



Lindsay B. Nickle
2100 Ross Avenue, Suite 2000
Dallas, Texas 75201
Lindsay.Nickle@lewisbrisbois.com
Direct: 214.722.7141

August 24, 2022

Brian E. Frosh
Maryland Attorney General
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202
EMAIL: IdTheft@oag.state.md.us

Re: Notification of Data Security Incident

Dear Attorney General Frosh:

We represent Better Tax Associates, Inc. DBA Better Income Tax Service ("Better Income Tax Service") with respect to a recent data security incident described in greater detail below.

1. Nature of the Security Incident

On March 31, 2022, Better Income Tax Service received an email communication from someone claiming to be a prospective new client requesting professional tax preparation services. After several exchanges concerning those services, the prospective client forwarded a link to what was believed to be his prior tax return for the client's review. A member of the staff attempted to open the link to access the return and antivirus application alerted the client that the content of the link was malicious. Better Income Tax Service immediately took steps through its information technology consultant to secure all sensitive data in its possession. Better Income Tax Service also engaged a third party digital forensic and incident response company to investigate the incident. The forensic investigation found evidence that an unauthorized backup of client files was created within the Better Income Tax Service environment. Although no evidence was available to confirm any exfiltration of data, it is presumed that the unauthorized back up file containing client data was exfiltrated.

2. Number of Maryland Residents Affected

Better Income Tax Service notified five (5) Maryland residents via first class US mail on August 24, 2022. The impacted information may have included names, addresses, Social Security numbers, dates of birth, driver's license numbers, and financial information.

3. Steps Taken Relating to the Incident

As stated above, following the data security incident, Better Income Tax Service engaged professionals to secure the data in its environment, investigate and review the impacted data, and enhance security measures to help prevent future data security incidents from occurring. Additionally, Better Income Tax Service retained IDX, a company specializing in credit and identity monitoring services, to offer complimentary privacy and identity theft protection for twelve (12) months. Better Income Tax Service also provided affected residents with additional information about steps they can take to protect their confidential information and privacy.

4. Contact Information

Better Income Tax Service remains dedicated to protecting the personal information in its control. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (214) 722-7141, or by e-mail at Lindsay.Nickle@lewisbrisbois.com.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,



Lindsay B. Nickle
LEWIS BRISBOIS BISGAARD & SMITH LLP

Encl: Sample Notification Letter

Better Income Tax Service
Return to IDX
10300 SW Greenburg Rd. Suite 570
Portland, OR 97223

BETTER INCOME TAX SERVICE

To Enroll, Please Call:
1-800-939-4170
Or Visit:
<https://app.idx.us/account-creation/protect>
Enrollment Code: <<XXXXXXXXXX>>

<<First Name>> <<Last Name>>
<<Address1>> <<Address2>>
<<City>>, <<State>> <<Zip>>

August 24, 2022

Re: Notice of Data Security Incident

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

As a valued client of our firm, we have enjoyed servicing you, and will continue to provide accounting and tax preparation services to you, your family, and your businesses. Our firm is committed to the privacy and security of all data in our possession. We regret to inform you about a data security incident involving Better Income Tax Service that may have impacted your personal information.

Background of Incident. On March 31, 2022, we received an email communication from someone claiming to be a prospective new client requesting professional tax preparation services. After several exchanges concerning our services, the prospective client forwarded a link to what was believed to be his prior tax return for our review. A member of our staff attempted to open the link to access the return and our antivirus application alerted us that the content of the link was malicious. We immediately took steps through our information technology consultant to secure all sensitive data in our possession. Thereafter, we also engaged a third party digital forensic and incident response company to investigate the incident. Unfortunately, the forensic investigation found evidence that an unauthorized backup of client files was created within our environment. Although no evidence was available to confirm any exfiltration of data, it is presumed that the unauthorized back up file containing client data was exfiltrated.

Personal Data at Risk. The impacted information may include your name, address, Social Security number, date of birth, driver's license number, and financial information.

