

March 4, 2022

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Via Email: IDTheft@oag.state.md.us

Attorney General Brian Frosh

Office of the Attorney General

Attn: Security Breach Notification

200 St. Paul Place

Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: Data Security Incident
Client: Homeschool Legal Defense Association
File No.: 15991.01190

Dear Attorney General Frosh:

We represent Homeschool Legal Defense Association (“HSLDA”), a non-profit organization providing services to families who homeschool located in Virginia in regards to a recent data security incident. HSLDA takes this matter very seriously and is taking measures to remediate the incident and provide notice to potentially affected individuals.

This letter will serve to inform you of the nature of the incident, what information may have been compromised, the number of Maryland residents being notified, and the steps that HSLDA has taken in response to the incident.

1. Nature of the incident.

On February 2, 2022, HSLDA was notified by one of our third party service providers of suspicious activity involving our payroll management system. Immediately upon notification, we took steps to mitigate further harm by shutting down access to the payroll system, changing passwords, and engaging third party experts to assist in remediation steps. Additionally, HSLDA commenced an investigation to determine the nature and scope of the incident. The investigation revealed that an unauthorized party may have gained access to HSLDA’s payroll system using compromised credentials. However, the investigation was unable to confirm the specific employee information that may have been accessed.

As a result of the investigation, HSLDA began a review of the account for impacted individuals’ personal information and created a list of individuals to notify. Immediately after concluding its validation procedures, HSLDA procured credit monitoring for affected individuals and drafted notices to individuals and state and federal regulators as appropriate.

The forensics investigation revealed that those who instigated the cybersecurity attack gained

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access to folders containing personal information. PII impacted includes name, date of birth, Social Security number, Driver's License number, Passport number, tax information, and/or financial account information.

2. Number of Maryland residents affected.

HSLDA discovered that twenty-one (21) resident of Maryland was impacted by this incident. A notification letter was sent to these individuals on March 7, 2022. A sample notice letter that was sent to the impacted individuals is included as **Exhibit A**.

3. Steps taken.

HSLDA takes the security of personal information in its control very seriously, and has taken steps to prevent a similar event from occurring in the future, including but not limited to: strengthened internal password policy by increasing complexity and enhanced secure login authentication procedures for third party service provider accounts.

HSLDA has also provided 12 months of credit monitoring, dark web monitoring, and identity theft protection services to the individuals whose PII was potentially accessed by an unauthorized individual.

4. Contact information.

HSLDA remains dedicated to protecting the sensitive information in its control. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at Anjali.Das@WilsonElser.com or 312-821-6164.

Very truly yours,

Wilson Elser Moskowitz Edelman & Dicker LLP



Anjali C. Das

Enclosure

EXHIBIT A



<Individual>
<Address 1>
<Address 2>

March 7, 2022

Notice of Data Security Incident

Dear <Individual>,

We are writing to inform you of a data security incident which affected Homeschool Legal Defense Association (“HSLDA”), a non-profit organization dedicated to assisting families with homeschooling services located in Purcellville, Virginia. The data security incident may have resulted in the potential compromise of some of your personal data. While we have no indication that your information has been misused, this letter contains information about the incident and information about how to protect your personal information going forward. HSLDA considers the protection of sensitive information a top priority, and sincerely apologizes for any inconvenience as a result of the incident.

What Happened

On February 2, 2022, HSLDA was notified by one of our third party service providers of suspicious activity involving our payroll management system. Immediately upon notification, we took steps to mitigate further harm by shutting down access to the payroll system, changing passwords, and engaging third party experts to assist in remediation steps. Additionally, HSLDA commenced an investigation to determine the nature and scope of the incident. The investigation revealed that an unauthorized party may have gained access to HSLDA’s payroll system using compromised credentials. However, the investigation was unable to confirm the specific employee information that may have been accessed. **Therefore, out of an abundance of caution, HSLDA is providing notice to all of its employees, regardless of whether their information was in fact subject to unauthorized access or acquisition.**

What Information Was Involved

While we have no reason to believe that your information has been misused as a result of this incident, we are notifying you out of an abundance of caution and for purposes of full transparency. Based on the investigation, the unauthorized party may have had access to your name, date of birth, Social Security number, Driver’s License number, Passport number, tax information, and/or financial account information. **Not every data element was present for each individual. Additionally, please note that the information did not include any individual’s credit card or debit card numbers.**

What We Are Doing

The security and privacy of your personal information contained within HSLDA systems is a top priority, and HSLDA is taking additional measures to protect this information. Since the incident, HSLDA has continued to strengthen our security posture by adding the following security controls, including strengthening our internal password policy by increasing complexity and enhancing secure login authentication procedures for third party service provider accounts.

We are also providing you with twelve (12) months of complimentary credit monitoring, dark web monitoring, and up to \$1,000,000 in identity theft protection. HSLDA strongly encourages you to take advantage of these services. More information on how to sign up for the services can be found below.

What You Can Do

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 or unauthorized activity. Additionally, security experts suggest that you contact your financial institution and all major credit bureaus to inform them of such a breach and then take whatever steps are recommended to protect your interests, including the possible placement of a fraud alert on your credit file.

Please review the enclosed *Additional Important Information*, to learn more about how to protect against the possibility of information misuse.

