



MULLEN
COUGHLIN^{LLC}
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Gregory Lederman
Office: (267) 930-4637
Fax: (267) 930-4771
Email: glederman@mullen.law

426 W. Lancaster Avenue, Suite 200
Devon, PA 19333

June 18, 2024

VIA E-MAIL

Office of the Attorney General
Attn: Security Breach Notification
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202
E-mail: idtheft@oag.state.md.us

Re: Notice of Data Event

To Whom It May Concern:

We represent Arsement Redd Gardner Benoit LLC (“ARGB”), located at 701 Robley Drive, Suite 200, Lafayette, LA 70503, and are writing to notify your Office of an incident that may affect the security of information relating to certain Maryland residents. This notice will be supplemented with any new significant facts learned subsequent to its submission. By providing this notice, ARGB does not waive any rights or defenses regarding the applicability of Maryland law, the applicability of the Maryland data event notification statute, or personal jurisdiction.

Nature of the Data Event

On or around April 22, 2024, ARGB learned of suspicious activity related to certain client tax filings. ARGB quickly began working with third-party cybersecurity specialists to understand the nature and scope of the activity. While the investigation confirmed that the incident did not involve ARGB systems, it determined that an unauthorized actor may have accessed ARGB information contained in its third-party tax preparation and filing software, Intuit’s Lacerte Tax, between March 14, 2024 and April 22, 2024. The information that could have been involved includes name, Social Security number, date of birth, and other tax information, including, if applicable, direct deposit account information. As a result, ARGB is notifying all clients whose information was present within the application at the time of the incident out of an abundance of caution.

Notice to Maryland Residents

On or about June 18, 2024, ARGB provided written notice of this incident to affected individuals, including five (5) Maryland residents. Written notice is being provided in substantially the same form as the letter attached here as ***Exhibit A***.

Other Steps Taken and To Be Taken

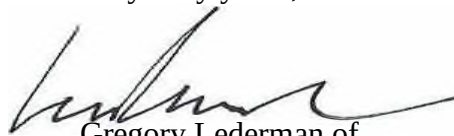
Upon discovering the event, ARGB moved quickly to investigate and respond to the incident, confirm the security of ARGB systems, and identify potentially affected individuals. Further, ARGB notified federal law enforcement as well as federal and state tax authorities of the event. ARGB is also working to implement additional safeguards and training to its employees. ARGB is providing access to complimentary credit monitoring services for one (1) year, through Experian, to individuals whose information was potentially affected by this incident.

Additionally, ARGB is providing impacted individuals with guidance on how to better protect against identity theft and fraud, including information on how to place a fraud alert and security freeze on one's credit file, information on protecting against tax fraud, the contact details for the national consumer reporting agencies, information on how to obtain a free credit report, a reminder to remain vigilant for incidents of fraud and identity theft by reviewing account statements and monitoring free credit reports, and encouragement to contact the Federal Trade Commission, their state Attorney General, and law enforcement to report attempted or actual identity theft and fraud. ARGB is providing written notice of this incident to relevant state regulators, as necessary.

Contact Information

Should you have any questions regarding this notification or other aspects of the data security event, please contact us at (267) 930-4637.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gregory Lederman', is written over a horizontal line.

Gregory Lederman of
MULLEN COUGHLIN LLC

GCL/sep
Enclosure

EXHIBIT A

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

June 18, 2024

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SAMPLE A SAMPLE - L01



APT ABC
123 ANY STREET
ANYTOWN, FC 1A2 B3C
COUNTRY



NOTICE OF [Extra1]

Dear Sample A. Sample:

Arsement Redd Gardner Benoit LLC (“ARGB”) (formerly named Arsement, Redd & Morella, LLC) is writing to provide you with notice of a recent data security event that may involve some of your information. We are providing you with information about the event, our response to it, and steps you can take to protect against the possibility of identity theft and fraud, should you feel it appropriate to do so.

What Happened? On or around April 22, 2024, ARGB learned of suspicious activity related to certain client tax filings. We quickly began working with third-party cybersecurity specialists to understand the nature and scope of the activity. While the investigation confirmed that the incident did not involve ARGB systems, it determined that an unauthorized actor may have accessed ARGB information through our third-party tax filing software, Intuit’s Lacerte Tax Program, between March 14, 2024 and April 22, 2024. As a result, ARGB is notifying all clients whose information was present within the software at the time of the incident out of an abundance of caution.

What Information Was Involved? Our investigation determined that the types of information may have been accessible to the unauthorized actor as a result of this incident include your name, Social Security number, date of birth, and other tax information, including, if applicable, direct deposit account information.

