

# SCOTT R. BELL, CPA, P.L.L.C.

Return Mail Processing  
PO Box 589  
Claysburg, PA 16625-0589

November 19, 2020

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## Re: Notice of Data Breach

Dear Sample A Sample:

Scott R. Bell, CPA, PLLC writes to inform you of an incident that may affect the security of your personal information. Out of an abundance of caution, we are providing this notice to ensure that you are aware of the incident so that you may take steps to protect your information should you feel it is appropriate to do so.

***What Happened?*** When we were submitting tax returns over the summer, a larger than normal number of tax returns were rejected by the IRS indicating that a prior tax return had already been submitted in the filer's name. In late August, an investigation was initiated, with the assistance of third-party forensic specialists, to determine whether our systems were subject to unauthorized access and if information needed to submit the fraudulent returns may have been taken. On September 8, 2020, we learned that there was unauthorized access to our tax filing software between April 26, 2020 and April 28, 2020. We then began reviewing the information stored in the tax software at the time of the unauthorized access to determine what sensitive information was contained within it. On September 18, 2020, it was determined that the software contained certain information related to you.

***What Information Was Involved?*** We determined that the following information related to you was stored within the software application at the time of this incident and may have been accessible: your name, address, Social Security number, date of birth, and in some cases, financial account information. If you listed a spouse/partner and/or dependents on your tax return, their information was also potentially affected, and they will also be mailed a letter.

***What We Are Doing.*** The confidentiality, privacy, and security of our client's information is one of our highest priorities. We have security measures in place to protect the security of information in our possession. In addition, as part of our ongoing commitment to the security of personal information in our care, we are working to implement additional safeguards regarding the privacy and security of information on our systems. We contacted the IRS, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and will be notifying the relevant state Attorneys General or state regulators.

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As an additional safeguard, we are offering you access to twelve (12) months of credit monitoring and identity restoration services through Experian. Please note, you must enroll in these services on as we are unable to do so on your behalf:

- URL to activate the membership is <https://www.experianidworks.com/credit>
- Toll-free number for enrollments/questions is **(833) 796-8643**
- Enrollment end date: **2/28/2021**
- Engagement #: **B006635**
- Enrollment Code: **ABCDEFGHI**

If you have questions about the product, need assistance with identity restoration or would like an alternative to enrolling in Experian IdentityWorks online, please contact Experian's customer care team at (833) 796-8643 by **2/28/2021**. Be prepared to provide engagement number **B006635** as proof of eligibility for the identity restoration services by Experian.

***What Can You Do?*** You can review the enclosed "*Steps You Can Take to Help Prevent Identity Theft and Fraud*." You can also enroll to receive the free credit monitoring and identity restoration services described above.

***For More Information.*** We apologize for any inconvenience or concern this incident causes you. The security of your information is a priority to us. Should you have any questions about the content of this letter or ways you can help protect yourself from the possibility of identity theft, please call our dedicated assistance line at (833) 796-8643 Monday thru Friday from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. PST and Saturday/Sunday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. PST.

Sincerely,



Scott R. Bell, CPA, PLLC

## Steps You Can Take to Help Protect Against Identity Theft and Fraud

### **Monitor Your Accounts**

You can contact the IRS at [www.irs.gov/Individuals/Identity-Protection](http://www.irs.gov/Individuals/Identity-Protection) for helpful information and guidance on steps you can take to address a fraudulent tax return filed in your name and what to do if you become the victim of such fraud. You can also visit [www.irs.gov/uac/Taxpayer-Guide-to-Identity-Theft](http://www.irs.gov/uac/Taxpayer-Guide-to-Identity-Theft) for more information.

In addition to enrolling in the complimentary services detailed above, we encourage you to remain vigilant against incidents of identity theft and fraud, to review your account statements, and to monitor your credit reports for suspicious activity. Under U.S. law, you are entitled to one free credit report annually from each of the three major credit reporting bureaus. To order your free credit report, visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call, toll-free, 1-877-322-8228. You may also contact the three major credit bureaus directly to request a free copy of your credit report.

