

## HOUSE SUBSTITUTE TO SENATE BILL 475

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend various provisions of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated as they relate to  
2 identity fraud and the collection and dissemination of personal identifying and financial  
3 information on individuals and businesses so as to protect such information from being  
4 utilized in an unlawful manner; to amend Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
5 relating to crimes and offenses, so as to change provisions relating to definitions, financial  
6 identity fraud, and racketeer influenced and corrupt organizations; to amend Title 35 of the  
7 Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to law enforcement officers and agencies, so  
8 as to change provisions relating to data collection for identity fraud cases; to amend Title 40  
9 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to motor vehicles and traffic, so as to  
10 change provisions to allow consistent penalties for identity fraud; to amend Title 10 of the  
11 Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to commerce and trade, so as to establish  
12 guidelines for proper discarding and disposal of certain business documents containing  
13 personal information; to define terms; to provide for exceptions; to provide for civil liability;  
14 to provide for criminal penalties; to provide for other matters relative to the foregoing; to  
15 provide effective dates; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

16 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

**SECTION 1.**

17 Title 16 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to crimes and offenses, is  
18 amended by striking Code Section 16-9-4, relating to definitions of identification documents  
19 and prohibitions regarding false documents, in its entirety and inserting in lieu thereof the  
20 following:  
21

22 "16-9-4.

23 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

24 (1) 'Access device' means a unique electronic identification number, address, description,  
25 or routing code or a device containing a unique electronic identification number, address,  
26 description, or routing code issued to an individual which permits or facilitates entry into

1 a facility or computer or provides access to the financial resources, including, but not  
 2 limited, to the credit resources of the individual to whom the device or card is issued.

3 (2) 'Description' means any identifying information about a person, including, but not  
 4 limited to, date of birth, place of birth, address, social security number, height, weight,  
 5 hair or eye color, or unique biometric data such as fingerprint, voice print, retina or iris  
 6 image, DNA profile, or other unique physical representation.

7 (3) 'Government agency' means any agency of the executive, legislative, or judicial  
 8 branch of government or political subdivision or authority thereof of this state, any other  
 9 state, the United States, or any foreign government or international governmental or  
 10 quasi-governmental agency recognized by the United States or by any of the several  
 11 states.

12 (4) 'Identification 'identification document' means:

13 (A) Any any document or card issued to an individual by a government agency or by  
 14 the authority of a government agency containing the name of a person and a description  
 15 of the person or such person's photograph, or both, and giving such person's date of  
 16 birth, and includes, without being limited to, a passport, visa, military identification  
 17 card, driver's license, or an identification card; authorized under Code Sections  
 18 40-5-100 through 40-5-104.

19 (B) Any document issued to an individual for the purpose of identification by or with  
 20 the authority of the holder of a trademark or trade name of another, as these terms are  
 21 defined in Code Section 10-1-371, that contains the trademark or trade name and the  
 22 name of the person to whom the document is issued and a description of the person or  
 23 the person's photograph, or both; or

24 (C) Any access device.

25 (b)(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly ~~manufacture, sell, or distribute~~  
 26 ~~a possess, display, or use any false, fictitious, fraudulent, or altered~~ identification  
 27 document.

28 (2) ~~Any person who violates paragraph (1) of this subsection on the first offense shall be~~  
 29 ~~guilty of a misdemeanor. Any person who violates paragraph (1) of this subsection for~~  
 30 ~~the second or any subsequent offense shall be guilty of a felony and shall be punished by~~  
 31 ~~a fine of not more than \$5,000.00 or by imprisonment for not more than three years, or~~  
 32 ~~both. It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly manufacture, alter, sell, distribute,~~  
 33 ~~deliver, possess with intent to sell, deliver, or distribute, or offer for sale, delivery, or~~  
 34 ~~distribution a false, fraudulent, or fictitious identification document or any identification~~  
 35 ~~document which contains any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry.~~

36 (3) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly manufacture, alter, sell, distribute,  
 37 deliver, possess with the intent to sell, deliver, or distribute, or offer for sale, delivery, or

1 distribution any identification document containing the trademark or trade name of  
2 another without the written consent of the owner of the trademark or trade name.

3 (4) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly possess, display, or use any false,  
4 fictitious, fraudulent, or altered identification document containing the logo or legal or  
5 official seal of a government agency or any colorable imitation thereof in furtherance of  
6 a conspiracy or attempt to commit a violation of the criminal laws of this state or of the  
7 United States or any of the several states which is punishable by imprisonment for one  
8 year or more.

