

Dear Attorney General Brown:

Pursuant to Maryland's Personal Information Protection Act, Md. Code Ann. Comm. Law 14-3504 ("PIPA"), we are writing to notify you on behalf of our client, Casey Watson, CPA, LLC, of a data incident that may affect the security of some personal information involving one Maryland resident.

Attached is the notice letter that will be sent to the individual.

Taylor Ey, CIPP/US, CIPP/E

She/Her

Associate

Womble Bond Dickinson (US) LLP

d: 919-484-2306

e: Taylor.Ey@wbd-us.com

Research Triangle Park
5425 Page Road, Suite 430
Durham, NC 27703



womblebond Dickinson.com



Blazing CPAs

SENT VIA EMAIL

December 31, 2023

Re: Notice of Data Incident

Dear [name]:

What happened?

Casey Watson, CPA, LLC d/b/a Blazing CPAs (“we” or “our”) is writing to provide you formal notice of a data incident that occurred on December 27, 2023 (the “Incident”). We discovered the Incident on December 29, 2023. The Incident was a theft of a physical drive containing client information.

What information was involved?

The affected information on this stolen drive included your first and last name, telephone number, mailing address, and Social Security number, as well as financial information, the tax ID and other tax data related to Simply Sweet Confections, LLC.

What are we doing?

Following the discovery of the Incident, we promptly contacted the relevant law enforcement authorities. We will file an official police report. Additionally, we have informed our vendors of this matter and working with them to monitor security of information. We will update passwords and authentication methods on our systems, and we are also reviewing our security policies, procedures, and controls following this Incident.

We are continuing to monitor the situation carefully. As of the date of this letter, we have no evidence that this information has been used for identity theft. However, in an abundance of caution, we are notifying you of this Incident and suggest you remain vigilant in monitoring your information and accounts.

To demonstrate our commitment to you, we are offering you twenty-four (24) months of identity theft protection with the credit monitoring company Kroll, at no cost to you. If you sign up, Kroll will provide you with identity theft detection and assist in the resolution of the same should it occur. To activate your membership and start monitoring your personal information please follow the steps included in this letter. Additional information describing your services is included with this letter.

What can you do?

We want you to be aware that because of this Incident, there is a possibility of (1) identity theft, and (2) fraudulent filings (such as opening accounts, obtain credit, or tax returns). We encourage you to remain vigilant for incidents of fraud, misuse or identity theft, and fraudulent tax filings, from any source, by reviewing and monitoring your account statements and credit reports, as detailed below. You can find information on how to protect yourself against tax-related identity theft at <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/taxpayer-guide-to-identity-theft>. If you notice suspicious activity in your financial records, you should report it immediately to your financial institution or issuing bank.

You can also place a credit freeze with credit reporting companies. You can do so by contacting **each** of the credit agencies listed below. To place a security freeze, you will need to provide your name, address, date of birth, and Social Security number. A security freeze prohibits a credit reporting agency from releasing any information from a consumer’s credit report without written authorization. However, please be aware that placing a security freeze may delay, interfere with, or prevent the timely approval of any requests you make for new loans, home mortgages, auto loans, employment, housing or other services. The

credit reporting agencies may not charge a fee to place a freeze, temporarily lift a freeze that has been placed, or permanently remove it.

You may also place a fraud alert on your credit report. A fraud alert tells creditors to follow certain procedures like contacting you before they open any new accounts or change your existing accounts. For example, when a creditor receives a request to change one of your existing accounts, before making the change that creditor may call you to verify that you requested a change to your existing account. You can place a fraud alert with one of the credit agencies listed below and that agency will alert the other two agencies.

You can also contact the Federal Trade Commission (“FTC”) and your state’s attorney general to obtain information about how to prevent identity theft. You may also call your local sheriff’s office and file a police report of identity theft, keeping a copy of the police report.

