

14755

March 20, 2019

Dear Colleague,

We regret to inform you that a data breach occurred at Mass Audubon between March 6, 2019 and March 15, 2019 which involved your personal information. During that period of time, emails with an attached spreadsheet that contained your name and, in a hidden column on the spreadsheet, your Social Security Number were sent to thirty-seven Mass Audubon managers. These emails were sent in error and there was no malicious intent by either the sender or the recipient. Your address was not included in the email, nor was any other personal information.

This error was discovered after one manager "unhid" the hidden column on the spreadsheet. S-he then immediately reported the breach to our Information Technology Department. The Information Technology Department staff removed all traces of the emails so they were permanently deleted from all affected Mass Audubon email accounts and from our servers.

Pursuant to such a data breach, Massachusetts law:

1. Allows consumers to place a security freeze on their credit reports. A security freeze prohibits a credit reporting agency from releasing any information from a consumer's credit report without written authorization. *However, please be aware that placing a security freeze on your credit report may delay, interfere with, or prevent the timely approval of any requests you make for new loans, credit mortgages, employment, housing or other services.*
2. Allows you to request a security freeze without a police report (Mass Audubon did not file a police report because it was not a malicious or criminal act) from a credit reporting agency but they may charge you up to \$5.00 each to place, temporarily lift, or permanently remove a security freeze. Mass Audubon will reimburse you up to \$15.00.
3. Allows a victim of identity theft with a valid police report, to place, lift, or remove a security freeze free of charge.
4. Gives you the right to file a police report and obtain a copy of it.

To place a security freeze on your credit report, you must send a written request to each of the three major consumer reporting agencies: Equifax ([www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)); Experian ([www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)); and TransUnion ([www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)) by regular, certified or overnight mail at the addresses below:

Equifax Security Freeze  
P.O. Box 105788  
Atlanta, GA 30348

Experian Security Freeze  
P.O. Box 9554  
Allen, TX 75013

Trans Union Security Freeze Fraud Victim Assistance Department  
P.O. Box 2000  
Chester, PA 19022-2000

In order to request a security freeze, you will need to provide the following information:

1. Your full name (including middle initial as well as Jr., Sr., II, III, etc.);
2. Social Security Number;
3. Date of birth;
4. If you have moved in the past five (5) years, provide the addresses where you have lived over the prior five years;
5. Proof of current address such as a current utility bill or telephone bill;
6. A legible photocopy of a government issued identification card (state driver's license or ID card, military identification, etc.)
7. If you are a victim of identity theft, include a copy of either the police report, investigative report, or complaint to a law enforcement agency concerning identity theft;
8. If you are not a victim of identity theft, include payment by check, money order, or credit card (Visa, MasterCard, American Express or Discover only).

The credit reporting agencies have three (3) business days after receiving your request to place a security freeze on your credit report. The credit bureaus must also send written confirmation to you within five (5) business days and provide you with a unique personal identification number (PIN) or password, or both that can be used by you to authorize the removal or lifting of the security freeze.

To lift the security freeze in order to allow a specific entity or individual access to your credit report, you must call or send a written request to the credit reporting agencies by mail and include proper identification (name, address, and social security number) and the PIN number or password provided to you when you placed the security freeze as well as the identities of those entities or individuals you would like to receive your credit report or the specific period of time you want the credit report available. The credit reporting agencies have three (3) business days after receiving your request to lift the security freeze for those identified entities or for the specified period of time.

To remove the security freeze, you must send a written request to each of the three credit bureaus by mail and include proper identification (name, address, and social security number) and the PIN number or password provided to you when you placed the security freeze. The credit bureaus have three (3) business days after receiving your request to remove the security freeze.

We at Mass Audubon take the security of our staff and the public's information very seriously and do everything we can to protect that information including but not limited to annual staff training on security and Massachusetts law as it relates to personal information. We deeply apologize for this error. If you should have any further questions, about this incident, please contact Nikki McKoon, Manager of Administrative Operations, at [nmckoon@massaudubon.org](mailto:nmckoon@massaudubon.org) or call her at (781) 259-2112.

Sincerely,

Bancroft Poor  
Vice President for Operations