9 (5) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly manufacture, alter, sell, distribute,  
10 deliver, possess with the intent to sell, deliver, or distribute, or offer for sale or  
11 distribution any other identification document containing the logo or legal or official seal  
12 of a government agency or any colorable imitation thereof without the written consent  
13 of the government agency.

14 (6) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly possess, display, or use an  
15 identification document issued to or on behalf of another person without the permission  
16 or consent of the other person for a lawful purpose, unless the identification document  
17 is possessed, displayed, or used with the intent to restore it to the other person or  
18 government agency or other entity that issued the identification document to the person.

19 (c)(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) or (3) of this subsection, any person who  
20 violates paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (6) of subsection (b) of this Code section shall be guilty  
21 of a misdemeanor.

22 (2) Any person who violates paragraph (2), (3), or (6) of subsection (b) of this Code  
23 section for the second or any subsequent offense shall be guilty of a felony and shall be  
24 punished by a fine of not more than \$25,000.00 or by imprisonment for not more than  
25 three years, or both.

26 (3) Any person who manufactures, alters, sells, distributes, delivers, receives, possesses,  
27 or offers for sale or distribution three or more identification documents in violation of  
28 subsection (b) of this Code section shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than  
29 three nor more than ten years, a fine not to exceed the amount specified by Code Section  
30 17-10-8, or both.

31 (4) Any person who violates paragraph (4) or (5) of subsection (b) of this Code section  
32 shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than five years, a fine  
33 not to exceed the amount specified by Code Section 17-10-8, or both.

34 (5) Any person convicted of an attempt or conspiracy to violate subsection (b) of this  
35 Code section shall be punished by imprisonment, by a fine, or by both such punishments  
36 not to exceed the maximum punishment prescribed for the offense the commission of  
37 which was the object of the attempt or conspiracy.

1 (d) Each violation of this Code section shall constitute a separate offense.

2 (e) Any violation of this Code section shall be considered to have been committed in any  
3 county of this state in which the evidence shows that the identification document was  
4 manufactured, altered, sold, displayed, distributed, delivered, received, offered for sale or  
5 distribution, or possessed.

6 (f) The provisions of this Code section shall not apply to any lawfully authorized  
7 investigative, protective, or intelligence activity of an agency of the United States, this  
8 state, or any of the several states or their political subdivisions or any activity authorized  
9 under Chapter 224 of Title 18 of the United States Code or any similar such law relating  
10 to witness protection.

11 (g) It shall not be a defense to a violation of this Code section that a document contained  
12 words indicating that it is not an identification document unless there appears on the front  
13 and back of such document the word 'novelty' which is in a color which is not transparent  
14 on the design of the document, is in block letters not less than 40 point type in size, and is  
15 indelible ink.

16 (h)(1) Any property which is used, intended for use, or used in any manner to facilitate  
17 a violation of this Code section is contraband and forfeited to the state and no person shall  
18 have a property interest in it. Such property may be seized or detained in the same  
19 manner as provided in Code Section 16-13-49 and shall not be subject to replevin,  
20 conveyance, sequestration, or attachment.

21 (2) Within 60 days of the date of the seizure of contraband pursuant to this Code section,  
22 the district attorney shall initiate forfeiture or other proceedings as provided in Code  
23 Section 16-13-49. An owner or interest holder, as defined by subsection (a) of Code  
24 Section 16-13-49, may establish as a defense to the forfeiture of property which is subject  
25 to forfeiture under this Code section the applicable provisions of subsection (e) or (f) of  
26 Code Section 16-13-49. Property which is forfeited pursuant to this Code section shall  
27 be disposed of and distributed as provided in Code Section 16-13-49.

28 (3) If property subject to forfeiture cannot be located; has been transferred or conveyed  
29 to, sold to, or deposited with a third party; is beyond the jurisdiction of the court; has  
30 been substantially diminished in value while not in the actual physical custody of a  
31 receiver or governmental agency directed to maintain custody of the property; or has been  
32 commingled with other property that cannot be divided without difficulty, the court shall  
33 order the forfeiture of any property of a claimant or defendant up to the value of property  
34 found by the court to be subject to forfeiture under this subsection in accordance with the  
35 procedures set forth in subsection (x) of Code Section 16-13-49.

