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APR 3 0 2020

**CONSUMER PROTECTION** 

April 24, 2020

# VIA U.S. MAIL

Gordon J. MacDonald Attorney General Consumer Protection Bureau Office of the Attorney General 33 Capitol Street Concord, NH 03301

# Re: Notification of Data Security Incident

To Whom It May Concern:

We represent the Timothy S. Hart Law Group ("HLG"), a law firm headquartered in Albany, New York, with an additional office in New York City. HLG provides tax preparation and counseling services to its clients. This notification pertains to a data security incident involving HLG, which is described in greater detail below. This letter is submitted on behalf of HLG pursuant to N.H. Rev. Stat. § 359-C:20, because HLG's investigation determined that the personal information of one New Hampshire resident may have been affected by the incident. HLG takes the protection of sensitive information very seriously and is taking steps to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.

1. Nature of the Security Incident. In late February 2020, during the course of an ongoing independent internal digital investigation, HLG learned that an unauthorized user may have gained access to HLG's business email account. In response, HLG reported the incident to law enforcement and retained independent cybersecurity and data privacy experts to assist with the investigation. HLG then conducted a thorough review of the emails and attachments contained within the impacted account to identify information that may have been impacted. Upon identification of the individuals associated with that information, HLG immediately took steps to identify mailing addresses for all potentially impacted individuals, which was completed on April 2, 2020, in order to provide notification of this incident.

The information involved in this data security incident may have included the following: name and Social Security number.

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**3. Steps Taken Relating to the Incident.** Upon learning of this incident, HLG took the steps described above. In addition, HLG notified the Internal Revenue Service and the three consumer credit bureaus. HLG also updated its internal procedures and has implemented additional safeguards to help prevent a similar incident from occurring in the future.

HLG has also offered impacted individuals twelve (12) months of credit monitoring and identity protection services at no cost.

4. Contact Information. HLG remains dedicated to protecting the personal information in its control. If you have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 412-567-5113 or via email at Lauren.Godfrey@LewisBrisbois.com.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Lauren D. Godfrey

Lauren D. Godfrey of LEWIS BRISBOIS BISGAARD & SMITH LLP

LDG Enclosure 4852-8636-5627.1



C/O ID Experts 10300 SW Greenburg Rd. Suite 570 Portland, OR 97223 To Enroll, Please Call: 1-800-939-4170 Or Visit: <u>https://app.myidcare.com/account-</u> <u>creation/protect</u> Enrollment Code:<XXXXXXXXXXXX

<<First Name>> <<Last Name>> <<Address 1>> <<Address 2>> <<City>>, <<State>> <<Zip>>

April 23, 2020

## <<Variable Data 2>>

Dear <<First Name>> <<Last Name>>:

I am writing to provide you with information about a data security incident that may have affected your personal information ("PI"). At the Timothy S. Hart Law Group ("HLG"), we take the privacy and security of your information very seriously and regret any concern that this incident might cause you. That is why I am contacting you and informing you about steps that can be taken to protect your information against abuse.

What Happened? During the course of an ongoing independent digital investigation, I learned that an unauthorized user may have gained access to my business email account. In response, I reported the incident to law enforcement and retained independent cybersecurity and data privacy experts to assist with the investigation. I then conducted a thorough review of the emails and attachments contained within the impacted account to identify information that may have been impacted, as well as up-to-date address information, which was completed on April 2, 2020. We then immediately took steps to notify you of the incident.

We are providing this letter to you to inform you of the incident and provide you with steps that you can take to further protect your personal information. HLG has arranged to offer you credit and identity protection services for a period of twelve (12) months, at no cost to you.

What Was Involved? Based upon our investigation, the affected PI may have included: << Variable Data 1>>.

What Are We Doing? As soon as the incident was discovered, we took the steps described above. We are also providing you with information about steps that you can take to help protect your personal information. We have also updated our internal procedures and have implemented additional safeguards to minimize the chance that an incident like this could occur in the future. As an added precaution, we are offering identity theft protection services through ID Experts®, the data breach and recovery services expert, to provide you with MyIDCare<sup>™</sup>. MyIDCare services include: 12 months of credit and CyberScan monitoring, a \$1,000,000 insurance reimbursement policy, and fully managed identity theft recovery services. With this protection, MyIDCare will help you resolve issues if your identity is compromised.

What You Can Do. We encourage you to contact ID Experts with any questions and to enroll in free MyIDCare services by calling 1-800-939-4170 or going to <u>https://app.myidcare.com/account-creation/protect</u> and using the Enrollment Code provided above. MyIDCare experts are available Monday through Friday from 9:00 am - 9:00 pm Eastern Time.

