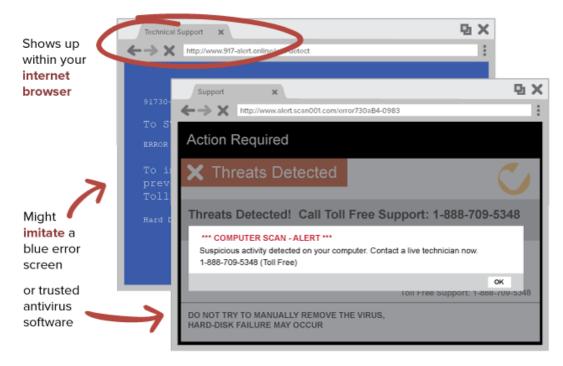
IRS Imposters: Twists

- Private debt collection for old IRS debts
- Get a letter first with name of debt collector & authentication number
- Always pay the IRS directly

- www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2017/04/irs-now-using-privatedebt-collectors
- Scammers make IRS deposits, then demand the money
- Follow the IRS's instructions to return money www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2018/03/watch-out-these-newtax-scams

TECH SUPPORT SCAM

It often starts with a pop-up . . .



CALL	NOW	OR ELSE
Wants you to call	Urges you to call	Threatens that you may lose
a toll-free number	immediately	personal data if you don't call

Tech Support Scams

Tips for Consumers:

- Hang up on callers who say you have a computer problem
- Ignore pop-ups that say to call tech support
- Never share passwords or give remote access
- Questions? Call the legitimate company before you do anything

<u>www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0346-tech-support-</u> <u>scams</u>

Sweepstakes & Grant Scams



ANITA - Substantive information contained herein for a Major Cash Prize. Please respond immediately:

CASH CLAIN VERIFICATION LETTER MESSAGE: JULY 15, 2014

Dear ANITA

1

Pursuant to the headline above and through which we are now contacting you via this dated correspondence, please understand true this is NOT a preliminary or gualification lotter of cash prize status; YOU HAVE WON A CASH PRIZE;

Please be assured of the accurateness of this documentation!

tpur name was identified among a tiny percentage of ALL eligible individuals who could have received this notice. The tact that you have non a cash price must be thinking and somewhat overneticining - we ask that you read carefuly. Do not skip ahead, Your response to this tester is AMSINATORY to claim the coash price your before down setted to rective.

To initiate issuance of your Pribs Check, you must RETURN THE ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT before the deadline date specified jo the enclosed according to the rules and terms thether. Failure to do so will invalidude the price confirmation and result is tortineture of the Chack weathern glaspic to jou otherchy by accorde mail.

We would like to proceed with resolution of your cash prize quickly!

[#1] Your cash prize will be drawn and paid in single tump sum (Section A / page2)

(42) Swieperakes report documentation for the total aggregate lunds around of \$1,543,543,64 as noted above is awating your raphy with promeding tee (Section 3.4 page2) for outright access to the amount fiscal above. [This is not a mixtuke.]

The total amount, \$1,943,543,54, being awarded by independent prize sponsors is continued and will be resolved at final proceedings pending. We are delighted to provide notification of the winners total entitiement amount, is writing, and to issue upon your reply and payment of the processing (e.g., full report documence and claim procedures for the maximum aggregate lunds as filed by this recorded/better and validated at \$1,943,543,54.

Please take a moment to read and complete the accompanying paperwork carefully. We are prepared to process and make delivery of the

Sweepstakes Scams

- Never pay to collect a so-called prize or grant
- Legit sweepstakes don't make you pay a fee
- www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0199-prize-scams

Grant Scams

- No surprise government grants
- No charge for a government grant or for a list of government grants-making agencies
- <u>Grants.gov</u> one place to apply
- www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0113-governmentgrant-scams