Steps Taken by Better Income Tax Service to Protect Your Sensitive Data. As stated above, following the data security incident, we engaged professionals to secure the data in our environment, investigate and review the impacted data, and enhance our security measures to help prevent future data security incidents from occurring. Additionally, we have retained IDX, a company specializing in credit and identity monitoring services, **to provide you with privacy and identity theft protection for twelve (12) months at no cost to you.** We selected IDX to proactively monitor your personal information as they are best in class, experienced, ethical, responsive, and service many Fortune 500 companies and government agencies. We are also providing you with additional information about steps you can take to protect your confidential information and privacy.

Our Recommendations. Please read the recommendations included with this letter which you can follow to help protect your personal and confidential information. As stated above, we are offering you complimentary privacy and identity theft protection services through IDX for twelve (12) months. Your complimentary IDX identity monitoring and protection services include credit and CyberScan monitoring, a One Million Dollar (\$1,000,000.00) insurance reimbursement policy, and fully managed identity theft recovery services. To receive credit monitoring services, you must be over the age of 18 and have established credit in the U.S., have a Social Security number in your name, and have a U.S. residential address associated with your credit file. You can enroll in by calling 1-800-939-4170 or by going to <https://app.idx.us/account-creation/protect> and using the Enrollment Code provided above. Representatives are available Monday through Friday from 6 am - 6 pm Pacific Time. Please note the deadline to enroll is November 24, 2022.

Additionally, we highly encourage you to request an IRS identity protection pin ("IP PIN") which you may obtain at <https://www.irs.gov/identity-theft-fraud-scams/get-an-identity-protection-PIN>. The purpose of this IP PIN is to prevent malicious actors from filing a fraudulent income tax return bearing your Social Security number. You would need to provide this unique, six-digit IP PIN to us at the time of your tax filing. Please contact us should you need assistance obtaining the IP PIN.

If you have other identity theft/tax related issues, contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of you obtaining the IP PIN and accepting our offered protection plan at no cost to you.

Additional Assistance. If you have any questions or need assistance, or to enroll in IDX's services, please contact 1-800-939-4170, Monday through Friday from 6 am - 6 pm Pacific Time, excluding major U.S. holidays, or visit <https://app.idx.us/account-creation/protect>. IDX's representatives are fully versed on this incident and can help answer questions you may have regarding the protection of your information. Please also examine the enclosed document for additional steps you may take to protect your private information.

We value you as our client and look forward to continuing to serve all of your accounting, tax preparation and consulting needs. Please accept our utmost heartfelt and sincere apologies. We deeply regret any worry or inconvenience that this matter may cause you.

Very truly yours,



Joseph Gottesman
On behalf of
Better Income Tax Service
660 W Oakland Park Boulevard
Wilton Manors, FL 33311

Enclosure: Steps You Can Take to Protect Your Personal Information

Steps You Can Take to Protect Your Personal Information

Review Your Account Statements and Notify Law Enforcement of Suspicious Activity: As a precautionary measure, we recommend that you remain vigilant by reviewing your account statements and credit reports closely. If you detect any suspicious activity on an account, you should promptly notify the financial institution or company with which the account is maintained. You also should promptly report any fraudulent activity or any suspected incidence of identity theft to proper law enforcement authorities, your state attorney general, and/or the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

Copy of Credit Report: You may obtain a free copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit reporting agencies once every 12 months by visiting <http://www.annualcreditreport.com/>, calling toll-free 1-877-322-8228, or by completing an Annual Credit Report Request Form and mailing it to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348. You also can contact one of the following three national credit reporting agencies:

Equifax

P.O. Box 105788
Atlanta, GA 30348
1-888-378-4329
www.equifax.com

Experian

P.O. Box 9532
Allen, TX 75013
1-800-831-5614
www.experian.com

TransUnion

P.O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19016
1-800-916-8800
www.transunion.com

Fraud Alert: You may want to consider placing a fraud alert on your credit report. An initial fraud alert is free and will stay on your credit file for at least one year. The alert informs creditors of possible fraudulent activity within your report and requests that the creditor contact you prior to establishing any accounts in your name. To place a fraud alert on your credit report, contact any of the three credit reporting agencies identified above. Additional information is available at <http://www.annualcreditreport.com>.

