



CITY OF
BRAZORIA

City of Brazoria Provides Notice of Data Security Incident

The privacy and security of the personal information we maintain is of the utmost importance to the City of Brazoria. Unfortunately, the City has learned that an unauthorized party may have obtained access to multiple City email accounts. Upon learning of this issue, the City secured the accounts and commenced a prompt and thorough investigation in consultation with outside cybersecurity professionals who regularly investigate and analyze these types of situations.

After an extensive investigation and manual document review, the City discovered on August 21, 2023, that some personal information was contained in the accounts that were accessed between February 20, 2023 to February 23, 2023. The City's broader network security has not been affected.

The information involved included names, Social Security numbers, dates of birth, driver's license/state IDs, and financial account information. The City has no evidence that any of the compromised information has been misused for identity theft.

Commencing on Friday, October 20, 2023, the City has notified individuals whose information may have been involved. Notified individuals have been provided with best practices to protect their information, including placing a fraud alert and/or security freeze on their credit files and obtaining a free credit report. Notified individuals should always remain vigilant in reviewing financial account statements and explanation of benefits statements and report any irregular activity. A credit monitoring membership has been offered to those individuals whose Social Security numbers were involved. *See below for additional information on protecting personal information.*

The City is committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information in its possession and has taken additional precautions to safeguard it. The City continually evaluates and modifies its practices and internal controls to enhance the security and privacy of personal information.

For individuals who have questions or need additional information regarding this incident, or to determine if they are impacted, the City has established a dedicated toll-free response line at **1-800-358-9154**. The response line is available Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Central Time.

– OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION –

1. Placing a Fraud Alert on Your Credit File.

You may place an initial one-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 contacting all three nationwide credit reporting companies at the numbers below and following the stated directions or by sending a request in writing, by mail, to all three credit reporting companies:

Equifax Security Freeze

P.O. Box 105788
Atlanta, GA 30348
<https://www.freeze.equifax.com>
1-800-349-9960

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 reporting 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 you do place a security freeze *prior* to enrolling in any credit monitoring service, 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, 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.

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.