The protection of your information is a top priority, and we sincerely regret any concern or inconvenience that this matter may cause. We have set up a call center provided by Cyberscout for additional inquiries. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call 1-800-405-6108 Monday through Friday, between 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Eastern time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Charles L. Hurst". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles L. Hurst
VP of Administration
Homeschool Legal Defense Association

Credit Monitoring

We are providing you with access to **Single Bureau Credit Monitoring*** services at no charge. These services provide you with alerts for twelve (12) months from the date of enrollment when changes occur to your Experian credit file. This notification is sent to you the same day that the change or update takes place with the bureau. In addition, we are providing you with proactive fraud assistance to help with any questions that you might have or in the event you become a victim of identity theft. These services will be provided by Cyberscout, a company specializing in fraud assistance and remediation services.

How do I enroll for the free services?

To enroll in Credit Monitoring* services at no charge, please log on to **<https://www.myidmanager.com>** and follow the instructions provided. When prompted please provide the following unique code to receive services: **108qkbpv6nnl**. In order for you to receive the monitoring services described above, you must enroll within 90 days from the date of this letter.

The enrollment requires an internet connection and an email account, and services may not be available to minors under the age of 18 years of age. When signing up for monitoring services, you may be asked to verify personal information for our own protection to confirm your identity.

Additional Important Information

For residents of Hawaii, Michigan, Missouri, Virginia, Vermont, and North Carolina: It is recommended by state law that you remain vigilant for incidents of fraud and identity theft by reviewing credit card account statements and monitoring your credit report for unauthorized activity.

For residents of Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Oregon, and West Virginia:

It is required by state laws to inform you that you may obtain a copy of your credit report, free of charge, whether or not you suspect any unauthorized activity on your account. You may obtain a free copy of your credit report from each of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies. To order your free credit report, please visit www.annualcreditreport.com, or call toll-free at 1-877-322-8228. You can also order your annual free credit report by mailing a completed Annual Credit Report Request Form (available at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0155-free-credit-reports>) to: Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA, 30348-5281.

For residents of Iowa:

State law advises you to report any suspected identity theft to law enforcement or to the Attorney General.

For residents of Oregon:

State laws advise you to report any suspected identity theft to law enforcement, including the Attorney General, and the Federal Trade Commission.

For residents of Maryland, Rhode Island, Illinois, New York, and North Carolina:

You can obtain information from the Maryland and North Carolina Offices of the Attorney General and the Federal Trade Commission about fraud alerts, security freezes, and steps you can take toward preventing identity theft.

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

Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection 150 South Main Street, Providence RI 02903 1-401-274-4400 www.riag.ri.gov

North Carolina Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division, 9001 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-9001 1-877-566-7226 www.ncdoj.com

Federal Trade Commission Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW Washington, DC 20580 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338) www.ftc.gov/idtheft

New York Office of Attorney General Consumer Frauds & Protection, The Capitol Albany, NY 12224 1-800-771-7755 <https://ag.ny.gov/consumer-frauds/identity-theft>

For residents of Massachusetts: It is required by state law that you are informed of your right to obtain a police report if you are a victim of identity theft

For residents of all states:

Fair Credit Reporting Act: You are also advised that you may have additional rights under the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act.

Fraud Alerts: You can place fraud alerts with the three credit bureaus by phone and online with Equifax (https://assets.equifax.com/assets/personal/Fraud_Alert_Request_Form.pdf); TransUnion (<https://www.transunion.com/fraud-alerts>); or Experian (<https://www.experian.com/fraud/center.html>). 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. As of September 21, 2018, initial fraud alerts last for one year. Victims of identity theft can also get an extended fraud alert for seven years. The phone numbers for all three credit bureaus are at the bottom of this page.

Monitoring: You should always remain vigilant and monitor your accounts for suspicious or unusual activity.

Security Freeze: You also have the right to place a security freeze on your credit report. A security freeze is intended to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in your name without your consent. To place a security freeze on your credit report, you need to make a request to each consumer reporting agency. You may make that request by certified mail, overnight mail, regular stamped mail, or by following the instructions found at the websites listed below. The following information must be included when requesting a security freeze (note that if you are requesting a credit report for your spouse or a minor under the age of 16, this information must be provided for him/her as well): (1) full name, with middle initial and any suffixes; (2) Social Security number; (3) date of birth; (4) current address and any previous addresses for the past five years; and (5) any applicable incident report or complaint with a law enforcement agency or the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The request must also include a copy of a government-issued identification card and a copy of a recent utility bill or bank or insurance statement. It is essential that each copy be legible, display your name and current mailing address, and the date of issue. As of September 21, 2018, it is free to place, lift, or remove a security freeze. You may also place a security freeze for children under the age of 16. You may obtain a free security freeze by contacting any one or more of the following national consumer reporting agencies:

Equifax Security Freeze

P.O. Box 105788
Atlanta, GA 30348
[\(800\)-525-6285](tel:(800)525-6285)

<https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/credit-freeze/>

Experian Security Freeze

P.O. Box 9554
Allen, TX 75013
[\(888\)-397-3742](tel:(888)397-3742)

www.experian.com/freeze

TransUnion (FVAD)

P.O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19022
[\(800\)-680-7289](tel:(800)680-7289)

freeze.transunion.com

More information can also be obtained by contacting the Federal Trade Commission listed above.

