

MORE THAN A NUMBER: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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What is More Than a Number?

More Than a Number is the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA's) initiative for spreading awareness of identity theft and disseminating information on identity theft prevention to Veterans and their beneficiaries.

What is identity theft?

Identity theft occurs when someone uses another person's Sensitive Personal Information (SPI) to commit, aid or abet fraud (Source: Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act, 2003).

What is personally identifiable information (PII)?

PII refers to information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity. Examples of PII include: names, Social Security numbers, addresses, phone numbers, credit card or bank numbers, and biometric data (like your fingerprint).

What is protected health information (PHI)?

PHI refers to PII that is related to a person's health. Examples of PHI include: medical records, health insurance information, and prescription information.

Why is it important to protect Veterans from identity theft?

Identity theft can result in serious consequences for Veterans and their beneficiaries. When a person's identity is compromised, it can take considerable time and money to resolve the criminal charges that occur or close bad accounts. Victims can even be denied loans or jobs as a result of the crime's impact on their credit.

What is VA doing to protect Veterans from identity theft?

In addition to promoting identity theft awareness through More Than a Number, VA goes to great measures internally to ensure that Veterans' PII and PHI are protected. VA employees are highly trained

at dealing with sensitive information, and VA also employs a team of network security experts to monitor and safeguard its systems.

If a Veteran's information is ever compromised as a result of an incident at VA, the Department offers free credit monitoring to all Veterans whose data is at risk.

How is More Than a Number helping to protect Veterans and their beneficiaries from identity theft?

VA knows that education and awareness are key in determining one's ability to prevent identity theft. The More Than a Number website, www.va.gov/identitytheft, offers Veterans a great deal of resources and information on the best ways to protect against identity thieves. In addition, a dedicated toll-free helpline is available for Veterans and their beneficiaries to call if they believe they have been a victim of identity theft. The toll-free number is 1-855-578-5492.

What specifically can Veterans and their beneficiaries find on More Than a Number website?

Visitors to the More Than a Number website (www.va.gov/identitytheft) will find:

- ▶ **Instructions** on what to do if they suspect that their identity or information has been stolen;
- ▶ **Tips** for protecting against identity theft;
- ▶ **Links** to the web's best resources for identity theft prevention; and
- ▶ **Information** on what VA is doing internally to protect the sensitive information that it possesses.

Visit www.va.gov/identitytheft to learn how to prevent identity theft.

More Than a Number is overseen by VA's Identity Safety Service within the Office of Information Security.



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DEFEND VETERANS' IDENTITIES