You have the right to place a “security freeze” on your credit report, which will prohibit a consumer reporting agency from releasing information in your credit report without your express authorization. The security freeze is designed to 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 gets 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 a new loan, credit, mortgage, or any other account involving the extension of credit. Pursuant to federal law, you cannot be charged to place or lift a security freeze on your credit report. Should you wish to place a security freeze, please contact the major consumer reporting agencies listed below:

**Experian**  
**P.O. Box 9554**  
**Allen, TX 75013**  
**1-888-397-3742**  
**[www.experian.com/freeze/center.html](http://www.experian.com/freeze/center.html)**

**TransUnion**  
**P.O. Box 160**  
**Woodlyn, PA 19094**  
**1-888-909-8872**  
**[www.transunion.com/credit-freeze](http://www.transunion.com/credit-freeze)**

**Equifax**  
**P.O. Box 105788**  
**Atlanta, GA 30348-5788**  
**1-800-685-1111**  
**[www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services](http://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services)**

In order to request a security freeze, you will need to provide the following information:

1. Your full name (including middle initial as well as Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.);
2. Social Security number;
3. Date of birth;
4. If you have moved in the past five (5) years, provide the addresses where you have lived over the prior 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, military identification, etc.); and
7. If you are a victim of identity theft, include a copy of either the police report, investigative report, or complaint to a law enforcement agency concerning identity theft.



As an alternative to a security freeze, you have the right to place an initial or extended “fraud alert” on your 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 you are a victim of identity theft, you are entitled to an extended fraud alert, which is a fraud alert lasting seven years. Should you wish to place a fraud alert, please contact any one of the agencies listed below:

**Experian**

P.O. Box 9554  
Allen, TX 75013  
1-888-397-3742  
[www.experian.com/fraud/center.html](http://www.experian.com/fraud/center.html)

**TransUnion**

P.O. Box 2000  
Chester, PA 19016  
1-800-680-7289  
[www.transunion.com/fraud-victim-resource/place-fraud-alert](http://www.transunion.com/fraud-victim-resource/place-fraud-alert)

**Equifax**

P.O. Box 105069  
Atlanta, GA 30348  
1-888-766-0008  
[www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services](http://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services)

**Additional Information**

You can further educate yourself regarding identity theft, fraud alerts, security freezes, and the steps you can take to protect yourself, by contacting the consumer reporting agencies, the Federal Trade Commission, or your state Attorney General.

The Federal Trade Commission can be reached at: 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580, [www.identitytheft.gov](http://www.identitytheft.gov), 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338); 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. You can obtain further information on how to file such a complaint by way of the contact information listed above. You have the right to file a police report if you ever experience identity theft or fraud. Please note that in order to file a report with law enforcement for identity theft, you will likely need to provide some proof that you have been a victim. Instances of known or suspected identity theft should also be reported to law enforcement and your state Attorney General. This notice has not been delayed by law enforcement.

***For New Mexico residents***, you have rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, such as the right to be told if information in your credit file has been used against you, the right to know what is in your credit file, the right to ask for your credit score, and the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information. Further, pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the consumer reporting agencies must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information; consumer reporting agencies may not report outdated negative information; access to your file is limited; you must give your consent for credit reports to be provided to employers; you may limit “prescreened” offers of credit and insurance you get based on information in your credit report; and you may seek damages from violator. You may have additional rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act not summarized here. Identity theft victims and active duty military personnel have specific additional rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act. We encourage you to review your rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act by visiting [www.consumerfinance.gov/t/201504\\_cfpb\\_summary\\_your-rights-under-fcra.pdf](http://www.consumerfinance.gov/t/201504_cfpb_summary_your-rights-under-fcra.pdf), or by writing Consumer Response Center, Room 130-A, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20580.

***For New York residents***, the Attorney General may be contacted at: Office of the Attorney General, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224-0341; 1-800-771-7755; <https://ag.ny.gov/>.

***For North Carolina residents***, the Attorney General can be contacted at 9001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-9001, 1-877-566-7226 or 1-919-716-6000, [www.ncdoj.gov](http://www.ncdoj.gov). You can obtain information from the Attorney General or the Federal Trade Commission about preventing identity theft.