What We Are Doing. ARGB holds the privacy of information in our care as one of our top priorities. Upon learning of this incident, we quickly took steps to investigate the nature and scope of the activity. As part of our ongoing commitment to data privacy, we are working to review existing policies and procedures, evaluating our current relationship with Intuit’s Lacerte Tax Product, and implementing additional protocols to ensure the security of information stored with our third-party vendors. We also notified federal law enforcement and are working with the IRS and state tax authorities related to this incident.

As an added precaution, we are offering you access to 12 months of complimentary credit monitoring and identity protection services through Experian. If you wish to activate the credit monitoring services or learn more about this offer, please see the enclosed *Steps You Can Take to Help Protect Your Information*.

What You Can Do. We encourage you to remain vigilant against incidents of identity theft and fraud by reviewing your account statements and monitoring your free credit reports for suspicious activity and to detect errors over the next 12 to 24 months. You may also review the information contained in the attached *Steps You Can Take to Help Protect Your Information*. There you will also find more information on the complimentary credit monitoring

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services we are making available to you. While ARGB will cover the cost of these services, you will need to enroll yourself in the services we are offering, if you would like to do so, as we are unable to enroll you on your behalf.

We also encourage you to apply for an Identity Protection PIN through the IRS. Instructions for applying for an Identity Protection PIN can be found in the attached *Steps You Can Take to Help Protect Your Information*.

For More Information. We understand that you may have questions about this incident that are not addressed in this letter. If you have additional questions, please call our dedicated assistance line at 833-704-9386 between the hours of 8 am - 8 pm CST, Monday through Friday (excluding major U.S. holidays), and provide engagement number

Sincerely,

Arsement Redd Gardner Benoit LLC

STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO HELP PROTECT YOUR INFORMATION

Enroll in Monitoring Services

To help protect your identity, we are offering complimentary access to Experian IdentityWorksSM for twelve (12) months.

If you believe there was fraudulent use of your information as a result of this incident and would like to discuss how you may be able to resolve those issues, please reach out to an Experian agent. If, after discussing your situation with an agent, it is determined that identity restoration support is needed then an Experian Identity Restoration agent is available to work with you to investigate and resolve each incident of fraud that occurred from the date of the incident (including, as appropriate, helping you with contacting credit grantors to dispute charges and close accounts; assisting you in placing a freeze on your credit file with the three major credit bureaus; and assisting you with contacting government agencies to help restore your identity to its proper condition).

Please note that Identity Restoration is available to you for twelve (12) months from the date of this letter and does not require any action on your part at this time. The Terms and Conditions for this offer are located at www.ExperianIDWorks.com/restoration.

While identity restoration assistance is immediately available to you, we also encourage you to activate the fraud detection tools available through Experian IdentityWorks as a complimentary 12-month membership. This product provides you with superior identity detection and resolution of identity theft. To start monitoring your personal information, please follow the steps below:

- Ensure that you enroll by September 30, 2024 (Your code will not work after this date.)
- Visit the Experian IdentityWorks website to enroll: <https://www.experianidworks.com/credit>
- Provide your activation code: ABCDEFGHI

If you have questions about the product, need assistance with Identity Restoration that arose as a result of this incident, or would like an alternative to enrolling in Experian IdentityWorks online, please contact Experian's customer care team at 833-704-9386 by September 30, 2024. Be prepared to provide engagement number as proof of eligibility for the Identity Restoration services by Experian.

ADDITIONAL DETAILS REGARDING YOUR 12-MONTH EXPERIAN IDENTITYWORKS MEMBERSHIP

A credit card is not required for enrollment in Experian IdentityWorks. You can contact Experian immediately regarding any fraud issues, and have access to the following features once you enroll in Experian IdentityWorks:

- Experian credit report at signup: See what information is associated with your credit file. Daily credit reports are available for online members only.*
- Credit Monitoring: Actively monitors Experian file for indicators of fraud.
- Identity Restoration: Identity Restoration specialists are immediately available to help you address credit and non-credit related fraud.
- Experian IdentityWorks ExtendCARETM: You receive the same high-level of Identity Restoration support even after your Experian IdentityWorks membership has expired.
- \$1 Million Identity Theft Insurance^{**}: Provides coverage for certain costs and unauthorized electronic fund transfers.

* Offline members will be eligible to call for additional reports quarterly after enrolling.

** The Identity Theft Insurance is underwritten and administered by American Bankers Insurance Company of Florida, an Assurant company. Please refer to the actual policies for terms, conditions, and exclusions of coverage. Coverage may not be available in all jurisdictions.

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Additional Steps

Contact Federal and State Tax Authorities. You can also contact the IRS at www.irs.gov/Individuals/Identity-Protection for helpful information and guidance on steps you can take to prevent a fraudulent tax return from being 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 for more information.

