

State of California

MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 10, 2002

TO: PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT LIAISONS REFERENCE CODE: 2002-034

THIS MEMORANDUM SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED TO:

Personnel Officers
Personnel Transactions Supervisors

FROM: Department of Personnel Administration
Office of the Director

SUBJECT: Mailing to Employee Homes from Office of Privacy Protection

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Please inform your employees to expect a mailing at their home address from the State Office of Privacy Protection. The mailing, attached to this memo, explains the steps employees should take in light of the recent hacking incident involving payroll deduction files.

Please advise employees that if they do not receive a copy at their home by June 19, 2002, to get a copy from your office.

In the meantime, employees should be directed to the special Web page set up by the Office of Privacy Protection at <http://www.privacy.ca.gov/stateemployee.htm>. This page provides easy-to-understand information on how to contact the three major credit bureaus to obtain a free credit report and includes a helpful question and answer section. It will also include a copy of the mailing in the near future.


Marty Morgenstern
Director

Attachment





Privacy Protection for State Employees

The recent security breach at the Teale Data Center has understandably raised concerns among State employees.

The Department of Consumer Affairs wants to keep employees informed and help them take the necessary steps to protect their privacy. Special phone lines have been arranged at the credit bureaus. The Department's Office of Privacy Protection will provide ongoing information and assistance, through its web site, its toll-free line and through workshops for employees.

1

The first thing to do is to get copies of your credit report.

Because something has occurred that gives you reason to believe that you could be a victim of identity theft, you are entitled to get your credit reports for free. You can do this by phone by calling the numbers below. When you use the phone lines for Equifax and Experian to order your free copy, you must also put a fraud alert on your file.

Equifax Line for California State Employees	1-888-511-1992
Experian Line for California State Employees	1-866-200-2313
Trans Union	1-800-680-7289

Individuals with hearing or speech impairments may contact the California Relay Service at 711.

2

Consider putting a fraud alert on your account.

A fraud alert helps protect you against the possibility of an identity thief opening new credit accounts in your name. A fraud alert also slows down your own ability to get new credit. It should not stop you from using your existing credit cards or other accounts. If you do not want to put a fraud alert on your account, you can still order a free copy of your reports. Trans Union's automated system allows you to order your free report by phone and choose whether to place a fraud alert or not. Or you can order a free copy of your report without a fraud alert by writing to the credit bureaus at the addresses below. Give your full name (including Jr., Sr., III), your Social Security number, your current and previous addresses within the last five years, your birth date, and your home phone number. Explain that you are a California State employee and would like to receive a free copy of your credit report without putting a fraud alert on your account, and sign the letter.

Equifax, Inc.
P.O. Box 105069
Atlanta, GA 30374

Experian
P. O. Box 9554
Allen, TX 75013

Trans Union
P. O. Box 6790
Fullerton, CA 92834

400 R Street, Suite 3000 | Sacramento, CA 95814
www.privacy.ca.gov | 866-785-9663



3

Review your credit reports. You will get the reports in about five days. Look through each one carefully.

Look for accounts you don't recognize, especially accounts opened recently. Look in the inquiries section for names of creditors from whom you haven't requested credit. Some companies bill under names other than their store names. The credit bureau will be able to tell you when that is the case. You may find some inquiries identified as "promotional." These occur when a company has obtained your name and address from a credit bureau to send you an offer of credit. Promotional inquiries are not signs of fraud. (You can stop further unsolicited offers of this kind by calling 1-888-5OPTOUT.) Also, as a general precaution, look in the personal information section for any address listed for you where you've never lived.

4

If you find items you don't understand on your report, call the credit bureaus at the number given on the report.

Credit bureau staff will review your report with you. If the information can't be explained, then you will need to call the creditors involved and report the crime to your local police or sheriff's office. For more information on what to do in this case, visit the Office of Privacy Protection's web site or call the Office of Privacy Protection at 866-785-9663.

Questions & Answers

What employee information was on the server that was accessed?

The information was the State Controller's "payroll deduction file" on all State employees. The file contained the first 13 digits of last names, first and middle initials, Social Security numbers, and payroll deduction items (the deductions listed on your pay stub: by code # and amount, for example, the code for United Way \$25). The file contained no bank information, no home addresses, no phone numbers.

How often should I order new credit reports?

In light of this incident, even if you find nothing wrong on your current report, it might be a good idea to order free copies of your credit reports again in a few months. Identity thieves usually, but not always, act soon after stealing personal information. We recommend checking your credit reports at least once a year as a general privacy protection measure.