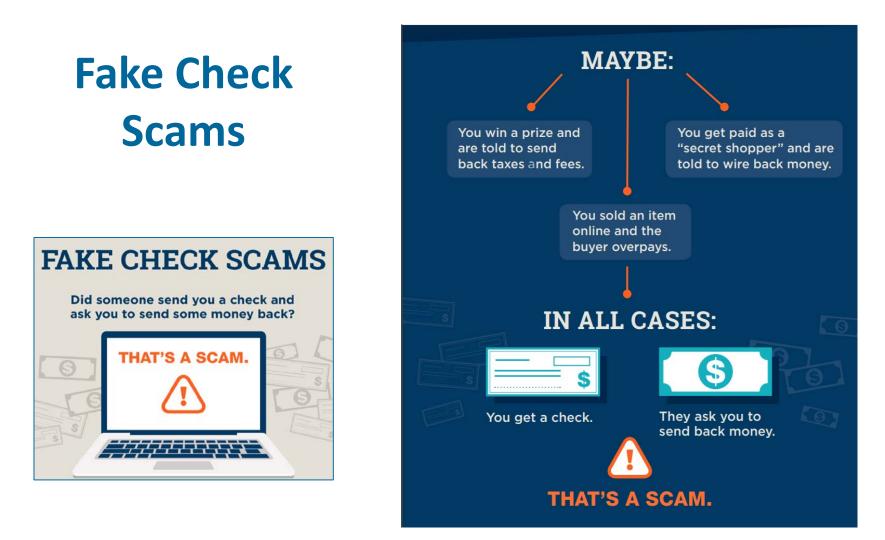
Family Emergency Scams



Family Emergency Scams

Tips for Consumers:

- SLOW DOWN
- Get off the phone and check with a family member or friend. (Even if they say it's a secret)
- Do not wire money or buy a prepaid card or a gift card and give someone the card's numbers
- www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0204-familyemergency-scams



www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2018/09/anatomy -fake-check-scam

Fake Check Scams

IF IT'S A FAKE CHECK, WHY IS MONEY IN YOUR ACCOUNT?



Federal Trade Commission

Spot this scam? Tell the Federal Trade Commission: ftc.gov/complaint

Charity Scams



Operation

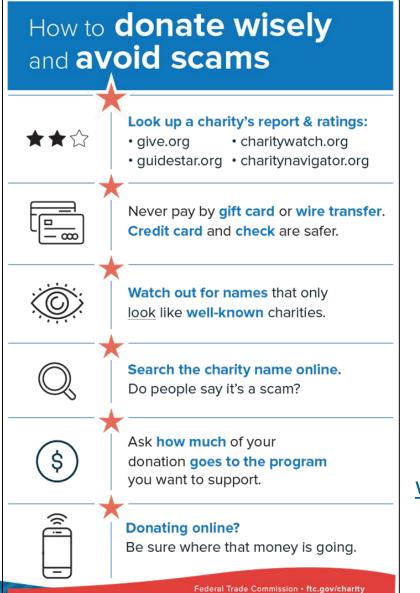
Donate with Honor

Which veterans group would you donate to?

American Disabled Veterans Foundation National Vietnam Veterans Foundation Healing American Heroes, Inc. Veterans Fighting Breast Cancer Military Families of America VietNow National Headquarters, Inc. Foundation for American Veterans, Inc. Healing Heroes Network Help the Vets, Inc.

They have all been sued for lying to donors.

Don't depend on the name. Do your research. Then donate.



Charity Scams

Other tips at: www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0074giving-charity

Unwanted Calls

- Telemarketing robocalls are more than just annoying: *they are illegal*
- The FTC has sued operations selling:
 - medical alert and home security systems
 - interest rate reduction services
 - auto warranties
 - free vacations

Unwanted Calls

- Report them:
 - <u>DoNotCall.gov</u> or 1-888-382-1222
- FTC shares information about reported unwanted calls with phone companies
 - Helps them block numbers
- Don't trust caller ID: easy to spoof
- Just hang up! It's ok to be rude
- Call-blocking technology
 - <u>www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0548-blocking-</u> <u>unwanted-calls</u>

How to Stop Unwanted Calls

www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/how-stop-unwanted-calls

How to stop unwanted calls **ON A MOBILE PHONE**



See what built-in features your phone has.



See what services your carrier offers. Download a call-blocking app.

- Some apps are **free**, but others charge a monthly fee.
- Some apps will access your contacts.
- Calls might be **stopped**, ring silently, or go straight to voicemail.

Report unwanted calls at ftc.gov/complaint

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION • ftc.gov/calls

ON A LANDLINE See what services



your carrier offers.

Some services are free, but others charge a monthly fee.



How to stop unwanted calls

Report unwanted calls at ftc.gov/complaint

Install a call-blocking device.

stop unwanted calls

divert calls to voicemail

Some use blacklists to

Some use whitelists of

approved numbers.

FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION · ftc.gov/calls

Debt Collection and Debt Scams

Fake Debt Collection Scams

www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0258-fake-debt-collectors

 Mortgage Relief & Foreclosure Rescue Scams <u>www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0100-mortgage-relief-</u> <u>scams</u>

www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0193-facing-foreclosure

Student Loan Debt Scams

www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/1028-student-loans

www.studentaid.ed.gov/sa

Opportunity Scams

- Investments
- Job scams
- Business opportunities

Real People Achieving Real Results ✓ BE YOUR OWN BOSS NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED EARN THOUSANDS MONTHLY BECOME PART OF A WINNING TEAM WORK FROM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD. CALL TODAY AND START EARNING TOMORROW!

