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February 7, 2025

VIA E-MAIL (IDTHEFT@OAG.STATE.MD.US)

Anthony G. Brown
Attorney General
Office of the Attorney General
Attn: Security Breach Notification
200 St. Paul Place
Baltimore, MD 21202

Re: Incident Notification

Dear Attorney General Brown:

We are writing on behalf of our client, Heartland Bank, to notify your office of a cybersecurity incident that involved one Maryland resident's information. Heartland is headquartered in Geneva, Nebraska.

Heartland recently completed an investigation of suspicious activity associated with certain employee email accounts. Upon identifying that activity, Heartland immediately took steps to secure the accounts and began its investigation. The investigation determined that an unauthorized person may have accessed the email accounts between October 31, 2024, and November 9, 2024. Heartland reviewed the messages and attachments that the unauthorized actor interacted with to identify whether they contained personal information, and, on January 9, 2025, determined that one or more contained the name and Social Security number of one Maryland resident.

On February 7, 2025, Heartland mailed a notification to the Maryland resident via U.S. First-Class mail in accordance with Md. Code Ann., Com. Law § 14-3504.¹ A copy of the notification is enclosed.

To reduce the risk of a similar incident from occurring in the future, Heartland has taken, and will continue to take, steps to enhance the security of its email environment.

¹ This report does not waive Heartland Bank's objection that Maryland lacks regulatory authority over it related to any claims that may arise from this incident.

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Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Patrick H. Haggerty", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Patrick H. Haggerty
Partner

Enclosure

Heartland Bank

P O Box 313
Geneva, NE 68361



February 7, 2025

Dear [REDACTED]:

Heartland Bank is writing to make you aware of an email data security incident that may have involved some of your information. This letter explains the incident, measures we have taken, and some steps you may consider taking.

We have completed an investigation of suspicious activity associated with certain employee email accounts. Upon identifying that activity, we immediately took steps to secure the email accounts and began our investigation. The investigation determined that an unauthorized person may have accessed the email accounts between October 31, 2024, and November 9, 2024. While we have no direct evidence that any of your personal information was taken or used, we reviewed the messages and attachments that the unauthorized actor interacted with to identify whether they contained personal information, and, on January 9, 2025, determined that one or more contained your name and Social Security number. This incident involved only unauthorized access to certain employees' email accounts. This incident did not involve access to any other bank systems, no customer account balances were accessed, and no funds were transferred or attempted to be transferred.

We apologize for any concern or inconvenience this incident may cause. We have and will continue to take steps to enhance the security of our email environment. If you have any questions about this incident, please call Heartland Bank at 402-759-8300, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Central, excluding some major U.S. holidays.

Heartland Bank

ADDITIONAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

We remind you it is always advisable to be vigilant for incidents of fraud or identity theft by reviewing your account statements and free credit reports for any unauthorized activity over the next 12 to 24 months. You should report any suspicious activity associated with your account statements to us. You may obtain a copy of your credit report, free of charge, once every 12 months from each of the three nationwide credit reporting companies. To order your annual free credit report, please visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call toll free at 1-877-322-8228. Contact information for the three nationwide credit reporting companies is as follows:

- *Equifax*, PO Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374, www.equifax.com, 1-888-378-4329
- *Experian*, PO Box 2002, Allen, TX 75013, www.experian.com, 1-888-397-3742
- *TransUnion*, PO Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016, www.transunion.com, 1-833-799-5355

If you believe you are the victim of identity theft or have reason to believe your personal information has been misused, you should immediately contact the Federal Trade Commission and/or the Attorney General's office in your state. You can obtain information from these sources about steps an individual can take to avoid identity theft as well as information about fraud alerts and security freezes. You should also contact your local law enforcement authorities and file a police report. Obtain a copy of the police report in case you are asked to provide copies to creditors to correct your records. Contact information for the Federal Trade Commission is as follows:

- *Federal Trade Commission*, Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580, 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338), www.identitytheft.gov

Fraud Alerts and Credit or Security Freezes:

Fraud Alerts: There are two types of general fraud alerts you can place on your credit report to put your creditors on notice that you may be a victim of fraud—an initial alert and an extended alert. You may ask that an initial fraud alert be placed on your credit report if you suspect you have been, or are about to be, a victim of identity theft. An initial fraud alert stays on your credit report for one year. You may have an extended alert placed on your credit report if you have already been a victim of identity theft with the appropriate documentary proof. An extended fraud alert stays on your credit report for seven years.

