

SEPTEMBER 2021

ICE, ICE BABY!¹

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As everyone who pays attention to the news now knows, Equifax, one of the three major credit agencies, suffered one of the greatest hacks ever in September 2017, exposing the personal information of, well, just about everyone in America with credit.²

So, what are we all to do?

Freeze.

If you have a job that requires frequent credit checks, or are the sort of person who gets a new credit card every time you go to a new place (20% off your first purchase if you apply for the Banana Republic card!), then perhaps you pass on this. For the rest of us, it's time.

Yes, we are going DEFCON 1 here.

So, what does a freeze actually mean? Quite simply, it means that the credit agency will give you a personal identification number or require you to create an account with a login that only you know. No one will have access to your frozen credit report unless you thaw the report by using your PIN or login process. By doing this, even if a criminal gets your personal information, they won't be able to establish new credit in your name.

Let's get to it. Here's what you need to do. First, while the breach was at Equifax, you will still need to freeze your credit at all three credit agencies to prevent credit from being established through any of these three potential "entry points." Also, freeze the credit of any of your minor children—I'm not messing around here.

TransUnion

Freeze: You can freeze your credit online at <https://freeze.transunion.com/sf/securityFreeze/landingPage.jsp> or by calling (888) 909-8872.

Thaw: You can thaw your credit online at <https://freeze.transunion.com/sf/securityFreeze/landingPage.jsp> or by calling (888) 909-8872.

(Continued)

¹ Many readers have figured out that I often use song titles as titles for our newsletters. Having now used a Vanilla Ice title, it may be time for me to call it a day.

² Not only that, but the executives sold some of their shares in Equifax prior to sharing the news with the public. I am sure there's a special place in hell for this or, at least one can hope, in jail.

Experian

Freeze: You can freeze your credit online at <https://www.experian.com/ncaconline/freeze> or by calling (888) 397-3742.

Thaw: You can thaw your credit online at <https://www.experian.com/ncaconline/removefreeze> or by calling (888) 397-3742.

Equifax

Freeze: You can freeze your credit online at <https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/credit-freeze/> or by calling (800) 685-1111.

Thaw: You can thaw your credit online at <https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/credit-freeze/> or by calling (800) 685-1111.

At Creative Planning, your personal financial security is a top priority. You can expect more from us as we work with our security consultants on additional ways to help you protect yourself, and please reach out to your wealth manager if you have any questions.

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