

Richland County, WI Media Statement

First and foremost, Richland County, WI (“Richland County”) is committed to protecting the privacy and security of personal information and we continue to take significant measures to protect that information. On or about October 4, 2023, Richland County detected unauthorized access to our network as a result of a sophisticated cybersecurity incident, initially described as a network disruption. Upon learning of the issue, we secured our network environment, alerted law enforcement and commenced an immediate and thorough investigation.

As part of the investigation, Richland County engaged leading third-party cybersecurity professionals experienced in handling these types of incidents. The investigation aimed to determine the extent of the activity and whether individual personal and protected health information, if any, may have been accessed or acquired by an unauthorized party. As such, Richland County engaged a third-party to conduct a programmatic and manual review of the potentially impacted files with the goal of identifying individuals, their contact information and the types of impacted personal and/or protected health information. Following this month’s long review, Richland County thoroughly worked to validate the data and obtain addresses for all individuals who may have been affected by the incident. With guidance from third-party cybersecurity professionals, Richland County ensured that the investigation and data review was comprehensive and thorough to identify those affected by the incident and determine the scope of the impacted information.

After an extensive forensic investigation and manual document review, on August 1, 2024, we discovered that certain impacted files containing personal information may have been accessed and/or acquired by an unauthorized individual between September 28, 2023 and October 26, 2023. Furthermore, Richland County ran all identified names through the National Change of Address database to ensure that the addresses identified were the most recent. Richland County then provided written notification of this incident via U.S. Mail to those whose contact information was on file and whose information was determined to be impacted. We have no evidence that any personal information has been or will be misused for identity theft as a direct result of this incident. However, out of abundance of caution, notified individuals have been provided with best practices to protect their information, and individuals whose Social Security numbers were potentially impacted have been offered complimentary credit monitoring.

Richland County understands the importance of safeguarding individual personal information. Richland County remains fully committed to maintaining the privacy of personal information in our possession, and upon learning of the event, Richland County took immediate action to protect the individual personal and protected health information it maintains and devoted considerable time and effort to determine what information was potentially impacted as a result of this incident. Richland County continually evaluates and modifies its practices to enhance the security and privacy of personal information and are taking measures to augment its existing cybersecurity.

If you have any further questions regarding this incident, please call our dedicated and confidential toll-free response line that we have set up to respond to questions at 833-215-3616.

This response line is staffed with professionals familiar with this incident and knowledgeable on what you can do to protect against misuse of your information. The response line is available Monday through Friday, 9:00 am to 9:00 pm Eastern Time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Candace Pesch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Candace" and the last name "Pesch" clearly distinguishable.

Candace Pesch
Richland County Administrator