

# Yale University

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August 9, 2011

VIA U.S. MAIL

New Hampshire Attorney General  
33 Capitol Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Sir or Madam:

Pursuant to N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 359-C:20, we are writing to notify you of a recent incident of unauthorized access to personal information supplied to Yale University involving New Hampshire residents.

## **NATURE OF THE SECURITY BREACH OR UNAUTHORIZED USE OR ACCESS**

On June 30, 2011, Yale was notified that an individual affiliated with Yale had searched his name on Google, and located and downloaded from a Yale hosted FTP server an electronic spreadsheet containing names and Social Security numbers. Upon investigation, Yale concluded that the computer file had been stored for 10 months in a way that left the information in the file searchable using Google.

Upon further investigation, Yale determined that the affected computer file was created in 1999 and was inadvertently moved to an insecure section of a computer server in July 2005. Although, from July 2005, the file was no longer fully protected from unauthorized public access, it could not be located using an ordinary Internet search engine. The situation changed in September 2010, when Google modified its search engine in a way that allowed it to search files stored on servers like the one holding the affected Yale file. As a result, between September 2010 and July 1, 2011, it was possible that information in the affected file, including Social Security numbers, might have been located through a Google search.

Other than the circumstance described above, Yale has no evidence that the affected file was accessed by any other unauthorized user.

there is no evidence that any other major search engine, including Yahoo and Bing, could or did locate the file, and, therefore, information from the affected file would not have been displayed in any of their search returns.

At this time, Yale has no reason to believe this incident is likely to result in harm to affected consumers and, therefore, Yale has not reported this incident to law enforcement. As a precaution, however, Yale intends to offer credit warning services to affected consumers.

Yale is searching its servers for similar archival files, and it is reviewing its procedures regarding the storing of archival information and, as appropriate, may revise these procedures. Further, Yale will remind employees of the importance of protecting all files containing personal information, including archival files.

#### **OTHER NOTIFICATION AND CONTACT INFORMATION**

Yale will send similar notifications to any regulatory agent required in the other states where residents were affected. If you have any questions or need further information please contact the undersigned attorney, Harold Rose.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'H. Rose', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Harold Rose  
Associate General Counsel