We encourage you to take full advantage of this service offering. MyIDCare representatives can answer questions or concerns you may have regarding protection of your personal information.

For More Information. You will find detailed instructions for enrollment on the enclosed Recommended Steps document. Also, you will need to reference the enrollment code at the top of this letter when calling or enrolling online, so please do not discard this letter. Please call 1-800-939-4170 or go to <u>https://app.myidcare.com/account-creation/protect</u> for assistance or for any additional questions you may have.

I remain dedicated to protecting your personal information and apologize for any concern or inconvenience this may cause you.

Sincerely,

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Timothy S. Hart, Esq.

#### **Recommended Steps to Help Protect Your Information**

1. Website and Enrollment. Go to <u>https://app.myidcare.com/account-creation/protect and follow the instructions for</u> enrollment using your Enrollment Code provided at the top of the letter.

2. Activate the credit monitoring provided as part of your MyIDCare membership. The monitoring included in the membership must be activated to be effective. Note: You must have established credit and access to a computer and the internet to use this service. If you need assistance, MyIDCare will be able to assist you.

3. Telephone. Contact MyIDCare at 1-800-939-4170 to gain additional information about this event and speak with knowledgeable representatives about the appropriate steps to take to protect your credit identity.

4. Review your credit reports. We recommend that you remain vigilant by reviewing account statements and monitoring credit reports. Under federal law, you also are entitled every 12 months to one free copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit reporting companies. To obtain a free annual credit report, go to <u>www.annualcreditreport.com</u> or call 1-877-322-8228. You may wish to stagger your requests so that you receive a free report by one of the three credit bureaus every four months.

If you discover any suspicious items and have enrolled in MyIDCare, notify them immediately by calling or by logging into the MyIDCare website and filing a request for help.

If you file a request for help or report suspicious activity, you will be contacted by a member of our ID Care team who will help you determine the cause of the suspicious items. In the unlikely event that you fall victim to identity theft as a consequence of this incident, you will be assigned an ID Care Specialist who will work on your behalf to identify, stop and reverse the damage quickly.

You should also know that you have the right to file a police report if you ever experience identity fraud. Please note that in order to file a crime report or incident report with law enforcement for identity theft, you will likely need to provide some kind of proof that you have been a victim. A police report is often required to dispute fraudulent items. You can report suspected incidents of identity theft to local law enforcement or to the Attorney General.

5. Place Fraud Alerts with the three credit bureaus. If you choose to place a fraud alert, we recommend you do this after activating your credit monitoring. You can place a fraud alert at one of the three major credit bureaus by phone and also via Experian's or Equifax's website. A fraud alert tells creditors to follow certain procedures, including contacting you, before they open any new accounts or change your existing accounts. For that reason, placing a fraud alert can protect you, but also may delay you when you seek to obtain credit. The contact information for all three bureaus is as follows:

## **Credit Bureaus**

Equifax Fraud Reporting	<b>Experian Fraud Reporting</b>	TransUnion Fraud Reporting
1-866-349-5191	1-888-397-3742	1-800-680-7289
P.O. Box 105069	P.O. Box 9554	P.O. Box 2000
Atlanta, GA 30348-5069	Allen, TX 75013	Chester, PA 19022-2000
www.alerts.equifax.com	www.experian.com	www.transunion.com

It is necessary to contact only ONE of these bureaus and use only ONE of these methods. As soon as one of the three bureaus confirms your fraud alert, the others are notified to place alerts on their records as well. You will receive confirmation letters in the mail and will then be able to order all three credit reports, free of charge, for your review. An initial fraud alert will last for one year.

### Please Note: No one is allowed to place a fraud alert on your credit report except you.

6. Security Freeze. By placing a security freeze, someone who fraudulently acquires your personal identifying information will not be able to use that information to open new accounts or borrow money in your name. You will need to contact the three national credit reporting bureaus listed above to place the freeze. Keep in mind that when you place

the freeze, you will not be able to borrow money, obtain instant credit, or get a new credit card until you temporarily lift or permanently remove the freeze. There is no cost to freeze or unfreeze your credit files.

7. You can obtain additional information about the steps you can take to avoid identity theft from the following agencies. The Federal Trade Commission also encourages those who discover that their information has been misused to file a complaint with them.

California Residents: Visit the California Office of Privacy Protection (<u>http://www.ca.gov/Privacy</u>) for additional information on protection against identity theft.

All US Residents: Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW Washington, DC 20580, www.consumer.gov/idtheft, 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338), TTY: 1-866-653-4261.