You may also 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, once every 12 months from each of the agencies, by contacting any one of the following national consumer reporting agencies:

Experian: www.experian.com or 1-888-397-3742 or P.O. Box 4500, Allen, TX 75013

TransUnion: www.transunion.com or 1-800-680-7289 or TransUnion LLC, P.O. Box 1000, Chester, PA 19016

Equifax: www.equifax.com or 1-800-525-6285 or Equifax Information Services LLC, P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241

You can also order a free credit report by visiting www.annualcreditreport.com, by calling toll-free at 1-877-322-8228, or by mailing a completed Annual Credit Report Request Form (available at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/pdf-0093-annual-report-request-form.pdf>) to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281.

For more information: You may contact Casey Watson at casey@blazing.cpa.

On behalf of Blazing CPAs, we sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this incident might have caused, and promise that we are working diligently to maintain protection of your data.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Casey Watson". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Casey" and "Watson" being capitalized and prominent.

Casey Watson, CPA

Additional Resources for Individuals

For residents of Maryland: You can obtain information from the 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, 16th Flr., Baltimore, MD 21202, www.oag.state.md.us/Consumer, and toll-free at (888) 743-0023 or (410) 528-8662.

All U.S. Residents: The Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission may be contacted at 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20580, www.ftc.gov, and 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338).

ADDITIONAL DETAILS REGARDING YOUR 24 MONTH KROLL MEMBERSHIP:

We have secured the services of Kroll to provide identity monitoring at no cost to you for two years. Kroll is a global leader in risk mitigation and response, and their team has extensive experience helping people who have sustained an unintentional exposure of confidential data. Your identity monitoring services¹ include Credit Monitoring, a Current Credit Report, Web Watcher, Public Persona, Quick Cash Scan, \$1 Million Identity Fraud Loss Reimbursement, Fraud Consultation, and Identity Theft Restoration.

How to Activate Your Identity Monitoring Services

1. You must activate your identity monitoring services by **December 31, 2024**. Your Activation Code will not work after this date.
2. Visit <https://enroll.idheadquarters.com/redeem> to activate your identity monitoring services.
3. Provide Your Activation Code: **XXX** and Your Verification ID:**XXX**
4. To sign into your account after you have activated your identity monitoring services, please visit <https://enroll.idheadquarters.com/redeem>

Take Advantage of Your Identity Monitoring Services

You've been provided with access to the following services¹ from Kroll:

Triple Bureau Credit Monitoring and Single Bureau Credit Report

Your current credit report is available for you to review. You will also receive alerts when there are changes to your credit data at any of the three national credit bureaus—for instance, when a new line of credit is applied for in your name. If you do not recognize the activity, you'll have the option to call a Kroll fraud specialist, who can help you determine if it's an indicator of identity theft.

Web Watcher

Web Watcher monitors internet sites where criminals may buy, sell, and trade personal identity information. An alert will be generated if evidence of your personal identity information is found.

Public Persona

Public Persona monitors and notifies when names, aliases, and addresses become associated with your Social Security number. If information is found, you'll receive an alert.

Quick Cash Scan

Quick Cash Scan monitors short-term and cash-advance loan sources. You'll receive an alert when a loan is reported, and you can call a Kroll fraud specialist for more information.

\$1 Million Identity Fraud Loss Reimbursement

Reimburses you for out-of-pocket expenses totaling up to \$1 million in covered legal costs and expenses for any one stolen identity event. All coverage is subject to the conditions and exclusions in the policy.

Fraud Consultation

You have unlimited access to consultation with a Kroll fraud specialist. Support includes showing you the most effective ways to protect your identity, explaining your rights and protections under the law, assistance with fraud alerts, and interpreting how personal information is accessed and used, including investigating suspicious activity that could be tied to an identity theft event.

Identity Theft Restoration

If you become a victim of identity theft, an experienced Kroll licensed investigator will work on your behalf to resolve related issues. You will have access to a dedicated investigator who understands your issues and can do most of the work for you. Your investigator can dig deep to uncover the scope of the identity theft, and then work to resolve it.

- ¹ Kroll's activation website is only compatible with the current version or one version earlier of Chrome, Firefox, Safari and Edge. To receive credit 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.