

Are you moving out of your Service Family Accommodation?

Advice regarding your mail.

Personal documents can contain a lot of data and information about you, especially bank and other financial documents. These can be used by people to steal your identity.

Families moving out of a Service Families Accommodation (SFA) property should:

1. Notify any relatives and businesses (especially banks or other financial institutions you deal with) that you are leaving your property and supply them with your new address.
2. Consider using the Royal Mail re-direction service. Redirection is a cost-effective way of continuing to receive mail when you move home, whether that is within the UK or to an overseas address. The service is available for periods of 1, 3, 6 or 12 months and you can redirect to any UK or overseas address. You can renew the redirection up to a maximum of two years. There is a convenient and secure online application for home movers. Prices start from £7.65 for 1 month. See the Royal Mail website: <http://www.royalmail.com/portal/rm/product1?catId=400040&mediaId=600008>

What is identity theft?

Identity theft, also known as ID theft, is a crime in which a criminal obtains key pieces of personal information, such as Social Security or driver's licence numbers, in order to pose as someone else. The information can be used to obtain credit, merchandise, and services using the victim's name.

The two main types of identity theft are:

- account takeover identity theft, where an impostor uses the stolen personal information to gain access to the person's existing accounts, or
- where the identity thief will use the stolen identity to open new accounts or obtain more credit by changing your address so that you never see the credit card bills that the thief runs up.

The <https://www.identitytheft.org.uk/> website can help you protect yourself, advises what to do if it happens to you and suggests where to get further help. It has been produced in collaboration between the public and private sectors to combat the threat of identity theft.

Keep your personal information secure

Your identity and personal information are valuable assets. Keep them safe and secure by:

- shredding unwanted receipts, bank statements and personal information. Many financial organisations now offer online statements – you can reduce the amount of paper produced with your details and save the environment at the same time.
- regularly obtaining a copy of your personal credit file from one of the major credit reference agencies. Call Credit, Experian or Equifax to see which financial organisations have accessed your details. It is particularly helpful to check your personal credit file 2-3 months after you have moved house.
- being extra careful if you live in a property where other people could have access to your mail. In some cases a bank or credit card company could arrange for you to collect valuable items such as new plastic cards or cheque books from a local branch.
- contacting the Royal Mail Customer Enquiry Line on 08457 740 740 if you suspect your mail is being stolen. Check whether a mail redirection order has been made in your name without your knowledge.
- telling your bank, card issuer and all other organisations that you deal with immediately if you move house. Ask the Royal Mail to redirect any mail from your old address to your new one for at least a year.
- considering using the Mailing Preference Service to limit unwanted mail.
- visiting Get Safe Online (<https://www.getsafeonline.org>) for advice on how to stay safe online when shopping, banking or doing business over the internet, and how to protect your computer and the personal information it contains. This website includes advice on disposing of unwanted computers and has been developed by the Government, police and industry.