Small Business Scams

- Unordered supplies
- Business directory listings
- Domain name/website registrations
- Payment processing
- Charity scams







Someone uses your personal information to

- Open accounts
- File taxes
- Buy things



Examples of Misuse

- Open Credit Cards
- Open Utility Accounts
- Apply for a Tax Refund
- Get a Loan
- Apply for Employment
- Get Medical Care



Impact on Victims

- Denial of credit/loans
- Denial of public benefits
- Denial of medical care
- Denial/loss of employment
- Harassment by debt collectors
- Legal issues/arrest
- Stress/anxiety
- Recovery time/expense



Reduce the Risk

- Review your mail, especially financial statements
- Check your credit report every year:
 - Free report from <u>AnnualCreditReport.com</u>
- Protect your Social Security and Medicare numbers
- Store documents securely and shred before discarding
- File your taxes as early as you can

Equifax Data Breach

- Check if you're affected: <u>equifaxsecurity2017.com</u>
- What can you do?
 - Monitor your accounts
 - Fraud alert or credit freeze
 - File taxes early
- Visit <u>ftc.gov/equifax</u>

New Law, New Credit Rights

- FRAUD ALERTS now last one year rather than 90 days
- CREDIT FREEZES are free for all
 - Also for kids under age 16
 - Also for incapacitated adults
- FREE CREDIT MONITORING for active duty military starting May 24, 2019
- For more information, go to <u>ftc.gov/newcreditlaw</u>



HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:



Tell us what happened.

We'll ask some questions about your situation. Tell us as much as you can.



Get a recovery plan.

We'll use that info to create a personal recovery plan.



Put your plan into action.

If you create an account, we'll walk you through each recovery step, update your plan as needed, track your progress, and pre-fill forms and letters for you.

Get started now. Or you can browse a complete list of possible recovery steps .

New Medicare Cards Starting In April 2018



New Medicare Cards – Stay Connected

Find more technical information, detailed updates, training opportunities, and materials to share on the web:
CMS.gov/newcard

 Comments and questions are always welcome! Send to: <u>NewMedicareCardSSNRemoval@cms.hhs.gov</u>

• Information for people with Medicare:

Medicare.gov/newcard

Report Fraud to the FTC



FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION PROTECTING AMERICA'S CONSUMERS FTC COMPLAINT ASSISTANT

FTC.gov/complaint or FTC.gov/queja 1-877-FTC-HELP

Virginia Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Section

- Enforce state and federal antitrust and consumer protection laws
- Serve as central clearinghouse for consumer complaints
- Offer dispute resolution services for consumer complaints
- Operate a consumer hotline



Virginia Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Section Counseling, Intake and Referral Unit

- Statewide clearinghouse for consumer complaints
 - 3,932 written complaints in 2017
 - 24,135 calls in 2017
- **Consumer Hotline**: 8:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m.

1-800-552-9963 804-786-2042

- Website: www.ag.virginia.gov
- Address: 202 North 9th Street Richmond, VA 23219
 Fax: 804-225-4378



Virginia Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Section Dispute Resolution Unit

- Offer Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) services for complaints that do not allege a violation of law
 - Contact consumer and business and attempt to facilitate resolution of the complaint
- Some complaints are assigned to Investigators
- Resolved/closed 3,213 complaints in 2017
- Consumers recovered \$944,106 in 2017



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Virginia Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Section Enforcement Units

Recoveries Since January 2014

- Restitution \$42.5 million
- Collection Forbearance \$168.7 million
- Civil Penalties/Attorneys' Fees \$35.1 million



Virginia Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Section Webpage www.ag.virginia.gov/consumer-protection



Virginia Office of the Attorney General Identity Theft Passport & Affidavit

- Identity Theft Passport Card you can carry and present to law enforcement or other individuals who may challenge you about your identity if you are the victim of an identity crime
 - To protect victims from unlawful detention or arrest for crimes committed by someone else under a stolen identity
- Identity Theft Affidavit Instead of completing several different forms, you can use the Identity Theft Affidavit to alert businesses about the fraud

Virginia Office of the Attorney General Identity Theft Passport

Identity Theft Passport is available to any Virginians who:

- Filed a police report because they believe they are a victim of identity crime; and/or
- Obtained a court order expunging their record as a result of an identity crime

Apply to the Virginia Attorney General's Office

 Information and forms available online: www.oag.state.va.us/programs-initiatives/identity-theft

U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia

Department of Justice Elder Justice Initiative

https://www.justice.gov/elderjustice

Virginia Elder Justice Coordinators

Eastern District of Virginia Kaitlin G. Cooke 919 E. Main Street, Suite 1900 Richmond, VA 23219 804-819-5416