1 (4) The provisions of paragraphs (3), (4), and (5) of subsection (x) and subsection (z) of  
 2 Code Section 16-13-49 shall be applicable to any proceedings brought pursuant to this  
 3 subsection.

4 (i) It shall be an affirmative defense to the manufacturing, selling, or distributing of  
 5 identification documents that contain false, fictitious, or altered information that the person  
 6 manufacturing, selling, or distributing the documents used due diligence to ascertain the  
 7 truth of the information contained in the identification document."

## 8 SECTION 2.

9 Said title is further amended by striking Article 8 of Chapter 9 thereof, relating to identity  
 10 fraud, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:

### 11 "ARTICLE 8

12 16-9-120.

13 ~~There is created the criminal offense of financial identity fraud.~~ As used in this article, the  
 14 term:

15 (1) 'Administrator' means the administrator appointed under Part 2 of Article 15 of  
 16 Chapter 1 of Title 10, the 'Fair Business Practices Act of 1975.'

17 (2) 'Business victim' means any individual or entity that provided money, credit, goods,  
 18 services, or anything of value to someone other than the intended recipient where the  
 19 intended recipient has not given permission for the actual recipient to receive it and the  
 20 individual or entity that provided money, credit, goods, services, or anything of value has  
 21 suffered financial loss as a direct result of the commission or attempted commission of  
 22 a violation of this article.

23 (3) 'Consumer victim' means any individual whose personal identifying information has  
 24 been obtained, compromised, used, or recorded in any manner without the permission of  
 25 that individual.

26 (4) 'Identifying information' shall include, but not be limited to:

27 (A) Current or former names;

28 (B) Social security numbers;

29 (C) Driver's license numbers;

30 (D) Checking account numbers;

31 (E) Savings account numbers;

32 (F) Credit and other financial transaction card numbers;

33 (G) Debit card numbers;

34 (H) Personal identification numbers;

1 (I) Electronic identification numbers;

2 (J) Digital or electronic signatures;

3 (K) Medical identification numbers;

4 (L) Birth dates;

5 (M) Mother's maiden name;

6 (N) Selected personal identification numbers;

7 (O) Tax identification numbers;

8 (P) State identification card numbers issued by state departments; or

9 (Q) Any other numbers or information which can be used to access a person's or  
10 entity's resources.

11 (5) 'Resources' includes, but is not limited to:

12 (A) A person's or entity's credit, credit history, credit profile, and credit rating;

13 (B) United States currency, securities, real property, and personal property of any kind;

14 (C) Credit, charge, and debit accounts;

15 (D) Loans and lines of credit;

16 (E) Documents of title and other forms of commercial paper recognized under Title 11;

17 (F) Any account, including a safety deposit box, with a financial institution as defined  
18 by Code Section 7-1-4, including a national bank, federal savings and loan association,  
19 or federal credit union or a securities dealer licensed by the Secretary of State or the  
20 federal Securities and Exchange Commission; and

21 (G) A person's personal history, including but not limited to records of such person's  
22 driving records; criminal, medical, or insurance history; education; or employment.

23  
24 16-9-121.

25 A person commits the offense of financial identity fraud when without the authorization  
26 or permission of ~~another person and~~ a person with the intent unlawfully to appropriate  
27 ~~financial resources of or cause physical harm to that other person, or of any other person,~~  
28 to his or her own use or to the use of a third party he or she:

29 (1) Obtains or records identifying information of a person which would assist in  
30 accessing the ~~financial resources of the other~~ that person or any other person; or

31 (2) Accesses or attempts to access the ~~financial resources of the other~~ a person through  
32 the use of identifying information. ~~Such identifying information shall include but not be~~  
33 ~~limited to:~~

34 ~~(A) Social security numbers;~~

35 ~~(B) Driver's license numbers;~~

36 ~~(C) Checking account numbers;~~

37 ~~(D) Savings account numbers;~~

- 1       ~~(E) Credit card numbers;~~  
 2       ~~(F) Debit card numbers;~~  
 3       ~~(G) Personal identification numbers;~~  
 4       ~~(H) Electronic identification numbers;~~  
 5       ~~(I) Digital signatures; or~~  
 6       ~~(J) Any other numbers or information which can be used to access a person's financial~~  
 7       ~~resources.~~

8       16-9-122.

