

FTC: Georgia 7th-worst for ID theft

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The **Federal Trade Commission** on Friday reported the most cases of identity theft ever in one year in 2008, with Georgia among the 10 worst for identity theft complaints.

The **FTC report** shows 1.22 million complaints related to fraud, identity theft and other consumer complaints -- 16 percent higher than the 1.05 million complaints in 2007. Those consumers reported fraud related losses of more than \$1.8 billion.

Some 52 percent of complaints were fraud complaints, 26 percent were identity theft complaints and 22 percent were classified as other types of complaints.

Georgia ranked seventh-worst for identity theft, with 10,748 complaints, or 111 per 100,000 residents. Third-party and creditor debt collection got the most complaints with 4,430 (16 percent). Other top complaints came from fraud on or through the Internet, credit bureaus/information furnishers/report users, shop-at-home/catalog sales and TV/electronic media.

Georgia was 16th-worst for fraud and other complaints, with 27,470, or 283.6 per 100,000 residents. Government documents or benefits fraud represented 13 percent of identity theft complaints with 2,488. Other top complaints came from credit card fraud with 1,906 (18 percent), bank fraud with 1,348 (13 percent) and phone or utilities fraud with 1,170 complaints (11 percent).

Losses from fraud in Georgia topped \$45 million in 2008.

Metro Atlanta was 87th for identity theft, with 7,503 complaints, or 146 per 100,000 residents. The metro area was 181st for fraud and other complaints, logging 18,864, or 367.1 per 100,000 residents.

The FTC report showed credit card fraud was the most common form of identity theft nationally, representing 20 percent of identity theft claims.