

Sample Letter



**Minnesota Department of Human Services
Elmer L. Andersen Human Services Building
Commissioner Tony Lourey
Post Office Box 64998
St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0998**

January 30, 2019

[INSERT NAME AND ADDRESS]

Dear [Mr./Ms. Last Name]:

Because the Minnesota Department of Human Services (“DHS”) respects and values the privacy of your personal information, we want you to know about a data security incident involving the compromise of the state email account of a DHS employee. We currently have no evidence that the information contained in this account was actually viewed, downloaded, or misused in any way. However, in an abundance of caution, we are providing you with this notice.

What happened? Minnesota’s executive agencies, including DHS, are the frequent target of increasingly sophisticated “email phishing campaigns.” Partnering with Minnesota IT Services (“MNIT”), we have been able to successfully defend against the vast majority of these email phishing campaigns. Unfortunately, on or about September 28, 2018, a hacker was able to use an email phishing campaign to gain access to the state email account of an employee in the Children and Family Services division of DHS. The hacker used this account to send out spam email messages and may have viewed some of the information contained in the account.

What information was involved? At the time of its compromise, the email account contained the following information about you: *(customize depending on individual case)*

How did we respond to these data security incidents? MNIT is the information technology agency for all of Minnesota’s executive branch, including DHS. Upon learning of this incident, MNIT immediately notified DHS and took steps to secure the email account, stopping the spread of the phishing emails. MNIT then investigated this incident, and provided the results of its investigation to us on or around October 26, 2018. We also reported these incidents to the Minnesota Office of the Legislative Auditor and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

What are we doing to prevent future data security incidents? We continue to work hard to protect against these and other types of data security incidents. We teach DHS employees about email best practices and how to prevent and respond to data security incidents. We use the technology at our disposal to its fullest potential to prevent and mitigate data security incidents, and push for security technology upgrades. We update relevant policies and procedures.

What should you do? Although we are not aware of any misuse of the information contained in the email account, we suggest that you consider taking these steps to help protect against identity theft:

- Ask to see your credit report. Under federal law, you have the right to receive a free copy of your credit report every 12 months from each of the three consumer credit reporting companies (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion). You may request these reports online at www.annualcreditreport.com, by telephone at (877) 322-8228, or by completing an Annual Credit Report Request Form (available from www.annualcreditreport.com) and mailing it to Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA 30348-5281.
- Place a fraud alert or credit freeze on your credit files by contacting Equifax, Experian, or TransUnion. More information about fraud alerts and credit freezes is available on the Federal Trade Commission's website (www.consumer.ftc.gov).
- Call the telephone number listed on the credit report or visit the Federal Trade Commission's website on identity theft at www.consumer.gov/idtheft/ if you see anything in your credit report that you do not understand.
- Check your credit report and other financial statements for any transactions or accounts that you do not recognize. If you find suspicious activity on your report or statements, contact your local police or sheriff's office to file a report.

Where can you get more information? If you have any questions or would like more information about this data security incident, please write, email, or call us:

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Child Safety and Permanency Division
ATTN: Administration
P.O. Box 64943
St. Paul, MN 55164-0943

csp.general.admin.dhs@state.mn.us

(651) 431-4660

We will also be preparing a report about this incident. You may ask us to send you a copy of this report by writing, emailing, or calling us.

We sincerely regret this data security incident and apologize for any impact it may have on you or your family.

Sincerely,

Tony Lourey
Commissioner