Western District of Virginia Ronald M. Huber 255 W. Main Street, Suite 130 Charlottesville, VA 22902 434-293-4283



U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia

Law Enforcement Contacts

Federal Bureau of Investigation – 804-261-1044

https://www.ic3.gov/default.aspx

Secret Service – 804-592-3086

https://www.secretservice.gov

United States Postal Inspection Service – 877-876-2455

https://postalinspectors.uspis.gov/contactUS/filecomplaint.aspx

Informational Resources

Consumer Financial Protection Bureau– <u>https://www.consumerfinance.gov/practitioner-resources/resources-for-older-adults/</u> National Clearing House on Abuse in Later Life – <u>http://www.ncall.us</u> National Center on Elder Abuse – <u>https://ncea.acl.gov/</u>

Administration for Community Living – <u>https://www.acl.gov</u>



Virginia Poverty Law Center Senior Legal Helpline

- 844-802-5910
- Legal assistance and advice for Virginians aged 60 and over
- Topics covered include: Financial exploitation and some consumer issues
- Also covered: Long term care, Medicaid, guardianship and alternatives



Virginia Poverty Law Center Predatory Loan Help Hotline

- 866-830-4501
- Call us if you are stuck in a car title loan, payday loan or an internet loan



Virginia Poverty Law Center Internet Loans

- Promises of fast cash from internet loans often leads to...
- Sale of your personal information which leads to....
- False threats of criminal prosecution
- Harassment calls to family and friends
- Endless scam calls and emails



Virginia Poverty Law Center <u>VaLegalAid.org</u>

- information about civil legal issues
- Choose a topic to get answers to your legal questions, find a legal aid office near you, court information, public forms and more
- Information on fraud, identity theft and unfair sales and practices
- Call 866-LEGLAID (866-534-5243) to reach you local legal aid office



Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Branch



- Provides information and resources about identity theft, fraud, and scams
- Consumer Specialist available Monday Friday between 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to answer questions or call to schedule a community presentation
- Call 703-222-8435; TTY 711
- Email <u>consumer@fairfaxcounty.gov</u>
- Resources available at:
- fairfaxcounty.gov/cableconsumer/csd/identity-theft-resources

HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER TO FIGHT FRAUD AND IDENTITY THEFT?

Federal Trade Commission

Keep up with the latest scams and share with your community



- Sign up for scam alerts at <u>FTC.gov/scams</u>
- Share these alerts on your website, in your newsletter or emails, or on social media

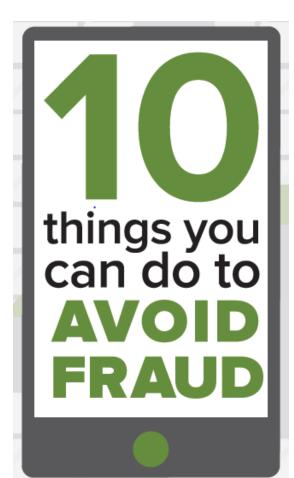
Keep up with the latest scams and share with your community

- Follow us on social media and share:
 - @FTC
 - @laFTC
 - @MilConsumer
 - Facebook.com/FederalTradeCommission
 - Facebook.com/MilitaryConsumer

Use and Share Free FTC Resources

- <u>Consumer.FTC.gov</u>: hundreds of fraud articles
- <u>Consumer.gov</u>: consumer protection basics, plain and simple
- <u>FTC.gov/PassItOn</u>: helping older adults protect others from fraud
- <u>YouTube.com/FTCVideos</u>: view and share videos

Use and Share Free FTC Resources Bulkorder.FTC.gov





Identity Theft

What to know, What to do



Talk to Us

Help for Virginia's Congressional delegation

Derick Rill, FTC's Office of Congressional Relations
<u>drill@ftc.gov</u> or 202-326-3007

Consumer Sentinel Network

www.ftc.gov/enforcement/consumer-sentinel-network

 Law enforcement groups can obtain access to complaints by contacting Nick Mastrocinque at <u>nmastrocinque@ftc.gov</u>

Thank you for joining us!

Speakers:

- Jon Miller Steiger, FTC East Central Regional Office
- **Richard S. Schweiker, Jr.,** Virginia Office of the Attorney General
- Kaitlin G. Cooke, United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Virginia
- James W. (Jay) Speer, Virginia Poverty Law Center
- Vee Johnson, Fairfax County Consumer Affairs Branch
- **Debbie Feierman**, Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services
- Patti Poss & Drew Johnson, FTC

Thank you for joining us!

Slides available at: <u>Consumer.gov/StateWebinars</u>

Please spread the word to fight fraud and identity theft throughout Virginia!

Feedback about the webinar: everycommunity@ftc.gov



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