9       It shall be unlawful for any person to attempt or conspire to commit any offense prohibited  
 10       by this article. Any person convicted of a violation of this Code section shall be punished  
 11       by imprisonment or community service, by a fine, or by both such punishments not to  
 12       exceed the maximum punishment prescribed for the offense the commission of which was  
 13       the object of the attempt or conspiracy.

14       ~~16-9-122.~~ 16-9-123.

15       The administrator appointed under Code Section 10-1-395 shall have the authority to  
 16       investigate any complaints of consumer victims regarding ~~financial~~ identity fraud. In  
 17       conducting such investigations the administrator shall have all investigative powers which  
 18       are available to the administrator under Part 2 of Article 15 of Chapter 1 of Title 10, the  
 19       'Fair Business Practices Act of 1975.' If, after such investigation, the administrator  
 20       determines that a person has been a consumer victim of identity fraud in this state, the  
 21       administrator shall, at the request of the consumer victim, provide the consumer victim  
 22       with certification of the findings of such investigation. Copies of any and all complaints  
 23       received by any law enforcement agency of this state regarding potential violations of this  
 24       article shall be transmitted to the Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs. The Governor's  
 25       Office of Consumer Affairs shall maintain a repository for all complaints in the State of  
 26       Georgia regarding identity fraud. Information contained in such repository shall not be  
 27       subject to public disclosure. The information in the repository may be transmitted to any  
 28       other appropriate investigatory agency or entity. Consumer victims of identity fraud may  
 29       file complaints directly with the Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs. Employees of the  
 30       Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs may communicate with consumer victims. Any  
 31       and all transmissions authorized under this Code section may be transmitted electronically,  
 32       provided that such transmissions are made through a secure channel for the transmission  
 33       of such electronic communications or information, the sufficiency of which is acceptable  
 34       to the Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs. Nothing in this Code section shall be

1 construed to preclude any otherwise authorized law enforcement or prosecutorial agencies  
 2 from conducting investigations and prosecuting offenses of identity fraud.

3 ~~16-9-123.~~ 16-9-124.

4 The Attorney General and prosecuting attorneys shall have the authority to conduct the  
 5 criminal prosecution of all cases of ~~financial~~ identity fraud ~~or to refer them to the district~~  
 6 ~~attorney in the county where the crime was committed.~~

7 ~~16-9-124.~~ 16-9-125.

8 ~~In any criminal proceeding brought pursuant to this article, the crime shall be considered~~  
 9 ~~to have been committed in any county in which any part of the financial identity fraud took~~  
 10 ~~place, regardless of whether the defendant was ever actually in such county. The General~~  
 11 Assembly finds that identity fraud involves the use of identifying information which is  
 12 uniquely personal to the consumer or business victim of that identity fraud and which  
 13 information is considered to be in the lawful possession of the consumer or business victim  
 14 wherever the consumer or business victim currently resides or is found. Accordingly, the  
 15 fraudulent use of that information involves the fraudulent use of information that is, for the  
 16 purposes of this article, found within the county where the consumer or business victim of  
 17 the identity fraud resides or is found. Accordingly, in a proceeding under this article, the  
 18 crime will be considered to have been committed in any county where the person whose  
 19 means of identification or financial information was appropriated resides or is found, or in  
 20 any county in which any other part of the offense took place, regardless of whether the  
 21 defendant was ever actually in such county.

22 ~~16-9-125.~~ 16-9-126.

23 (a) A violation of this article, other than a violation of Code Section 16-9-122, shall be  
 24 punishable by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than ten years or a fine not to  
 25 exceed \$100,000.00, or both. Any person who commits such a violation for the second or  
 26 any subsequent offense shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than three nor more  
 27 than 15 years, a fine not to exceed \$250,000.00, or both.

28 (b) Any person found guilty of a violation of this article may be ordered by the court to  
 29 make restitution to any consumer victim or any business victim of such fraud.

30 (c) Each violation of this article shall constitute a separate offense.

31 (d) Upon a conviction of a violation of this article, the court may issue any order  
 32 necessary to correct a public record that contains false information resulting from the  
 33 actions which resulted in the conviction.

1 ~~16-9-126.~~ 16-9-127.

