



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL

STATE OF NH  
DEPT OF JUSTICE  
2017 JAN 30 PM 1:11

Health Information Services  
FND-860  
55 Fruit Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114-2621  
Tel: 617.726.2465  
Fax: 617.643.4041

January 25, 2017

Office of the Attorney General  
33 Capitol Street  
Concord, NH 03301  
Attn: Attorney General Joseph Foster

To whom it may concern:

Please allow this letter to serve as notification that the Massachusetts General Hospital has recently discovered information leading it to believe that an acquisition of patient information may have occurred.

***Nature of the Incident***

On December 19, 2016, MGH learned that an e-mail containing a limited number of patient names and social security numbers was sent to the wrong party in error.

***Number of New Hampshire Residents Affected***

Two residents of New Hampshire were affected by such incident at the time of notification.

***Steps Taken to resolve the incident and Planned Remediation***

Upon learning of this incident, MGH performed a thorough investigation into the incident. The recipient of the misdirected e-mail confirmed deletion of the e-mail. MGH, as required by N.H. REV. STATE. ANN. § 359-C:20(V), sent the affected residents a letter with instructions on monitoring and/or freezing financial accounts (please see attached notification letter). To date, we have no knowledge that any of our patients' information has been used improperly.

If you wish to speak to an MGH representative regarding this incident, please contact Erika M. Barber at 617-643-4060. **MGH** will make every effort to address any questions and concerns that you may have.

Sincerely,

Erika Barber  
Privacy and Security Manager

Enclosure: Consumer Notification Letter



A Teaching Affiliate  
of Harvard Medical School





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<Address Block>

<Salutation>:

Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) is committed to protecting the security and confidentiality of our patients' information. We wanted to make you aware of an incident involving some of your information and apologize for any concern this may cause.

On December 19, 2016, MGH learned one of our employees e-mailed a form to another patient, in error. The form included your name, medical record number, and social security number. We contacted the recipient, who understands the mistake, and confirmed destruction of the information.

To date, we have no knowledge that any of your information has been used improperly. But, as a precaution, you may want to review carefully all "explanation of benefits" statements that your insurer sends you as well as any bills or statements you receive for medical care. If you notice any unauthorized charges or services, you should notify your insurer, the sender of the bill, the provider of the service, and file a police report immediately. As another precautionary measure, you may want to periodically request a listing of benefits paid in your name by your health insurer.

There are also additional steps you may take to further reduce any potential risk to you. These steps are described below.

First, we encourage you to review carefully your bank, credit card, and other account statements every month to ensure that all of your account activity is valid. If you notice any questionable charges, report them promptly in writing to your card or account issuer.

Second, we encourage you to check your credit report to ensure that all of your information is correct. You can obtain a free credit report once per year by visiting [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or by calling 877-322-8228. If you notice any inaccuracies, contact the relevant credit bureau promptly at the telephone number listed on the report. You can also report any suspicious activity to your local law enforcement, in which case you should request a copy of the police report and retain it for your records.





Third, you have the right to request that the credit bureaus place a fraud alert on your file. A fraud alert tells creditors to contact you before opening any new accounts or increasing credit limits on your existing accounts. You need to contact only one of the three credit bureaus to place a fraud alert; the one you contact is required by law to contact the other two. The credit bureaus can be reached at:

Equifax  
P.O. Box 740241  
Atlanta, GA 30374  
800-525-6285  
[www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)

Experian  
P.O. Box 9532  
Allen, TX 75013  
888-397-3742  
[www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)

TransUnion  
P.O. Box 6790  
Fullerton, CA 92834  
800-680-7289  
[www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

Finally, you have the right to request that the credit bureaus place a security freeze on your file. A security freeze prohibits a credit bureau from releasing any information from your credit report without written authorization. Please be aware, however, that placing a security freeze on your credit report may delay or prevent the timely approval of any requests you make for new loans, credit, mortgages, or other services. To place a security freeze on your file, you must send a written request to each of the three credit bureaus at the addresses listed above. The credit bureaus may require that you provide proper identification and may charge you a reasonable fee. Further information about placing a security freeze is enclosed with this letter.

For more guidance on the steps you can take to protect against misuse of your information, you can also contact the Federal Trade Commission at [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft), or at 877-ID-THEFT (877-438-4338), or at the Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20580.

We sincerely regret that this incident occurred. MGH takes the privacy and security of our patients' information very seriously. As a result of our investigation, appropriate action was taken with the workforce member who made the error. To help prevent something like this from happening again, we continue to enhance training and education and hold individuals accountable for their actions.

If you have questions, please call the MGH Privacy Office toll-free at (877) 644-2003.

Sincerely,

Erika M. Barber  
Privacy Manager







### FURTHER INFORMATION ON SECURITY FREEZES

To place a security freeze on your credit report, you must send a written request to each of the three major consumer reporting agencies by regular, certified, or overnight mail at the addresses below:

Equifax Security Freeze  
P.O. Box 105788  
Atlanta, GA 30348

Experian Security Freeze  
P.O. Box 9554  
Allen, TX 75013

TransUnion Security Freeze  
Fraud Victim Assistance  
P. O. Box 6790  
Fullerton, CA 92834

When requesting a security freeze, you will need to provide the following information: (1) your full name; (2) your social security number; (3) your date of birth; (4) if you have moved in the past five years, the addresses where you have lived during that period; (5) proof of your current address, such as a current utility or telephone bill; and (6) a legible copy of your government-issued identification card, such as a state driver's license, state ID card, or military ID card. If you have been a victim of identity theft, and you provide the credit reporting agency with a valid police report, it cannot charge you to place, lift, or remove a security freeze. In all other cases, the credit reporting agency may charge you up to \$5.00 each to place, temporarily lift, or permanently remove a security freeze. You will need to include payment by check, money order, or major credit card. Do not send cash through the mail.

The credit reporting agencies have three business days after receiving your request to place a security freeze on your credit report. The credit bureaus also must send written confirmation to you within five business days and provide you with a unique personal identification number (PIN) or password, or both, that you can use to authorize the removal or lifting of the security freeze.

To lift the security freeze in order to allow a specific entity or individual access to your credit report, you must call or send a written request to the credit reporting agencies by mail and include proper identification (name, address, and social security number) **and** the PIN number or password provided to you when you placed the security freeze, as well as the identities of those entities or individuals you would like to receive your credit report or the specific period of time you want the credit report to be available. The credit reporting agencies have three business days after receiving your request to lift the security freeze for those specific entities or individuals or for the specified period of time.

To remove the security freeze completely, you must send a written request to each of the three credit bureaus by mail and include proper identification (name, address, and social security number) **and** the PIN number or password provided to you when you placed the security freeze. The credit bureaus have three business days after receiving your request to remove the security freeze.

