



CAROLINE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – March 1, 2018

Caroline County Government Employee Data Breach

We recently discovered that the Caroline County Government's was the victim of an email spoofing attack by an individual pretending to be our County Administrator. On February 5, 2018, a request was made from what appeared to be a legitimate Caroline County email address for all 2017 employee W-2 information. Unfortunately, copies of all 2017 employee W--2 forms were provided before we discovered that the request was made from a fraudulent account by someone that appeared to be from our County Administrator. The attack affects every person who was employed with the Caroline County government, Sheriff's Office, Circuit Court, or State's Attorney's Office during calendar year 2017, whether in a full- or part-time capacity. We discovered the fraudulent nature of the request on February 27, 2018 and have been working tirelessly to investigate and to mitigate the impact of the attack.

"The security of personal information in our possession is one of our highest priorities. We deeply regret the release of information, and we are working to remedy the incident situation, protect our employees' information, and take steps to prevent any similar incidents from happening again." said County Administrator Ken Decker.

Upon learning of the incident, the County immediately took steps to notify current employees and inform the IRS, State Office of the Comptroller, and local law enforcement. "Unfortunately, hundreds of employers from the private and public sector have fallen victim to this same type of scheme," said Sheriff Randy Bounds. "Our detectives are working closely with federal law enforcement partners and other agencies to investigate this crime."

A more detailed mailing about the incident has been sent to all impacted individuals, and the County will be providing them with identify theft protection. In addition, over the next several days, the County will hold a series of informational meeting for current and former employees to answer questions and to help them take actions to safeguard them from identify theft and fraud.

If you are a former or current employee and have questions about this incident, please contact the Office of Human Resources at (410) 479-4043.

5 Steps

You Can Take Immediately to Protect Your Identity

The following information is provided to help employees of Caroline County Government, Sheriff's Office, Circuit Court, and State's Attorney's Office who were impacted by the February 2018 data breach.

Place a fraud alert immediately, and consider a credit freeze.

Contact one of the three credit bureaus. Once you have told one credit bureau, they must tell the other two.

www.Experian.com/fraudalert

1-888-397-3742

www.TransUnion.com/fraud

1-800-680-7289

www.Equifax.com/CreditReportAssistance

1-888-766-0008

Placing a fraud alert is free.

You should get a letter from each credit bureau confirming that they placed a fraud alert in your file.

We strongly urge you to consider freezing your credit, which is free in Maryland and will not hurt your credit score. The County will reimburse costs for Delaware residents.

Learn more at <http://bit.ly/FTCCreditfreezeinfo>

Get your free credit reports from Experian, TransUnion, and Equifax.

Go to annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228.

Review your credit reports and make note of any account or transaction you don't recognize.

Report your identity theft to the FTC.

Go to IdentityTheft.gov or call 1-877-438-4338.

Based on the information you provide, a Theft Report and recovery plan will be created. Your Identity Theft Report guarantees you certain rights.

We strongly recommend creating an account.

You'll get help with every step of the process, be able to update your recovery plan as needed, track your progress, and forms & letters will be pre-filled for you.

If you find suspicious activity in your credit report or believe your information has been misused, file a police report with the Caroline County Sheriff's Office at 410-479-5028.

The lead investigator is Detective Justin Reibly.

If you receive notice about a suspicious tax return filed in your name, or you have trouble filing your return:

Contact Maryland's Taxpayer Service number at 1-800-638-2937.

Contact the IRS at 1-800-829-1040 or go online to IRS.gov/Individuals/Identity-Protection.

The Caroline County Office of Human Resources will be happy to help with any questions. Please contact them during normal business hours at 410-479-4043.