



# Marks & Associates

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www.markscpas.com

Date

Name

Address

Address

Address

## Notice of a Data Breach

Dear:

**Please read this letter in its entirety. It contains important information regarding protection of the personal information of you and your household members.**

### What happened?

We were unfortunately the victims of a social engineering scam that allowed an unauthorized party or parties to access one of our employee's email accounts and other portions of our network in November 2018. Although our IT support responded immediately by shutting down access to the account, replacing our entire server and implementing additional security measures, a recent forensic investigation found that our system was likely compromised. No evidence was found that files from our system were extracted in the incident. Due to the high percentage of e-file rejections in the tax season, we have engaged a third party and outside IT and information security consultant to further investigate, evaluate and respond to the situation. Although data breaches have been commonplace even in the most secure environments, we regret that this incident has occurred.

### What information was involved?

Based on the review of this situation by IT support and outside consultants and their examination of the impacted account and our network, it is possible that personal data belonging to you and members of your household, including dependents, was potentially exposed to the unauthorized party or parties. The personal information accessed may have included your name in combination with other data elements, such as a social security number.

Because we have a concern that your personal information may have been accessed and potentially misused, we are taking appropriate precautionary measures to ensure your financial security and help alleviate concerns you may have. We are also recommending that you take the protective measures listed below.

### What we are doing to address this situation?

Marks & Associates made immediate enhancements to our systems, security and practices. Additionally, we have engaged appropriate consultants to assist us in conducting a full review of our security practices

\* Services marked with an "\*" require an internet connection and e-mail account and may not be available to minors under the age of 18 years of age. Please note that when signing up for monitoring services, you may be asked to verify personal information for your own protection to confirm your identity.

and systems to ensure that appropriate security protocols are in place going forward. We are committed to helping those people who may have been impacted by this unfortunate situation.

We believe that you or a member of your household are likely a victim of the Equifax data breach and may be eligible for free multiple year credit monitoring or cash payment as compensation for the breach under a settlement reached with the U.S. government. We therefore strongly urge you to confirm your eligibility by going to this authorized site for the victims of the Equifax breach: <https://eligibility.equifaxbreachsettlement.com/en/eligibility>. You may also enroll for free multiple-year credit monitoring at this site.

In addition, at your option Marks & Associates is providing you with access to Triple Bureau Credit Monitoring\* services at no charge. These services provide you with alerts for twelve months from the date of enrollment when changes occur to any of one of your Experian, Equifax or TransUnion credit files. This notification is sent to you the same day that the change or update takes place with the bureau. In addition, we are providing you with proactive fraud assistance to help with any questions that you might have. These services will be provided by CyberScout a company that specializes in identity theft education and resolution.

To enroll in Credit Monitoring\* services at no charge, please log on to <https://www.myidmanager.com> and follow the instructions provided. When prompted please provide the following unique code to receive services:

<primary>      <CODE HERE.>                      <spouse>              <spouse code>

In addition, you should contact CyberScout regarding any questions or problems you may encounter, including assisting you with obtaining a credit report and placing fraud alerts or in the event that you become a victim of fraud.

For guidance with the CyberScout services, or to obtain additional information about these services, please call the CyberScout help line 1-800-405-6108 and supply the fraud specialist with your unique code.

#### **What you can do to address this situation?**

CyberScout has been retained to help you with any questions or problems you may encounter, including assisting you with obtaining a credit report and placing fraud alerts.

However, if you choose not to use these services, we are strongly urging all customers to consider doing the following:

**If you choose to place a fraud alert on your own, you will need to contact one of the three major credit agencies directly at:**

**Experian (1-888-397-3742)**  
P.O. Box 4500  
Allen, TX 75013  
[www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)

**Equifax (1-800-525-6285)**  
P.O. Box 740241  
Atlanta, GA 30374  
[www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)

**TransUnion (1-800-680-7289)**  
P.O. Box 2000  
Chester, PA 19016  
[www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

**Also, should you wish to obtain a credit report and monitor it on your own:**

- **IMMEDIATELY** obtain free copies of your credit report and monitor them upon receipt for any suspicious activity. You can obtain your free copies by going to the following website:

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[www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or by calling them toll-free at 1-877-322-8228. (Hearing impaired consumers can access their TDD service at 1-877-730-4204.

- **Upon receipt of your credit report**, we recommend that you review it carefully for any suspicious activity.
- Be sure to promptly report any suspicious activity to Marks & Associates or CyberScout

### **Other Important Information**

You can also obtain more information about identity theft and ways to protect yourself from the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). The FTC has an identity theft hotline: 877-438-4338; TTY: 1-866-653-4261. They also provide information on-line at [www.ftc.gov/idtheft](http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft).

### **For more information**

While CyberScout should be able to provide thorough assistance and answer most of your questions, you may still feel the need to speak with Marks & Associates regarding this incident. If so, please call our office at 818-5917560 or email to [Raina@markscpas.com](mailto:Raina@markscpas.com), we will response within 24 business hours.

At Marks & Associates we take our responsibilities to protect your personal information very seriously. We are deeply disturbed by this situation and apologize for any inconvenience.

Sincerely,

Neal Marks

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