

# **HIPAA DATA BREACH SPECIAL NOTICE**

## **ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES BREACH OF PERSONAL INFORMATION SPECIAL NOTICE**

The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) has been affected by a privacy incident. On or around August 7, 2017, a potential breach of privacy concerning Medicaid claims data (including names, Medicaid ID numbers, dates of birth, and diagnoses) was discovered.

### **ADDITIONAL NOTICE**

On or around March 23, 2017, information containing some Medicaid ID numbers, dates of birth, and diagnoses was accessed in an unauthorized way by a former DHS employee. DHS was made aware of the potential breach on August 7, 2017. Since that time, the Department has conducted a review of the materials to determine the number of affected individuals, the type of data that was accessed, and the scope of any use or misuse of that data. Additionally, the agency has referred the matter to local and federal law enforcement officials.

We are notifying affected individuals by mail so that they can take any necessary personal action along with our organization's efforts to reduce or eliminate harm. We recommend affected individuals take appropriate steps to protect their identity, including:

We recommend the steps below be taken to protect information from breach or harm:

- If you discover errors or suspicious activity on your credit card account, you should immediately contact the credit card company and inform them that you have received that you received a notice identifying you as an affected individual. Confirm the address they have on file for you is your current address, and that all charges on the account are legitimate.
- To obtain an annual free copy of your credit reports, visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call (877) 322-8228. Review your credit reports carefully for inquiries from companies you did not contact, accounts you did not open, or debts on your accounts that you do not recognize. Also make sure to verify the accuracy of your Social Security number, address(es), complete name,

and employer(s) information. If information on a report is incorrect, notify the credit bureau directly using the telephone number on the report. You can reach the credit reporting agencies at:

- **Equifax** P.O. Box 740241 Atlanta, GA 30374 (800) 685-1111 [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)
  - **Experian** P.O. Box 2104 Allen, TX 75013 (888) 397-3742 [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)
  - **TransUnion** P.O. Box 2000 Chester, PA 19022 (800) 916-8800 [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)
- **Placing a fraud alert or security freeze on your credit file** – Credit bureaus have tools you can use to protect your credit, including fraud alerts and security freezes. A fraud alert is a cautionary flag, which is placed on your credit file to notify lenders and others that they should take special precautions to ensure your identity before extending credit. Although this may cause some short delay if you are the one applying for credit, it might protect against someone else obtaining credit in your name. Call any one of the three credit reporting agencies at the numbers below to place fraud alerts with all three of the agencies.
    - **Equifax** (888) 766-0008
    - **Experian** (888) 397-3742
    - **TransUnion** (800) 680-7289
  - A security freeze is a more dramatic step that will prevent lenders and others from accessing your credit report entirely, which will prevent them from extending credit. With a security freeze in place, even you will need to take special steps when applying for credit. A security freeze may delay, interfere with, or prevent the timely approval of any requests you make for new loans, credit mortgages, employment, housing or other services, **including the activation of credit monitoring services**. You must contact each credit agency separately to order a security freeze. You can obtain more information by visiting the credit bureaus at the following addresses:
    - **Equifax** [https://www.freeze.equifax.com/Freeze/jsp/SFF\\_PersonalIDInfo.jsp](https://www.freeze.equifax.com/Freeze/jsp/SFF_PersonalIDInfo.jsp)
    - **Experian** [http://www.experian.com/consumer/security\\_freeze.html](http://www.experian.com/consumer/security_freeze.html)
    - **TransUnion** <http://www.transunion.com/personal-credit/credit-disputes/credit-freezes.page>
  - **Reporting suspicious activity** – If you believe you are the victim of fraud or identity theft, file a police report and get a copy of the report to submit to your creditors and others that may require proof of a crime to clear up your records. The report may also provide you with access to services that are free for identity theft victims.
  - You may also contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at (800) 908-4490. See [identitytheft.gov/databreach](http://identitytheft.gov/databreach) for additional follow-up steps.

The Arkansas Department of Human Services understands the importance of safeguarding personal information and takes that responsibility very seriously. We will do all we can to work with our clients whose personal information may have been compromised and help them work through the process. We regret that this incident has occurred and are actively working to prevent such instances in the future.

Please direct all questions to 1-855-372-1084 option #2.