

## NOTICE OF DATA EVENT

*Last Updated as of January 8, 2024*

Washington County is providing notice of an event that may affected the privacy of certain personal information. We take this event seriously and would like to share information about the event, our response, and resources available to help protect information.

**What Happened?** On or about November 24, 2022, Washington County discovered suspicious activity in its computer network environment. In response, Washington County immediately took steps to secure its network and started an investigation to determine the nature and scope of the incident. Through the investigation, Washington County determined that certain files may have been copied from its network without authorization between November 22, 2022 and November 24, 2022. After identifying the files, we undertook a comprehensive and time-intensive review of the files to determine their contents and whether sensitive information was present in the files at the time of the incident. Upon completion of this review, Washington County worked diligently to reconcile this information with our records to confirm the appropriate contact information for potentially impacted individuals, and then provided notice to impacted individuals.

**What Information Was Involved?** While the specific data varies by individual, the affected information may include, name, contact information, Social Security number, driver's license or state identification number, passport number, financial account number, medical information, health insurance information.

**What We Are Doing.** We take the confidentiality, privacy, and security of information very seriously. We have security measures in place to protect information in our care and responded to this matter promptly by taking steps to further secure our systems and commencing a comprehensive investigation. We also took steps to report this incident to federal law enforcement, and regulatory authorities, as required by law.

Washington County also mailed notices with more information about the event to those individuals for whom it has address information and, as an added precaution, is providing impacted individuals with credit monitoring and identity theft protection services at no cost. Information on the services and instructions on how to enroll in these services is included in the letter mailed to individuals.

**What You Can Do.** We encourage you to remain vigilant against incidents of identity theft and fraud by reviewing your account statements and monitoring your free credit reports for suspicious activity and to detect errors. You can find more information about obtaining a free copy of your credit report, protecting against potential identity theft and fraud, and other resources available to you in the below *Steps Individuals Can Take To Help Protect Personal Information*.

**For More Information.** If you have questions or concerns, please contact our dedicated assistance line at 1-833-918-0242, Monday through Friday from 9 am – 9 pm Eastern Time (excluding major U.S. holidays). You can also write to Washington County at Attn: Public Information Officer, 100 W. Washington Street, Ste. 2600, Hagerstown, MD 21740.

Sincerely,

Washington County, Maryland

## STEPS INDIVIDUALS CAN TAKE TO HELP PROTECT PERSONAL INFORMATION

### 1. Request a Free Credit Report

Under U.S. law, a consumer is entitled to one free credit report annually from each of the three major credit reporting bureaus, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. To order a free credit report, visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call, toll-free, 1-877-322-8228. Consumers may also directly contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below to request a free copy of their credit report.

### 2. Place a “Fraud Alert” on your Credit File

Consumers have the right to place an initial or extended “fraud alert” on a credit file at no cost. An initial fraud alert is a 1-year alert that is placed on a consumer’s credit file. Upon seeing a fraud alert display on a consumer’s credit file, a business is required to take steps to verify the consumer’s identity before extending new credit. If consumers are the victim of identity theft, they are entitled to an extended fraud alert, which is a fraud alert lasting seven years. Should consumers wish to place a fraud alert, please contact any of the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below.

### 3. Place a “Credit Freeze” on a Credit Report

As an alternative to a fraud alert, consumers have the right to place a “credit freeze” on a credit report, which will prohibit a credit bureau from releasing information in the credit report without the consumer’s express authorization. The credit freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in a consumer’s name without consent. However, consumers should be aware that using a credit freeze to take control over who gets access to the personal and financial information in their credit report may delay, interfere with, or prohibit the timely approval of any subsequent request or application they make regarding a new loan, credit, mortgage, or any other account involving the extension of credit. Pursuant to federal law, consumers cannot be charged to place or lift a credit freeze on their credit report. To request a credit freeze, individuals may need to provide some or all of the following information:

1. Full name (including middle initial as well as Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.);
2. Social Security number;
3. Date of birth;
4. Addresses for the prior two to five years;
5. Proof of current address, such as a current utility bill or telephone bill;
6. A legible photocopy of a government-issued identification card (state driver’s license or ID card, etc.); and
7. A copy of either the police report, investigative report, or complaint to a law enforcement agency concerning identity theft if they are a victim of identity theft.

Should consumers wish to place a credit freeze or fraud alert, please contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below:

<b>Equifax</b>	<b>Experian</b>	<b>TransUnion</b>
<a href="https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/">https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/</a>	<a href="https://www.experian.com/help/">https://www.experian.com/help/</a>	<a href="https://www.transunion.com/credit-help">https://www.transunion.com/credit-help</a>
1-888-298-0045	1-888-397-3742	1-800-916-8800
Equifax Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 105069 Atlanta, GA 30348-5069	Experian Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016
Equifax Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 105788 Atlanta, GA 30348-5788	Experian Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 160, Woodlyn, PA 19094

#### **4. Obtain an Internal Revenue Service Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN)**

You may also obtain an Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN) from the Internal Revenue Service, a six-digit number that prevents someone else from filing a tax return using your Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number. The IP PIN is known only to you and the IRS, and helps the IRS verify your identity when you file your electronic or paper tax return. Even though you may not have a filing requirement, an IP PIN still protects your account. If you do not already have an IP PIN, you may get an IP PIN as a proactive step to protect yourself from tax-related identity theft either online, by paper application or in-person. Information about the IP PIN program can be found here: <https://www.irs.gov/identity-theft-fraud-scams/get-an-identity-protection-pin>.

#### **Additional Information**

Consumers may further educate themselves regarding identity theft, fraud alerts, credit freezes, and the steps they can take to protect your personal information by contacting the consumer reporting bureaus, the Federal Trade Commission, or their state Attorney General. The Federal Trade Commission may be reached at: 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20580; [www.identitytheft.gov](http://www.identitytheft.gov); 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338); and TTY: 1-866-653-4261. The Federal Trade Commission also encourages those who discover that their information has been misused to file a complaint with them. Consumers can obtain further information on how to file such a complaint by way of the contact information listed above. Consumers have the right to file a police report if they ever experience identity theft or fraud. Please note that in order to file a report with law enforcement for identity theft, consumers will likely need to provide some proof that they have been a victim. Instances of known or suspected identity theft should also be reported to law enforcement and the relevant state Attorney General. This notice has not been delayed by law enforcement.

*For District of Columbia residents*, the District of Columbia Attorney General may be contacted at: 400 6th Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20001; 202-727-3400; and [oag.dc.gov](http://oag.dc.gov).

*For Maryland residents*, the Maryland Attorney General may be contacted at: 200 St. Paul Place, 16th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202; 1-410-528-8662 or 1-888-743-0023; and <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/>.