To place a fraud alert on your credit reports, contact one of the nationwide credit bureaus. A fraud alert is free. The credit bureau you contact must tell the other two, and all three will place an alert on their versions of your report.

For those in the military who want to protect their credit while deployed, an Active Duty Military Fraud Alert lasts for one year and can be renewed for the length of your deployment. The credit bureaus will also take you off their marketing lists for pre-screened credit card offers for two years, unless you ask them not to.

Credit or Security Freezes: You have the right to put a credit freeze, also known as a security freeze, on your credit file, free of charge, which makes it more difficult for identity thieves to open new accounts in your name. That is because most creditors need to see your credit report before they approve a new account. If they cannot see your report, they may not extend the credit.

How do I place a freeze on my credit reports? There is no fee to place or lift a security freeze. Unlike a fraud alert, you must separately place a security freeze on your credit file at each credit reporting company. For information and instructions to place a security freeze, contact each of the credit reporting agencies at the addresses below:

- **Equifax Security Freeze**, PO Box 105788, Atlanta, GA 30348, www.equifax.com
- **Experian Security Freeze**, PO Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013, www.experian.com
- **TransUnion Security Freeze**, PO Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016, www.transunion.com

You will need to supply your name, address, date of birth, Social Security number and other personal information.

After receiving your freeze request, each credit bureau will provide you with a unique PIN (personal identification number) or password. Keep the PIN or password in a safe place. You will need it if you choose to lift the freeze.

How do I lift a freeze? A freeze remains in place until you ask the credit bureau to temporarily lift it or remove it altogether. If the request is made online or by phone, a credit bureau must lift a freeze within one hour. If the request is made by mail, then the bureau must lift the freeze no later than three business days after getting your request.

If you opt for a temporary lift because you are applying for credit or a job, and you can find out which credit bureau the business will contact for your file, you can save some time by lifting the freeze only at that particular credit bureau. Otherwise, you need to make the request with all three credit bureaus.

Heartland Bank is located at 896 G. St., Geneva, Nebraska, 68361, and can be reached by telephone at 402-759-8300.

Additional Information for Residents of the Following States

Maryland: You may contact and obtain information from your state attorney general at: *Maryland Attorney General's Office*, 200 St. Paul Place, Baltimore, MD 21202, 1-888-743-0023 / 1-410-576-6300, <https://www.marylandattorneygeneral.gov/>

New York: You may contact and obtain information from these state agencies: *New York Department of State Division of Consumer Protection*, One Commerce Plaza, 99 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12231-0001, 518-474-8583 / 1-800-697-1220, <http://www.dos.ny.gov/consumerprotection>; and *New York State Office of the Attorney General*, The Capitol, Albany, NY 12224-0341, 1-800-771-7755, <https://ag.ny.gov>

North Carolina: You may contact and obtain information from your state attorney general at: *North Carolina Attorney General's Office*, 9001 Mail Service Centre, Raleigh, NC 27699, 1-919-716-6000 / 1-877-566-7226, www.ncdoj.gov

Rhode Island: This incident involves 2 individuals in Rhode Island. Under Rhode Island law, you have the right to file and obtain a copy of a police report. You also have the right to request a security freeze, as described above. You may contact and obtain information from your state attorney general at: *Rhode Island Attorney General's Office*, 150 South Main Street, Providence, RI 02903, 1-401-274-4400, www.riag.ri.gov

A Summary of Your Rights Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act: The federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) promotes the accuracy, fairness, and privacy of information in the files of consumer reporting agencies. There are many types of consumer reporting agencies, including credit bureaus and specialty agencies (such as agencies that sell information about check writing histories, medical records, and rental history records). Your major rights under the FCRA are summarized below. For more information, including information about additional rights, go to www.consumerfinance.gov/learnmore or write to: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 1700 G Street N.W., Washington, DC 20552.

- You must be told if information in your file has been used against you.
- You have the right to know what is in your file.
- You have the right to ask for a credit score.
- You have the right to dispute incomplete or inaccurate information.
- 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 reports to be provided to employers.
- You may limit “prescreened” offers of credit and insurance you get based on information in your credit report.
- You have a right to place a “security freeze” on your credit report, which will prohibit a consumer reporting agency from releasing information in your credit report without your express authorization.
- You may seek damages from violators.
- Identity theft victims and active-duty military personnel have additional rights.