



C/O IDX
PO Box 4600
Everett WA 98204

ENDORSE



NAME

ADDRESS1

ADDRESS2

CSZ

COUNTRY



SEQ
CODE 2D
Ver 1EN

BREAK

To Enroll
<https://response.idx.us/dss>
833-752-0864
Enrollment Code:
<<XXXXXXXXXX>>

October 29, 2020

Dear <<First Name>> <<Last Name>>,

The Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS) takes your privacy extremely seriously, and we want to make you aware of a potential privacy issue. You are receiving this letter because information related to your application for and/or receipt of benefits was contained in email accounts belonging to DSS employees that were involved in a potential breach of our information systems.

Between July 29, 2019 and December 2, 2019, the Department learned that a large volume of “spam” email messages was sent from the email accounts of a number of DSS employees. Each time this was discovered, the e-mail account was immediately shut down and secured. Our review found that these email security breaches resulted from successful “phishing” attempts by individuals or systems outside of DSS.

In order to determine the extent of the potential breach, DSS engaged state agency information technology resources and an independent forensic IT firm. Due to the large volume of emails involved and the nature of the phishing attack, this joint investigation concluded on July 28, 2020.

Our forensic investigation could not determine whether any information contained in the affected email accounts actually was accessed, acquired, used or disclosed by any person. However, the investigation could not determine with certainty that the hackers did not access information belonging to any of our clients, including you. We are able to conclude that it is likely that some information related to your application for and/or receipt of benefits from DSS (such as your name, date of birth, client number, case number, social security number) may have been included in at least one of the DSS email accounts involved in the potential breach.

Although, we have found no evidence that any of your personal information was obtained by the hackers, the Department is notifying you of this possibility, and is offering you the opportunity to enroll in free identity theft protection services provided by IDX. If you have any questions about IDX identity protection services or would like to enroll in IDX – at no charge to you – please contact IDX at 833-752-0864 or online at <https://response.idx.us/dss> using the Enrollment Code provided at the top of this letter. IDX representatives are available Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET. The deadline to enroll in these services is January 28, 2021. Please refer to the enclosed “Recommended Steps to Help Protect Your Information” for additional safeguards you may want to take.

The security of your personal information is extremely important to us. Please know that we are committed to properly handling and protecting your personal information. The Department has also taken a number of steps to strengthen our security protocols and training program to better protect personal information and to help identify and protect against future phishing attempts. We regret any inconvenience this situation may have caused you.

Sincerely,

Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH
Commissioner



Recommended Steps to Help Protect Your Information

- 1. Website and Enrollment.** Go to <https://response.idx.us/dss> and follow the instructions for enrollment using your Enrollment Code provided at the top of the letter.
- 2. Activate the credit monitoring** provided as part of your IDX identity protection membership. The monitoring included in the membership must be activated to be effective. Note: You must have established credit and access to a computer and the internet to use this service. If you need assistance, IDX will be able to assist you.
- 3. Telephone.** Contact IDX at 833-752-0864 to gain additional information about this event and speak with knowledgeable representatives about the appropriate steps to take to protect your credit identity.
- 4. Review your credit reports.** We recommend that you remain vigilant by reviewing account statements and monitoring credit reports. Under federal law, you also are entitled every 12 months to one free copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit reporting companies. To obtain a free annual credit report, go to www.annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228. You may wish to stagger your requests so that you receive a free report by one of the three credit bureaus every four months.

If you discover any suspicious items and have enrolled in IDX identity protection, notify them immediately by calling or by logging into the IDX website and filing a request for help.

If you file a request for help or report suspicious activity, you will be contacted by a member of our ID Care team who will help you determine the cause of the suspicious items. In the unlikely event that you fall victim to identity theft as a consequence of this incident, you will be assigned an ID Care Specialist who will work on your behalf to identify, stop and reverse the damage quickly.

You should also know that you have the right to file a police report if you ever experience identity fraud. Please note that in order to file a crime report or incident report with law enforcement for identity theft, you will likely need to provide some kind of proof that you have been a victim. A police report is often required to dispute fraudulent items. You can report suspected incidents of identity theft to local law enforcement or to the Attorney General.

5. Place Fraud Alerts with the three credit bureaus. If you choose to place a fraud alert, we recommend you do this after activating your credit monitoring. You can place a fraud alert at one of the three major credit bureaus by phone and also via Experian's or Equifax's website. A fraud alert tells creditors to follow certain procedures, including contacting you, before they open any new accounts or change your existing accounts. For that reason, placing a fraud alert can protect you, but also may delay you when you seek to obtain credit. The contact information for all three bureaus is as follows:

Credit Bureaus

Equifax Fraud Reporting
1-866-349-5191
P.O. Box 105069
Atlanta, GA 30348-5069
www.equifax.com

Experian Fraud Reporting
1-888-397-3742
P.O. Box 9554
Allen, TX 75013
www.experian.com

TransUnion Fraud Reporting
1-800-680-7289
P.O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19022-2000
www.transunion.com

It is necessary to contact only ONE of these bureaus and use only ONE of these methods. As soon as one of the three bureaus confirms your fraud alert, the others are notified to place alerts on their records as well. You will receive confirmation letters in the mail and will then be able to order all three credit reports, free of charge, for your review. An initial fraud alert will last for one year.

Please Note: No one is allowed to place a fraud alert on your credit report except you.

6. Security Freeze. By placing a security freeze, someone who fraudulently acquires your personal identifying information will not be able to use that information to open new accounts or borrow money in your name. You will need to contact the three national credit reporting bureaus listed above to place the freeze. Keep in mind that when you place the freeze, you will not be able to borrow money, obtain instant credit, or get a new credit card until you temporarily lift or permanently remove the freeze. There is no cost to freeze or unfreeze your credit files.

7. You can obtain additional information about the steps you can take to avoid identity theft from the following agencies. The Federal Trade Commission also encourages those who discover that their information has been misused to file a complaint with them.

California Residents: Visit the California Office of Privacy Protection (www.oag.ca.gov/privacy) for additional information on protection against identity theft.

Kentucky Residents: Office of the Attorney General of Kentucky, 700 Capitol Avenue, Suite 118 Frankfort, Kentucky 40601, www.ag.ky.gov, Telephone: 1-502-696-5300.

Maryland Residents: Office of the Attorney General of Maryland, Consumer Protection Division 200 St. Paul Place Baltimore, MD 21202, www.oag.state.md.us/Consumer, Telephone: 1-888-743-0023.

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 a 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. You can review your rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act by visiting www.consumerfinance.gov/f/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.

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/>.

North Carolina Residents: Office of the Attorney General of North Carolina, 9001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-9001, www.ncdoj.gov, Telephone: 1-919-716-6400.

Oregon Residents: Oregon Department of Justice, 1162 Court Street NE, Salem, OR 97301-4096, www.doj.state.or.us/, Telephone: 877-877-9392

Rhode Island Residents: Office of the Attorney General, 150 South Main Street, Providence, Rhode Island 02903, www.riag.ri.gov, Telephone: 401-274-4400

All US Residents: Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20580, www.consumer.gov/idtheft, 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338), TTY: 1-866-653-4261.

