



Breach of Information Frequently Asked Questions Fact Sheet May 6, 2013

Breach Incident

- 1. What happened?** A roll of microfiche containing 2,000 State of California birth records for 1974 was found at an unsecure non-State owned location. The birth records are only of persons born or a parent of a person born in certain months in 1974 in nine specific counties. Thus the total number of people whose personal information may have possibly been revealed is limited to approximately 6,000. If you were not a child or the parent of a child born in the months of May, June, July, August or September of 1974 in either Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Shasta, Siskiyou, Solano, Sonoma, Stanislaus, Sutter or Tehama counties, then your records were not on this roll of microfiche. Other than being found in an unsecure non-State owned location, there is no evidence that any of the records have been compromised or seen by anyone.
- 2. When was this discovered?** The reel of microfiche was discovered March 17, 2013.
- 3. Why did CDPH have my personal and some medical information?** By law, the California Department of Public Health, Vital Records Issuance and Preservation Branch maintains a permanent central registry of all birth, death, fetal death, stillbirth, marriage and dissolution records for vital events which occur in California.
- 4. What happened to the personal and medical information that was potentially compromised?** The California Department of Public Health has the reel of microfiche that was found.
- 5. What specific items of personal and/or medical information were involved?** The information included the names, addresses, Social Security numbers and some medical information.
- 6. What is CDPH doing about the breach?** CDPH is currently investigating the incident.



- 7. How will CDPH prevent this from happening in the future?** CDPH has made technological advances over time and continues to implement additional internal safeguards to protect the birth records as the investigation progresses. CDPH is also conducting a thorough review of information security policies and will put in place any additional policies or practices necessary to help prevent such an incident from happening again.
- 8. How can I contact CDPH if I need more information?** You may call 855-737-1796 or email 1974birth@cdph.ca.gov for more information.
- 9. Does this mean that I'm a victim of identity theft?** No. The fact that someone may have had access to your information doesn't mean that you are a victim of identity theft or that your information will be used to commit fraud. We wanted to let you know about the incident so that you can take appropriate steps to protect yourself. The way to protect yourself is to place a fraud alert on your credit files, order your credit reports and review them for possible problems.
- 10. How will I know if any of my personal information was used by someone else?** The best way to find out is to order your credit reports from the three credit bureaus: Equifax, Experian and Trans Union. If you notice accounts on your credit report that you did not open or applications for credit ("inquiries") that you did not make, these could be indications that someone else is using your personal information, without your permission.
- 11. Do I have to pay for the credit report?** No. You can order your credit reports from all three credit bureaus for free once a year. You can do this online at www.annualcreditreport.com or by phone at 1-877-322-8228.
- 12. What else can I do to protect myself?** You can place a fraud alert on your credit files. Simply call any one of the three credit bureaus at the numbers provided below and follow the "fraud victim" instructions. The credit bureau you call will notify the others to place the alert. When you call the credit bureau's fraud line, you will be asked for identifying information and will be given the opportunity to enter a phone number for creditors to call. You may want to make this your cell phone number.
- **Trans Union – 1-800-680-7289**
 - **Experian – 1-888-397-3742**
 - **Equifax – 1-800-525-6285**



- 13. I called the credit bureau fraud line and they asked for my Social Security number. Is it okay to give it?** The credit bureaus ask for your Social Security number and other information in order to identify you and avoid sending your credit report to the wrong person. It is okay to give this information to the credit bureau that you call.
- 14. Do I have to call all three credit bureaus?** No. If you call just one of the bureaus, they will notify the other two. A fraud alert will be placed on your file with all three bureaus and you will receive a confirmation letter from each of them.
- 15. Why can't I talk to someone at the credit bureaus?** You must first order your credit reports. When you receive your reports, each one will have a phone number you can call to speak with a live person in the bureau's fraud unit. If you see anything on any of your reports that looks unusual or that you don't understand, call the number on the report.
- 16. How long does it take to receive my credit reports?** You can view your reports online if you order them at www.annualcreditreport.com. If you order by phone, you should receive the report by mail in five to ten days.
- 17. Is it necessary to contact the Social Security Administration and change my Social Security number (SSN)?** The Social Security Administration very rarely changes a person's SSN. The mere possibility of fraudulent use of your SSN would probably not be viewed as a justification.
- 18. What should I look for on my credit report?** Look for any accounts that you don't recognize. Look at the inquiries or requests section for names of creditors from whom you haven't requested credit. Note that some kinds of inquiries, labeled something like "promotional inquiries," are for unsolicited offers of credit, mostly from companies with whom you do business.

Look in the personal information section for addresses where you've never lived. Any of these things might be indications of fraud. Also, be on the alert for other possible signs of identity theft, such as calls from creditors or debt collectors about bills that you don't recognize, or unusual charges on your credit card bills.



- 19. What happens if I find out that I have been a victim of identity theft?** You should immediately notify your local law enforcement agency, contact any creditors involved and notify the credit bureaus. For more information on what to do, see the [Identity Theft Victim Checklist](#) on the website of the California Office of the Attorney General.
- 20. How often should I order new credit reports and how long should I continue ordering them?** If you were born in 1974 or the parent of a child born in 1974 in one of the listed counties during one of the months listed above then it might be a good idea to order copies of your credit reports every three months for a while. How long you continue to order them is up to you. We recommend checking your credit reports at least twice a year as a general privacy protection measure.
- 21. The notice from CDPH is regarding a family member, a spouse, or child who is deceased. What should I do?** See the Information Sheet, *Identity Theft and the Deceased, CIS 3C* on the Identity Theft page of the California Office of Attorney General's website at www.oag.ca.gov/privacy.