



Secure Processing Center
25 Route 111, P.O. Box 1048
Smithtown, NY 11787

Postal Endorsement Line
To the Estate of

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

NOTICE OF DATA BREACH

Dear Estate of [REDACTED]

The privacy and security of the personal information we maintain is of the utmost importance to Stanislaus County. We are writing to provide you with information regarding a recent inadvertent disclosure incident. Please read this notice carefully, as it provides information about the incident and other precautionary measures you can take to protect the decedent's information.

What Happened?

On or about July 28, 2025, due to human error, a Stanislaus County employee inadvertently disclosed via email a file containing sensitive information related to a limited number of individuals.

What We Are Doing.

Upon learning of the issue, we immediately took steps to mitigate the issue. Additionally, we are in the process of retraining our staff to prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future and working with technology support to safeguard against future inadvertent disclosures.

What Information Was Involved?

The information that may have been accessed contained some of the decedent's personal information, including the decedent's [REDACTED].

What You Can Do.

We have no evidence that any of the decedent's information has been used to commit financial fraud or identity theft as a result of this incident. Nevertheless, out of an abundance of caution, we want to make you aware of the incident. We encourage you to review the following pages containing steps the estate can take to protect the decedent's personal information, including placing a "deceased alert" on the decedent's credit files. Additionally, you should always remain vigilant in reviewing the estate's financial account statements for fraudulent or irregular activity on a regular basis.

For More Information.

If you have questions, please contact our dedicated and confidential call center at [REDACTED] The response line is available for [REDACTED] days from the date of this letter, between the hours of [REDACTED] p.m. Eastern time, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. We apologize for any inconvenience or concern this may cause. We have taken this matter very seriously and will continue to take significant measures to protect the personal information in our possession.

Sincerely,

Stanislaus County
1010 10th Street
Modesto, CA 95354

– OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION –

Protecting Deceased Individuals

Notifying any one of the three credit bureaus allows the deceased's credit report to be updated with a deceased notice, which may help prevent theft of their identity. When one bureau adds a deceased notice to the person's credit file, it will notify the other two, eliminating the need for you to contact all three credit bureaus. The following steps are recommended for all deaths, regardless of age. It is best to notify all entities by telephone but such notifications **must** be followed-up in writing. To speed up processing, include all requested documentation specific to that agency in the first letter and send all mail certified, return receipt requested. It is recommended to keep copies of all correspondence, noting date sent and any response(s) you receive.

1. Obtain copies of the official death certificate when it becomes available. In some cases you will be able to use a photocopy, but some businesses will request an original death certificate. Since many death records are public, a business may require more than just a death certificate as proof.
2. Immediately contact the CRAs in writing and request a "deceased" alert be placed on their credit report. You should also request a copy of the credit report.
3. Contact all credit issuers, collection agencies, the CRAs and any other financial institutions that need to know of the death using the required procedures for each one. Include the following information on all letters: legal Name and Social Security number of deceased, last 5 years of addresses, date of birth, and date of death.
4. Contact each of the CRAs. Request a copy of the decedent's credit report. A review of each report will let you know of any active credit accounts that still need to be closed, or any pending collection notices. Be sure to ask for all contact information on accounts currently open in the name of the deceased (credit granters, collection agencies, etc.) so that you can follow through with those entities.
5. Request that the report is flagged with the following alert: "*Deceased. **Do not** issue credit. If an application is made for credit, notify the following person(s) immediately: (list the next surviving relative, executor/trustee of the estate and/or local law enforcement agency- noting the relationship).*"

Friends, neighbors or distant relatives do not have the same rights as a spouse or executor of the estate. They are classified as a third party and a CRA may not mail out a credit report or change data on a consumer file upon their request. If you fall into this classification and are dealing with a very unique situation, you may write to the CRA and explain the situation. They are handled on a case-by case basis. Specific instructions for each credit reporting agency (CRA) are listed below.

Steps to take if you (surviving spouse or estate executor) suspect fraudulent use of the decedent's information.

1. Request a copy of the decedent's credit report as outlined above.
2. Place a "deceased alert" on the report as outlined above.
3. Notify the police in the decedent's jurisdiction if you have evidence of fraud (collection notice, bills, credit report). A suspicion (especially of identity theft by a family member) is best when backed with concrete evidence.
4. Notify any creditor, collection agency, credit issuer, utility company that the person is deceased and date of death. Be sure to include a copy of the death certificate. Request an immediate investigation and that they contact you with the results of the investigation. Insist on letters of clearance, which you should keep with the other estate papers.
5. In the event that the thief is a family member or relative, if the family is unable to decide on a course of action, it may be best to seek the advice of an attorney that specializes in estate or family law.
6. Report the identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission and get a copy of an Identity Theft Report. The identity theft can be reported online at www.identitytheft.gov.