2 ~~In addition to being imprisoned as provided in Code Section 16-9-125, a person found~~  
 3 ~~guilty of financial identity fraud may be ordered by the court to make restitution to any~~  
 4 ~~victims of such fraud. The administrator shall have authority to initiate any proceedings~~  
 5 ~~and to exercise any power or authority in the same manner as if he or she were acting under~~  
 6 ~~Part 2 of Article 15 of Chapter 1 of Title 10, as regards violations or potential violations~~  
 7 ~~of this article.~~

8 ~~16-9-127.~~ 16-9-128.

9 ~~(a) The prohibitions set forth in Code Section Sections 16-9-121 and 16-9-122 shall not~~  
 10 ~~apply to nor shall any cause of action arise under Code Sections 16-9-129 and 16-9-131~~  
 11 ~~for:~~

12 (1) The lawful obtaining of credit information in the course of a bona fide consumer or  
 13 commercial transaction;

14 (2) The lawful, good faith exercise of a security interest or a right to offset by a creditor  
 15 or a financial institution; ~~or~~

16 (3) The lawful, good faith compliance by any party when required by any warrant, levy,  
 17 garnishment, attachment, court order, or other judicial or administrative order, decree, or  
 18 directive; or

19 ~~(4) The good faith use of identifying information with the permission of the affected~~  
 20 ~~individual.~~

21 ~~(b) The These exemptions provided in subsection (a) of this Code section will not apply~~  
 22 ~~to a person intending to further a scheme to violate Code Section 16-9-121 or 16-9-122.~~

23 ~~(c) It is not necessary for the state to negate any exemption or exception in this article in~~  
 24 ~~any complaint, accusation, indictment, or other pleading or in any trial, hearing, or other~~  
 25 ~~proceeding under this article involving a business victim. In such cases the burden of proof~~  
 26 ~~of any exemption or exception is upon the business victim claiming it.~~

27 16-9-129.

28 ~~Any business victim who is injured by reason of any violation of this article shall have a~~  
 29 ~~cause of action for the actual damages sustained and, where appropriate, punitive damages.~~

30 ~~Such business victim may also recover attorney's fees in the trial and appellate courts and~~  
 31 ~~the costs of investigation and litigation reasonably incurred.~~

32 16-9-130.

33 ~~(a) Any consumer victim who suffers injury or damages as a result of a violation of this~~  
 34 ~~article may bring an action individually or as a representative of a class against the person~~

1 or persons engaged in such violations under the rules of civil procedure to seek equitable  
 2 injunctive relief and to recover general and punitive damages sustained as a consequence  
 3 thereof in any court having jurisdiction over the defendant; provided, however, punitive  
 4 damages shall be awarded only in cases of intentional violation. A claim under this article  
 5 may also be asserted as a defense, setoff, cross-claim, or counterclaim or third-party claim  
 6 against such person.

7 (b) A court shall award three times actual damages for an intentional violation.

8 (c) If the court finds in any action that there has been a violation of this article, the  
 9 consumer victim injured by such violation shall, in addition to other relief provided for in  
 10 this Code section and irrespective of the amount in controversy, be awarded reasonable  
 11 attorney's fees and expenses of litigation incurred in connection with said action.

12 (d) It shall not be a defense in any action under this article that others were, are, or will be  
 13 engaged in like practices.

14 (e) In any action brought under this article the administrator shall be served by certified  
 15 or registered mail or statutory overnight delivery with a copy of the initial complaint and  
 16 any amended complaint within 20 days of the filing of such complaint. The administrator  
 17 shall be entitled to be heard in any such action, and the court where such action is filed may  
 18 enter an order requiring any of the parties to serve a copy of any other pleadings in an  
 19 action upon the administrator.

20 16-9-131.

21 Whenever an investigation has been conducted by the Governor's Office of Consumer  
 22 Affairs under this article and such investigation reveals conduct which constitutes a  
 23 criminal offense, the administrator shall forward the results of such investigation to the  
 24 Attorney General or other prosecuting attorney of this state who shall commence any  
 25 criminal prosecution that he or she deems appropriate.

26 16-9-132.

27 This article is cumulative with other laws and is not exclusive. The rights or remedies  
 28 provided for in this article shall be in addition to any other procedures, rights, remedies, or  
 29 duties provided for in any other law or in decisions of the courts of this state dealing with  
 30 the same subject matter."

### 31 **SECTION 3.**

32 Said title is further amended by striking divisions (9)(A)(xxxiv) and (xxxv) of Code Section  
 33 16-14-3, relating to definitions, and inserting in lieu thereof the following:



1 "40-5-125.

