

Equifax 2017 Data Breach Settlement with State Attorneys General

SUMMARY OF THE SETTLEMENT:

On July 22, 2019, the Office of the Montana Attorney General, along with 47 state Attorneys General, and the Attorneys General of Puerto Rico and Washington, D.C., announced an historic \$600 million settlement with Equifax concerning the 2017 Equifax data breach affecting over 147 million Americans.

This settlement is part of a global settlement that Equifax reached with the Federal Trade Commission, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and the Multi-District Litigation private class action.

The terms of the multistate Attorney General settlement are as follows:

- Equifax will offer affected consumers free credit monitoring services for 10 years;
- Equifax will provide free Identity Theft Restoration services to all affected consumers;
- Equifax will strengthen its data security practices to help protect against another breach;
- Equifax will take several steps to assist consumers:
 - with understanding their credit report;
 - with disputing inaccurate entries on their credit report, including credit report entries that are the result of identity theft;
 - who have become the victim of identity theft or who are concerned about becoming the victim of identity theft; and
 - including assisting active duty military members and their families with credit report issues unique to military members.
- Equifax will pay \$300 million into a settlement fund for the benefit of affected consumers, with the possibility of paying up to an additional \$125 million into the settlement fund, for a total of \$425 million; and
- Equifax will pay \$175 million to the states.

Details on the Consumer Settlement Fund- Affected consumers are eligible to request the following types of reimbursements from the settlement fund:

- Reimbursement for time spent trying to avoid or recover from identity theft (up to 20 total hours at \$25 per hour);
- Reimbursement for money spent trying to avoid or recover from identity theft (such as costs for freezing your credit report, professional fees paid to address identity theft, postage, etc.);
- Up to \$125 to reimburse for credit monitoring services purchased if you choose not to accept the offered 10 free years of credit monitoring service offered as a part of the settlement.

The settlement is being handled by a settlement administrator who is maintaining a website (www.EquifaxBreachSettlement.com) and a toll-free number (1-833-759-2982). Eligible consumers can submit claims at the settlement website.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Q: How do I know if I am covered by the settlement?

A: Once the class action court approves the settlement, Equifax will provide a lookup tool on the settlement website (www.EquifaxBreachSettlement.com) that you can use to determine whether you are affected by the data breach. You will be required to input the last 6 digits of your Social Security Number that Equifax will use only to determine whether you are one of the affected consumers.

Q: I am an eligible consumer who wants to make a claim from the settlement fund. How do I make a claim?

A: You can make a claim through the settlement website (www.EquifaxBreachSettlement.com) once the court approves the settlement. This is the simplest and quickest way to file a claim. However, you also can request a paper claim form via the settlement website or by calling (1-833-759-2982). The deadline to file all claims will be determined once the court approves the proposed settlement and will be posted on the settlement website as soon as that information becomes available, so please check the settlement website for

updated information. When you file a claim, you will receive a claim number. Please record your claim number and retain it for future reference.

Q: How will I know when I can file a claim for reimbursement from the settlement fund?

A: The court must approve the proposed breach settlement before consumers can begin to file claims. If you wish to be notified when the breach settlement website begins accepting claims against the settlement fund, they can go to <https://www.ftc.gov/equifax-data-breach> and submit their email addresses. This site, run by the Federal Trade Commission, will notify consumers who submit their email address when claims begin being accepted. For questions about eligibility for restitution, filing a claim, enrolling in credit monitoring, or additional information, people should visit www.EquifaxBreachSettlement.com or they can also call 1-833-759-2982. Individuals will be able to submit claims on the website or by mail.

Q: I am an eligible consumer who wants to make a claim from the settlement fund. What can I request in my claim?

A: You will be able to request, after the court approves the settlement, and before the deadline to be announced by the court, free credit monitoring and reimbursement for money and time spent addressing the data breach. Specifically, you can:

- sign up for the free 10 years of credit monitoring that Equifax is offering. It consists of at least 4 years of three bureau credit monitoring that monitors your credit report with Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion, followed by up to 6 years of single bureau credit monitoring of your Equifax credit report;
- request reimbursement for:
 - time spent trying to avoid or recover from identity theft (up to 20 total hours at \$25 per hour);

- money spent trying to avoid or recover from identity theft (such as money paid to freeze or unfreeze your credit report, money paid to a professional for identity theft services, postage, etc.); and
- if you do not wish to utilize the offered free 10 years of credit monitoring, you can request reimbursement of up to \$125 for what you spent to purchase alternative credit monitoring services.

Also, all affected consumers are eligible to use the free offered Identity Restoration services at any time during the extended claims period. The court will determine the deadline to file a claim during the extended claims period once it approves the proposed settlement. Affected consumers do not need to enroll in this service in order to be able to use it.

Q: When is the deadline to file a claim against the settlement fund?

A: The deadline is not yet set, but the court will determine the deadline if it approves the proposed settlement. Please check the settlement website (www.EquifaxSettlementBreach.com) for updates on the claims deadlines and other documents associated with the settlement.

Q: I filed a claim against the settlement fund. How can I find out about the status of the claim?

A: The settlement administrator will contact you when a decision is made about your claim. Also, you can check the status of your claim at www.EquifaxBreachSettlement.com. Please be prepared to enter your claim number that the settlement administrator provided to you when you filed your claim.

Q: I have questions about the Equifax settlement. Where can I get information about the settlement?

A: You can go to www.EquifaxBreachSettlement.com for information about the settlement and to view important documents associated with the settlement. Also, you can call (1-833-759-2982) to obtain information about the settlement. Illinois consumers who have questions that were not answered by the website or toll-free number may contact the Office of the Montana Attorney General at <https://dojmt.gov/consumer/affected-data-breach/> or you can call (1-800-481-6896).

Q: I am concerned about identity theft. How can I place a freeze on my credit report?

A: Credit freezes are free of charge, and in order to place a freeze on your credit report, you must contact each of the major consumer reporting agencies directly and identify yourself to them. A credit freeze prevents companies from viewing your credit report if they are considering granting credit unless you prove to them that you are who you say you are. It can help protect you from identity thieves who are trying to open a credit account in your name. The consumer reporting agencies are not permitted to charge you any fee to place or lift the freeze. You should know that if you plan to apply for credit when you have a freeze in place, there may be a delay in processing your credit application while you request that the credit freeze be lifted. You can find instructions on how to place a credit freeze here: <https://dojmt.gov/consumer/identity-theft>.