

Title 09 : Commerce And Trade

Chapter 063 : Consumer Protection

Subchapter 003 : Fair Credit Reporting

(Cite as: 9 V.S.A. § 2480e)

• **§ 2480e. Consumer consent**

(a) A person shall not obtain the credit report of a consumer unless:

- (1) the report is obtained in response to the order of a court having jurisdiction to issue such an order; or
- (2) the person has secured the consent of the consumer, and the report is used for the purpose consented to by the consumer.

(b) Credit reporting agencies shall adopt reasonable procedures to ensure maximum possible compliance with subsection (a) of this section.

(c) Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect:

- (1) the ability of a person who has secured the consent of the consumer pursuant to subdivision (a)(2) of this section to include in his or her request to the consumer permission to also obtain credit reports, in connection with the same transaction or extension of credit, for the purpose of reviewing the account, increasing the credit line on the account, for the purpose of taking collection action on the account, or for other legitimate purposes associated with the account; and
- (2) the use of credit information for the purpose of prescreening, as defined and permitted from time to time by the Federal Trade Commission. (Added 1991, No. 246 (Adj. Sess.), § 1.)

The Vermont Statutes Online

Title 09 : Commerce And Trade

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(Cite as: 9 V.S.A. § 2480b)

• **§ 2480b. Disclosures to consumers**

(a) A credit reporting agency shall, upon request and proper identification of any consumer, clearly and accurately disclose to the consumer all information available to users at the time of the request pertaining to the consumer, including:

- (1) any credit score or predictor relating to the consumer, in a form and manner that complies with such comments or guidelines as may be issued by the Federal Trade Commission;
- (2) the names of users requesting information pertaining to the consumer during the prior 12-month period and the date of each request; and
- (3) a clear and concise explanation of the information.

(b) As frequently as new telephone directories are published, the credit reporting agency shall cause to be listed its name and number in each telephone directory published to serve communities of this State. In accordance with rules adopted by the Attorney General, the credit reporting agency shall make provision for consumers to request by telephone the information required to be disclosed pursuant to subsection (a) of this section at no cost to the consumer.

(c) Any time a credit reporting agency is required to make a written disclosure to consumers pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1681g, it shall disclose, in at least 12 point type, and in bold type as indicated, the following notice:

NOTICE TO VERMONT CONSUMERS

(1) Under Vermont law, you are allowed to receive one free copy of your credit report every 12 months from each credit reporting agency. If you would like to obtain your free credit report from [INSERT NAME OF COMPANY], you should contact us by [[writing to the following address: [INSERT ADDRESS FOR OBTAINING FREE CREDIT REPORT]] or [calling the following number: [INSERT TELEPHONE NUMBER FOR OBTAINING FREE CREDIT REPORT]] or both].

(2) Under Vermont law, no one may access your credit report without your permission except under the following limited circumstances:

- (A) in response to a court order;
- (B) for direct mail offers of credit;
- (C) if you have given ongoing permission and you have an existing relationship with the person requesting a copy of your credit report;

(D) where the request for a credit report is related to an education loan made, guaranteed, or serviced by the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation;

(E) where the request for a credit report is by the Office of Child Support Services when investigating a child support case;

(F) where the request for a credit report is related to a credit transaction entered into prior to January 1, 1993; and

(G) where the request for a credit report is by the Vermont State Tax Department and is used for the purpose of collecting or investigating delinquent taxes.

(3) If you believe a law regulating consumer credit reporting has been violated, you may file a complaint with the Vermont Attorney General's Consumer Assistance Program, 104 Morrill Hall, University of Vermont, Burlington, Vermont 05405.

Vermont Consumers

Have The Right to obtain a Security Freeze

You have a right to place a "security freeze" on your credit report pursuant to 9 V.S.A. § 2480h at no charge if you are a victim of identity theft. All other Vermont consumers will pay a fee to the credit reporting agency of up to \$10.00 to place the freeze on their credit report. The security freeze will prohibit a credit reporting agency from releasing any information in your credit report without your express authorization. A security freeze must be requested in writing by certified mail.

The security freeze is designed to help prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in your name without your consent. However, you should be aware that using a security freeze to take control over who gains access to the personal and financial information in your credit report may delay, interfere with, or prohibit the timely approval of any subsequent request or application you make regarding new loans, credit, mortgage, insurance, government services or payments, rental housing, employment, investment, license, cellular phone, utilities, digital signature, internet credit card transaction, or other services, including an extension of credit at point of sale.

When you place a security freeze on your credit report, within ten business days you will be provided a personal identification number or password to use if you choose to remove the freeze on your credit report or authorize the release of your credit report for a specific party, parties or period of time after the freeze is in place. To provide that authorization, you must contact the credit reporting agency and provide all of the following:

(1) The unique personal identification number or password provided by the credit reporting agency.

(2) Proper identification to verify your identity.

(3) The proper information regarding the third party or parties who are to receive the credit report or the period of time for which the report shall be available to users of the credit report.

A credit reporting agency may charge a fee of up to \$5.00 to a consumer who is not a victim of identity theft to remove the freeze on your credit report or authorize the release of your credit report for a specific party, parties, or period of time after the freeze is in place. For a victim of identity theft, there is no charge when the victim submits a copy of a police report, investigative report, or complaint filed with a law enforcement agency about unlawful use of the victim's personal information by another person.

A credit reporting agency that receives a request from a consumer to lift temporarily a freeze on a credit report shall comply with the request no later than three business days after receiving the request.

A security freeze will not apply to "preauthorized approvals of credit." If you want to stop receiving preauthorized approvals of credit, you should call [INSERT PHONE NUMBERS] [ALSO INSERT ALL OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION FOR PRESCREENED OFFER OPT OUT.]

A security freeze does not apply to a person or entity, or its affiliates, or collection agencies acting on behalf of the person or entity with which you have an existing account that requests information in your credit report for the purposes of reviewing or collecting the account, provided you have previously given your consent to this use of your credit reports. Reviewing the account includes activities related to account maintenance, monitoring, credit line increases, and account upgrades and enhancements.

You have a right to bring a civil action against someone who violates your rights under the credit reporting laws. The action can be brought against a credit reporting agency or a user of your credit report."

(d) The information required to be disclosed by this section shall be disclosed in writing. The information required to be disclosed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section shall be disclosed on one side of a separate document, with text no

smaller than that prescribed by the Federal Trade Commission for the notice required under 15 U.S.C. § 1681q. The information required to be disclosed pursuant to subsection (c) of this section may accurately reflect changes in numerical items that change over time (such as the phone number or address of Vermont State agencies), and remain in compliance.

(e) The Attorney General may revise this required notice by rule as appropriate from time to time so long as no new substantive rights are created therein. (Added 1991, No. 246 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; amended 1993, No. 3, § 1, eff. April 9, 1993; 1997, No. 93 (Adj. Sess.), § 1; 2003, No. 155 (Adj. Sess.), § 2, eff. July 1, 2005; 2005, No. 211 (Adj. Sess.), § 2.)