2 (a) It is a misdemeanor for any person to:

3 ~~(1) Display, cause or permit to be displayed, or have in his or her possession any~~  
4 ~~fictitious, fraudulent, or altered driver's license or identification card;~~

5 ~~(2) Use a false or fictitious name or provide any other false information in any~~  
6 ~~application for a driver's license or identification card;~~

7 ~~(3) Procure, secure, or assist another person in the procuring or securing of a fraudulent~~  
8 ~~driver's license or identification card;~~

9 ~~(4) Alter any driver's license or identification card such that the information on the~~  
10 ~~license is false or fictitious;~~

11 ~~(5) Sell or deliver any false, fictitious, or altered driver's license or identification card;~~

12 ~~(6)~~(1) Lend his or her driver's license or identification card to any other person or permit  
13 knowingly the use thereof by another person; or

14 ~~(7)~~(2) Display or represent as his or her own any driver's license or identification card  
15 not issued to him or her; or;

16 ~~(8) Conceal a material fact in any application for a driver's license or identification card.~~

17 ~~Any employee of the department who knowingly violates and is convicted of violating this~~  
18 ~~Code section shall also be guilty of the offense of violating his or her public position and,~~  
19 ~~upon conviction, shall be punished as for such separate and additional violation.~~

20 (b) Any person who knowingly makes any false statement in an application for a driver's  
21 license provided for by this chapter shall be guilty of a violation of Code Section  
22 16-10-20."

### 23 SECTION 7.

24 Said title is further amended by striking Code Section 40-5-179, relating to penalties, and  
25 inserting in lieu thereof the following:

26 "40-5-179.

27 It is a misdemeanor for any person:

28 ~~(1) To use a false or fictitious name in any application for an identification card for~~  
29 ~~persons with disabilities or knowingly to make a false statement or conceal a material fact~~  
30 ~~or otherwise commit a fraud in any such application;~~

31 ~~(2) To display or cause to be displayed or have in his or her possession any fictitious or~~  
32 ~~fraudulently altered identification card for persons with disabilities;~~

33 ~~(3)~~(1) To lend his or her identification card for persons with disabilities to any other  
34 person or knowingly to permit the use thereof by another; and

35 ~~(4)~~(2) To display or represent as his or her own any identification card for persons with  
36 disabilities not issued to him or her."



1 (6)(A) 'Personally identifiable' means capable of being associated with a particular  
 2 customer through one or more identifiers, including, but not limited to, a customer's  
 3 fingerprint, photograph, or computerized image, social security number, passport  
 4 number, driver identification number, personal identification card number, date of birth,  
 5 medical information, or disability information.

6 (B) A customer's name, address, and telephone number shall not be considered  
 7 personally identifiable data unless one or more of them are used in conjunction with  
 8 one or more of the identifiers listed in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph.

9 (7) 'Record' means any material on which written, drawn, printed, spoken, visual, or  
 10 electromagnetic information is recorded or preserved, regardless of physical form or  
 11 characteristics.

12 10-15-2.

13 A business may not discard a record containing personal information unless it:

- 14 (1) Shreds the customer's record before discarding the record;
- 15 (2) Erases the personal information contained in the customer's record before discarding  
 16 the record;
- 17 (3) Modifies the customer's record to make the personal information unreadable before  
 18 discarding the record; or
- 19 (4) Takes actions that it reasonably believes will ensure that no unauthorized person will  
 20 have access to the personal information contained in the customer's record for the period  
 21 between the record's disposal and the record's destruction.

22 10-15-3. Reserved.

23 10-15-4.

24 A business that violates Code Section 10-15-2 may be fined by the administrator appointed  
 25 pursuant to Code Section 10-1-395 not more than \$500.00 for each customer's record that  
 26 contains personal information that is wrongfully disposed of or discarded; provided,  
 27 however, in no event shall the total fine levied by the administrator exceed \$10,000.00.  
 28 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Code section, it shall be an  
 29 affirmative defense to the wrongful disposing of or discarding of a customer's record that  
 30 contains personal information if the business can show that it used due diligence in its  
 31 attempt to properly dispose of or discard such records.

**SECTION 9.**1  
2  
3  
4

This section and Sections 1 through 7 and Section 10 of this Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law without such approval; Section 8 of this Act shall become effective on July 1, 2002.

**SECTION 10.**5  
6

All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.