

## Debit card fraud

### But my bank offers a debit-card fraud guarantee, so I'm covered, right?

Not exactly. Many banks do offer a fraud guarantee, and your fraudulently removed funds are likely to be replaced eventually, assuming that you comply with the specific requirements of that program. The key word here is *eventually*.

Due to the unfortunate language in the EFTA, your bank has up to 10 business days before even deciding whether to refund your account or investigate.

If you do not notice the problem and report this within 48 hours of the incident, you are liable for up to \$500 of the theft. And if you do not report it within 60 days, you may be liable for the entire amount. You could lose all the money in your account plus your maximum overdraft line of credit, if any. That's the law.

During this time period, you may not have your funds available in your account to pay your mortgage, rent, loans or other bills. Many people cannot afford to be without their money for that length of time.

You need to understand that once you pay with a debit card, your bank is no longer holding that money. You transferred the money out of your account into someone else's account. Your bank won't front you that money while it figures out how to get it back from that entity for you.

### But I need a debit card to get cash from an ATM

Not necessarily. Ask your bank to replace your debit card with an ATM card. With an ATM card, a PIN is always necessary to complete a transaction. ATM cards cannot be used for online, telephone or mail transactions. If your ATM card is lost, stolen, or