Protecting Medical Information.

If this notice letter indicates that medical information was impacted, we have no information to date indicating that medical information involved in this incident was or will be used for any unintended purposes. As a general matter, however, the following practices can help to protect oneself from medical identity theft.

- Only share your health insurance cards with your health care providers and other family members who are covered under your insurance plan or who help you with your medical care.
- Review your “explanation of benefits statement” which you receive from your health insurance company. Follow up with your insurance company or care provider for any items you do not recognize. If necessary, contact the care provider on the explanation of benefits statement and ask for copies of medical records from the date of the potential access (noted above) to current date.
- Ask your insurance company for a current year-to-date report of all services paid for you as a beneficiary. Follow up with your insurance company or the care provider for any items you do not recognize.

Specific Instructions from the 3 Credit Reporting Agencies.

Experian — P.O. Box 9701, Allen, TX 75013. Ordering Reports: A spouse can obtain a credit report by simply making the request through the regular channels -mail, phone and Internet. The spouse is legally entitled to the report. The executor of the estate can obtain a credit report but must write Experian with a specific request, a copy of the executor paperwork and the death certificate. Requesting Changes or Voicing Concerns: A spouse or executor may change the file to show the person as deceased via written request. A copy of the death certificate and in the case of the executor, the executor's paperwork must be included with the request. After any changes, Experian will send an updated credit report to the spouse or executor for confirmation that a deceased statement has been added to the credit report. This is important as executors and spouse can request other types of “changes” that we may not be able to honor. If ID Theft is a stated concern, Experian will add a security alert after the file has been changed to reflect the person as deceased. If there are additional concerns, Experian will add a general statement to the file at the direction of the spouse/executor. The spouse/executor must state specifically what they want the general statement to say, such as “Do not issue credit.”

Equifax — P.O. Box 105139, Atlanta, GA 30348. Ordering Reports: Equifax requests that the spouse, attorney or executor of the estate submit a written request to receive a copy of the deceased consumer's file. The request should include a copy of a notarized document stating that the requestor is authorized to handle the deceased consumer's affairs (i.e.: Order from a Probate Court or Letter of Testamentary). If an executor, the request should include the court order or other document showing that the requestor is an executor. Requesting Changes or Voicing Concerns: Equifax requests that a spouse, attorney or executor of the estate submit a written request if they would like to place a deceased indicator on the deceased consumer's file. The written request should include a copy of the consumer's death certificate and the request should be sent to the address listed above. Please also include your name, your mailing address to send final confirmation and a copy of your identification, such as a driver's license or other government-issued identification. Upon receipt of the death certificate, Equifax will attempt to locate a file for the deceased consumer and place a death notice on the consumer's file. In addition, Equifax will place a seven year promotional block on the deceased consumer's file. Once Equifax's research is complete, they will send a response back to the spouse, attorney, or executor of the estate.

TransUnion (TU) — P.O. Box 2000, Chester, PA 19016. Ordering Reports: TU requires proof of a power of attorney, executor of estate, conservatorship or other legal document giving the requestor the legal right to obtain a copy of the decedent's credit file. If the requestor was married to the deceased and the address for which the credit file is being mailed to is contained on the decedent's credit file, then TU will mail a credit file to the surviving spouse. If the deceased is a minor child of the requestor, TU will mail a credit file to the parent upon receipt of a copy of the birth certificate or death certificate naming the parent as requestor. Requesting Changes or Voicing Concerns: Placing a "decease alert" on reports: TU will accept a request to place a temporary alert on the credit file of a deceased individual from any consumer who makes such a request and identifies themselves as having a right to do so. The requestor's phone number is added to the temporary, three month alert. Upon receipt of a verifiable death certificate, TU will entirely suppress the decedent's credit file and so note it as a deceased consumer. TU will not mail out a copy of its contents without the requirements mentioned above. If you suspect fraud, TU suggests a call to their fraud unit at 800-680-7289. It will place the temporary alert over the phone and advise the requestor of what needs to be sent to suppress the credit file and to disclose a copy of its contents. Requests can also be emailed to fvad@transunion.com.