Security Freeze: You have the right to put a security freeze on your credit file for up to one year at no cost. This will prevent new credit from being opened in your name without the use of a PIN number that is issued to you when you initiate the freeze. A security freeze is designed to prevent potential creditors from accessing your credit report without your consent. As a result, using a security freeze may interfere with or delay your ability to obtain credit. You must separately place a security freeze on your credit file with each credit reporting agency. In order to place a security freeze, you may be required to provide the consumer reporting agency with information that identifies you including your full name, Social Security number, date of birth, current and previous addresses, a copy of your state-issued identification card, and a recent utility bill, bank statement or insurance statement.

Additional Free Resources: You can obtain information from the consumer reporting agencies, the FTC, or from your respective state Attorney General about fraud alerts, security freezes, and steps you can take toward preventing identity theft. You may report suspected identity theft to local law enforcement, including to the FTC or to the Attorney General in your state.

Federal Trade Commission

600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20580
consumer.ftc.gov
1-877-438-4338

Maryland Attorney General

St. Paul Plaza
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202
marylandattorneygeneral.gov
1-888-743-0023

New York Attorney General

Bureau of Internet and Technology
Resources
28 Liberty Street
New York, NY 10005
ag.ny.gov
1-212-416-8433 / 1-800-771-7755

North Carolina Attorney General

9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699
ncdoj.gov
1-877-566-7226

Rhode Island Attorney General

150 South Main Street
Providence, RI 02903
riag.ri.gov
1-401-274-4400

Washington D.C. Attorney General

400 S 6th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
oag.dc.gov
1-202-727-3400

You also have certain rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA): These rights include to know what is in your file; to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information; to have consumer reporting agencies correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information; as well as other rights. For more information about the FCRA, and your rights pursuant to the FCRA, please visit https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201504_cfpb_summary_your-rights-under-fcra.pdf.

Better Income Tax Service
Return to IDX
10300 SW Greenburg Rd. Suite 570
Portland, OR 97223

BETTER INCOME TAX SERVICE

To Enroll, Please Call:
1-800-939-4170
Or Visit:
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Enrollment Code: <<XXXXXXXXXX>>

<<First Name>> <<Last Name>>
<<Address1>> <<Address2>>
<<City>>, <<State>> <<Zip>>

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Steps Taken by Better Income Tax Service to Protect Your Sensitive Data. As stated above, following the data security incident, we engaged professionals to secure the data in our environment, investigate and review the impacted data, and enhance our security measures to help prevent future data security incidents from occurring. Additionally, we have retained IDX, a company specializing in credit and identity monitoring services, **to provide you with privacy and identity theft protection for twelve (12) months at no cost to you.** We selected IDX to proactively monitor your personal information as they are best in class, experienced, ethical, responsive, and service many Fortune 500 companies and government agencies. We are also providing you with additional information about steps you can take to protect your confidential information and privacy.

Our Recommendations. Please read the recommendations included with this letter which you can follow to help protect your personal and confidential information. As stated above, we are offering you complimentary privacy and identity theft protection services through IDX for twelve (12) months. Your complimentary IDX identity monitoring and protection services include credit and CyberScan monitoring, a One Million Dollar (\$1,000,000.00) insurance reimbursement policy, and fully managed identity theft recovery services. To receive credit monitoring services, you must be over the age of 18 and have established credit in the U.S., have a Social Security number in your name, and have a U.S. residential address associated with your credit file. You can enroll in by calling 1-800-939-4170 or by going to <https://app.idx.us/account-creation/protect> and using the Enrollment Code provided above. Representatives are available Monday through Friday from 6 am - 6 pm Pacific Time. Please note the deadline to enroll is November 24, 2022.

