

# STEELE COUNTY Administration



Scott Golberg - County Administrator

Dear [REDACTED]

We are writing with important information regarding a recent data security incident. The privacy and security of the personal information we maintain is of the utmost importance to Steele County. As such, we wanted to provide you with information about the incident, explain the services we are making available to you, and let you know that we continue to take significant measures to safeguard your information.

### What Happened?

We recently learned that an unauthorized party may have obtained access to a Steele County employee email account between September 17, 2019 and October 10, 2019.

### What We Are Doing.

Upon learning of the issue, we secured the account and commenced a prompt and thorough investigation. As part of our investigation, we have been working very closely with external cybersecurity professionals experienced in handling these types of incidents. After an extensive forensic investigation and manual email review, we discovered on February 21, 2020 that the impacted email account contained some of your personal information. **We have no evidence that any of the information has been misused.** Nevertheless, out of an abundance of caution, we want to make you aware of the incident.

### What Information Was Involved?

The impacted email account contained some of your personal information, including your [REDACTED]

### What You Can Do.

To help relieve concerns and restore confidence following this incident, we have secured the services of Kroll to provide identity monitoring at no cost to you for one year. 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 services include Credit Monitoring, Fraud Consultation, and Identity Theft Restoration.

Visit [REDACTED] to activate and take advantage of your identity monitoring services.

You have until [REDACTED] to activate your identity monitoring services.

Membership Number: [REDACTED]

Additional information describing your services is included with this letter.

This letter also provides other precautionary measures you can take to help protect your personal information, including placing a fraud alert and/or security freeze on your credit files, and/or obtaining a free credit report. Additionally, you should always remain vigilant in reviewing your account statements for fraudulent or irregular activity on a regular basis. We have also provided information on protecting your medical information on the following pages.

*For More Information.*

Please accept our apologies that this incident occurred. We are committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information in our possession and have taken many precautions to safeguard it. We continually evaluate and modify our practices and internal controls to enhance the security and privacy of your personal information.

**If you have any further questions regarding this incident, please call our dedicated and confidential toll-free response line that we have set up to respond to questions at [REDACTED].** This response line is staffed with professionals familiar with this incident and knowledgeable on what you can do to help protect against misuse of your information. The response line is available Monday through Friday, 9:00am to 6:30pm Eastern Time.

Sincerely,

Steele County

## – OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION –

### **1. Placing a Fraud Alert on Your Credit File.**

Whether or not you choose to use the complimentary 12-month credit monitoring services, we recommend that you place an initial 1-year “fraud alert” on your credit files, at no charge. A fraud alert tells creditors to contact you personally before they open any new accounts. To place a fraud alert, call any one of the three major credit bureaus at the numbers listed below. As soon as one credit bureau confirms your fraud alert, they will notify the others.

#### **Equifax**

P.O. Box 105069  
Atlanta, GA 30348  
www.equifax.com  
1-800-525-6285

#### **Experian**

P.O. Box 2002  
Allen, TX 75013  
www.experian.com  
1-888-397-3742

#### **TransUnion LLC**

P.O. Box 2000  
Chester, PA 19016  
www.transunion.com  
1-800-680-7289

### **2. Consider Placing a Security Freeze on Your Credit File.**

If you are very concerned about becoming a victim of fraud or identity theft, you may request a “Security Freeze” be placed on your credit file, at no charge. A security freeze prohibits, with certain specific exceptions, the consumer reporting agencies from releasing your credit report or any information from it without your express authorization. You may place a security freeze on your credit report by sending a request in writing or by mail, to all three nationwide credit reporting companies. To find out more about how to place a security freeze, you can use the following contact information:

#### **Equifax Security Freeze**

P.O. Box 105788  
Atlanta, GA 30348  
<https://www.freeze.equifax.com>  
1-800-685-1111

#### **Experian Security Freeze**

P.O. Box 9554  
Allen, TX 75013  
<http://experian.com/freeze>  
1-888-397-3742

#### **TransUnion Security Freeze**

P.O. Box 2000  
Chester, PA 19016  
<http://www.transunion.com/securityfreeze>  
1-888-909-8872

In order to place the security freeze, you'll need to supply your name, address, date of birth, Social Security number and other personal information. After receiving your freeze request, each credit monitoring company will send you a confirmation letter containing 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.

If your personal information has been used to file a false tax return, to open an account or to attempt to open an account in your name or to commit fraud or other crimes against you, you may file a police report in the City in which you currently reside.

If you do place a security freeze prior to enrolling in the credit monitoring service as described above, you will need to remove the freeze in order to sign up for the credit monitoring service. After you sign up for the credit monitoring service, you may refreeze your credit file.

### **3. Obtaining a Free Credit Report.**

Under federal law, you are entitled to one free credit report every 12 months from each of the above three major nationwide credit reporting companies. Call **1-877-322-8228** or request your free credit reports online at **www.annualcreditreport.com**. Once you receive your credit reports, review them for discrepancies. Identify any accounts you did not open or inquiries from creditors that you did not authorize. Verify all information is correct. If you have questions or notice incorrect information, contact the credit reporting company.

### **4. Additional Helpful Resources.**

Even if you do not find any suspicious activity on your initial credit reports, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recommends that you check your credit reports periodically. Checking your credit report periodically can help you spot problems and address them quickly.

If you find suspicious activity on your credit reports or have reason to believe your information is being misused, call your local law enforcement agency and file a police report. Be sure to obtain a copy of the police report, as many creditors will want the information it contains to absolve you of the fraudulent debts. You may also file a complaint with the FTC by contacting them on the web at [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft), by phone at 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338), or by mail at Federal Trade Commission, Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20580. Your complaint will be added to the FTC's Identity Theft Data Clearinghouse, where it will be accessible to law enforcement for their investigations. In addition, you may obtain information from the FTC about fraud alerts and security freezes.

You may contact [REDACTED] to request that we deliver to you via U.S. Mail or email a written report on the facts and result of our investigation.

## **5. Protecting Your Medical Information.**

We have no information to date indicating that your medical information involved in this incident was or will be used for any unintended purposes. As a general matter, however, the following practices can help to protect you from medical identity theft.

- Only share your health insurance cards with your health care providers and other family members who are covered under your insurance plan or who help you with your medical care.
- Review your “explanation of benefits statement” which you receive from your health insurance company. Follow up with your insurance company or care provider for any items you do not recognize. If necessary, contact the care provider on the explanation of benefits statement and ask for copies of medical records from the date of the potential access (noted above) to current date.
- Ask your insurance company for a current year-to-date report of all services paid for you as a beneficiary. Follow up with your insurance company or the care provider for any items you do not recognize.



## **TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR IDENTITY MONITORING SERVICES**

You've been provided with access to the following services<sup>1</sup> from Kroll:

### **Single Bureau Credit Monitoring**

You will receive alerts when there are changes to your credit data—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.

### **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.

<sup>1</sup> 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.