PO Box 45100
Olympia, WA 98504

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES

NOTICE OF DATA BREACH

June 2026

Dear DSHS Client:

The State of Washington Department of Social and Health Services ("DSHS") is letting you know that a person may have had unauthorized access to your personal information we maintain in our system. This letter provides details of the incident, our response, and steps you can take to help protect yourself against possible misuse of your personal information.

What Happened?

In March 2026, we discovered that a DSHS employee had accessed personal information from a DSHS internal client data system for reasons unrelated to their work. We immediately terminated the employee's access to DSHS systems, and we investigated what personal information the employee had viewed. We are also cooperating with state and local law enforcement in their ongoing investigation.

What Information Was Involved?

We have determined that the employee may have viewed certain information related to your DSHS account for reasons unrelated to their work. The personal information that may have been viewed includes: Name, Date of Birth, Social Security Number, DSHS Client Number, and the general category of services you have received. There is no evidence this employee had access to any specific health information such as diagnoses, test results, treatments, claims, or chart notes.

What We Are Doing?

We take the confidentiality, privacy, and security of information in our care seriously. We immediately terminated the employee's access to DSHS systems. We have looked into the history of the employee's activities and access to client information. We are contacting all clients whose information may have been viewed by this employee even if it was for work-related purposes. We are taking steps to implement additional safeguards and review policies and procedures relating to data privacy and security.

What You Can Do?

We encourage you to watch your DSHS and personal financial account statements and credit reports for any activity you do not recognize. Please also see the additional information that came with this letter about steps you can take.

For More Information. Your confidence and trust are important to us. We regret that this occurred and apologize for any inconvenience this incident may have caused. If you have any questions, please call 1-855-887-9382, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Pacific Time.

Sincerely,
Department of Social and Health Services

ADDITIONAL STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

We remind you it is always advisable to be vigilant for incidents of fraud or identity theft by reviewing your account statements and free credit reports for any unauthorized activity. You may obtain a copy of your credit report, free of charge, once every 12 months from each of the three nationwide credit reporting companies. To order your annual free credit report, please visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call toll free at 1-877-322-8228. Contact information for the three nationwide credit reporting companies is as follows:

- *Equifax*, PO Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374, www.equifax.com, 1-800-685-1111
- *Experian*, PO Box 2002, Allen, TX 75013, www.experian.com, 1-888-397-3742
- *TransUnion*, PO Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016, www.transunion.com, 1-800-916-8800

If you believe you are the victim of identity theft or have reason to believe your personal information has been misused, you should immediately contact the Federal Trade Commission and/or the Washington Attorney General's office. You can obtain information from these sources about steps an individual can take to avoid identity theft as well as information about fraud alerts and security freezes. You should also contact your local law enforcement authorities and file a police report. Obtain a copy of the police report in case you are asked to provide copies to creditors to correct your records.

Contact information for the Federal Trade Commission and Washington Attorney General's office is as follows:

- *Federal Trade Commission*, Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20580, 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338), www.identitytheft.gov
- Washington Office of the Attorney General https://www.atg.wa.gov/recovering-identity-theft-or-fraud

Fraud Alerts and Credit or Security Freezes:

Fraud Alerts: There are two types of general fraud alerts you can place on your credit report to put your creditors on notice that you may be a victim of fraud—an initial alert and an extended alert. You may ask that an initial fraud alert be placed on your credit report if you suspect you have been, or are about to be, a victim of identity theft. An initial fraud alert stays on your credit report for one year. You may have an extended alert placed on your credit report if you have already been a victim of identity theft with the appropriate documentary proof. An extended fraud alert stays on your credit report for seven years.

To place a fraud alert on your credit reports, contact one of the nationwide credit bureaus. A fraud alert is free. The credit bureau you contact must tell the other two, and all three will place an alert on their versions of your report.

For those in the military who want to protect their credit while deployed, an Active Duty Military Fraud Alert lasts for one year and can be renewed for the length of your deployment. The credit bureaus will also take you off their marketing lists for pre-screened credit card offers for two years, unless you ask them not to.

Credit or Security Freezes: You have the right to put a credit freeze, also known as a security freeze, on your credit file, free of charge, which makes it more difficult for identity thieves to

open new accounts in your name. That's because most creditors need to see your credit report before they approve a new account. If they can't see your report, they may not extend the credit.

How do I place a freeze on my credit reports? There is no fee to place or lift a security freeze. Unlike a fraud alert, you must separately place a security freeze on your credit file at each credit reporting company. For information and instructions to place a security freeze, contact each of the credit reporting agencies at the addresses below:

- **Experian Security Freeze**, PO Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013, www.experian.com
- **TransUnion Security Freeze**, PO Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016, www.transunion.com
- **Equifax Security Freeze**, PO Box 105788, Atlanta, GA30348, www.equifax.com

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 bureau will provide you with 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.

How do I lift a freeze? A freeze remains in place until you ask the credit bureau to temporarily lift it or remove it altogether. If the request is made online or by phone, a credit bureau must lift a freeze within one hour. If the request is made by mail, then the bureau must lift the freeze no later than three business days after getting your request.

If you opt for a temporary lift because you are applying for credit or a job, and you can find out which credit bureau the business will contact for your file, you can save some time by lifting the freeze only at that particular credit bureau. Otherwise, you need to make the request with all three credit bureaus.