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malicious actors from filing a fraudulent income tax return bearing your Social Security number. You would need to provide this unique, six-digit IP PIN to us at the time of your tax filing. Please contact us should you need assistance obtaining the IP PIN.

If you have other identity theft/tax related issues, contact the IRS Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of you obtaining the IP PIN and accepting our offered protection plan at no cost to you.

Additional Assistance. If you have any questions or need assistance, or to enroll in IDX's services, please contact 1-800-939-4170, Monday through Friday from 6 am - 6 pm Pacific Time, excluding major U.S. holidays, or visit <https://app.idx.us/account-creation/protect>. IDX's representatives are fully versed on this incident and can help answer questions you may have regarding the protection of your information. Please also examine the enclosed document for additional steps you may take to protect your private information.

We value you as our client and look forward to continuing to serve all of your accounting, tax preparation and consulting needs. Please accept our utmost heartfelt and sincere apologies. We deeply regret any worry or inconvenience that this matter may cause you.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Gottesman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joseph Gottesman
On behalf of
Better Income Tax Service
660 W Oakland Park Boulevard
Wilton Manors, FL 33311

Enclosure: Steps You Can Take to Protect Your Personal Information

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Copy of Credit Report: You may obtain a free copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit reporting agencies once every 12 months by visiting <http://www.annualcreditreport.com/>, calling toll-free 1-877-322-8228, or by completing an Annual Credit Report Request Form and mailing it to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348. You also can contact one of the following three national credit reporting agencies:

Equifax

P.O. Box 105788
Atlanta, GA 30348
1-888-378-4329
www.equifax.com

Experian

P.O. Box 9532
Allen, TX 75013
1-800-831-5614
www.experian.com

TransUnion

P.O. Box 2000
Chester, PA 19016
1-800-916-8800
www.transunion.com

Fraud Alert: You may want to consider placing a fraud alert on your credit report. An initial fraud alert is free and will stay on your credit file for at least one year. The alert informs creditors of possible fraudulent activity within your report and requests that the creditor contact you prior to establishing any accounts in your name. To place a fraud alert on your credit report, contact any of the three credit reporting agencies identified above. Additional information is available at <http://www.annualcreditreport.com>.

Security Freeze: You have the right to put a security freeze on your credit file for up to one year at no cost. This will prevent new credit from being opened in your name without the use of a PIN number that is issued to you when you initiate the freeze. A security freeze is designed to prevent potential creditors from accessing your credit report without your consent. As a result, using a security freeze may interfere with or delay your ability to obtain credit. You must separately place a security freeze on your credit file with each credit reporting agency. In order to place a security freeze, you may be required to provide the consumer reporting agency with information that identifies you including your full name, Social Security number, date of birth, current and previous addresses, a copy of your state-issued identification card, and a recent utility bill, bank statement or insurance statement.

Additional Free Resources: You can obtain information from the consumer reporting agencies, the FTC, or from your respective state Attorney General about fraud alerts, security freezes, and steps you can take toward preventing identity theft. You may report suspected identity theft to local law enforcement, including to the FTC or to the Attorney General in your state.

Federal Trade Commission

600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20580
consumer.ftc.gov
1-877-438-4338

Maryland Attorney General

St. Paul Plaza
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202
marylandattorneygeneral.gov
1-888-743-0023

New York Attorney General

Bureau of Internet and Technology
Resources
28 Liberty Street
New York, NY 10005
ag.ny.gov
1-212-416-8433 / 1-800-771-7755

North Carolina Attorney General

9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699
ncdoj.gov
1-877-566-7226

Rhode Island Attorney General

150 South Main Street
Providence, RI 02903
riag.ri.gov
1-401-274-4400

Washington D.C. Attorney General

400 S 6th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
oag.dc.gov
1-202-727-3400

You also have certain rights under the Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA): These rights include to know what is in your file; to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information; to have consumer reporting agencies correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information; as well as other rights. For more information about the FCRA, and your rights pursuant to the FCRA, please visit https://files.consumerfinance.gov/f/201504_cfpb_summary_your-rights-under-fcra.pdf.