You should also look to the information made available by the tax authority for your state of residence and any other state where you file a tax return. For a list of websites for each US state's tax authority, visit <http://www.taxadmin.org/state-tax-agencies>.

Internal Revenue Service Identity Protection PIN (IP PIN). We encourage you to obtain an Identity Protection PIN ("IP PIN") from the IRS, a six-digit number that prevents someone else from filing a tax return using your Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number. The IP PIN is known only to you and the IRS, and helps the IRS verify your identity when you file your electronic or paper tax return. Even though you may not have a filing requirement, an IP PIN still protects your account. If you do not already have an IP PIN, you may get an IP PIN as a proactive step to protect yourself from tax-related identity theft either online, by paper application or in-person. Information about the IP PIN program can be found here: <https://www.irs.gov/identity-theft-fraud-scams/get-an-identity-protection-pin>.

Monitor Your Accounts. Under U.S. law, a consumer is entitled to one free credit report annually from each of the three major credit reporting bureaus, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. To order a free credit report, visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call, toll-free, 1-877-322-8228. Consumers may also directly contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below to request a free copy of their credit report.

Consumers have the right to place an initial or extended "fraud alert" on a credit 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 consumers are the victim of identity theft, they are entitled to an extended fraud alert, which is a fraud alert lasting seven years. Should consumers wish to place a fraud alert, please contact any of the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below.

As an alternative to a fraud alert, consumers have the right to place a "credit freeze" on a credit report, which will prohibit a credit bureau from releasing information in the credit report without the consumer's express authorization. The credit freeze is designed to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in a consumer's name without consent. However, consumers should be aware that using a credit freeze to take control over who gets access to the personal and financial information in their credit report may delay, interfere with, or prohibit the timely approval of any subsequent request or application they make regarding a new loan, credit, mortgage, or any other account involving the extension of credit. Pursuant to federal law, consumers cannot be charged to place or lift a credit freeze on their credit report. To request a credit freeze, individuals may need to provide some or all of the following information:

1. Full name (including middle initial as well as Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.);
2. Social Security number;
3. Date of birth;
4. Addresses for the prior two to 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, etc.); and
7. A copy of either the police report, investigative report, or complaint to a law enforcement agency concerning identity theft if they are a victim of identity theft.

Should consumers wish to place a credit freeze or fraud alert, please contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below:

Equifax	Experian	TransUnion
https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/	https://www.experian.com/help/	https://www.transunion.com/credit-help
1-888-298-0045	1-888-397-3742	1-800-916-8800
Equifax Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 105069 Atlanta, GA 30348-5069	Experian Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Fraud Alert, P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016
Equifax Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 105788 Atlanta, GA 30348-5788	Experian Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013	TransUnion Credit Freeze, P.O. Box 160, Woodlyn, PA 19094

Additional Information

Consumers may further educate themselves regarding identity theft, fraud alerts, credit freezes, and the steps they can take to protect your personal information by contacting the consumer reporting bureaus, the Federal Trade Commission, or their state Attorney General. The Federal Trade Commission may be reached at: 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20580; www.identitytheft.gov; 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338); and 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. Consumers can obtain further information on how to file such a complaint by way of the contact information listed above. Consumers have the right to file a police report if they ever experience identity theft or fraud. Please note that in order to file a report with law enforcement for identity theft, consumers will likely need to provide some proof that they have been a victim. Instances of known or suspected identity theft should also be reported to law enforcement and the relevant state Attorney General. This notice has not been delayed by law enforcement.

For Maryland residents, the Maryland Attorney General may be contacted at: 200 St. Paul Place, 16th Floor, Baltimore, MD 21202; 1-410-576-6300 or 1-888-743-0023; and <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/>. ARGB is located at 701 Robley Drive, Suite 200, Lafayette, LA 70503.

For New Mexico residents, consumers have rights pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, such as the right to be told if information in their credit file has been used against them, the right to know what is in their credit file, the right to ask for their credit score, and the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information. Further, pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the consumer reporting bureaus must correct or delete inaccurate, incomplete, or unverifiable information; consumer reporting agencies may not report outdated negative information; access to consumers' files is limited; consumers must give consent for credit reports to be provided to employers; consumers may limit "prescreened" offers of credit and insurance based on information in their credit report; and consumers may seek damages from violators. Consumers 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 consumers to review their 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.

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

For North Carolina residents, the North Carolina Attorney General may be contacted at: 9001 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-9001; 1-877-566-7226 or 1-919-716-6000; and www.ncdoj.gov. ARGB is located at 701 Robley Drive, Suite 200, Lafayette, LA 70503.

