

April 11, 2016

PUBLIC NOTICE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH PALM BEACH COUNTY MEDICAL RECORDS BREACH



Contact:

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Palm Beach County—Florida Department of Health in Palm Beach County is issuing a public notice of an unauthorized disclosure and/or use of protected health information pertaining to some clients of its Health Centers. Federal law enforcement officials informed the department they had obtained a list of names, birth dates, social security numbers, Medicaid numbers, phone numbers, and medical record numbers of individuals who were identified as Palm Beach County Health Department clients.

Individual notices have been mailed to all clients whose names were on the list with information on how to review their credit history and report any suspicious activity to law enforcement. However, DOH-Palm Beach is advising persons that have been a client in one of the Health Centers to review their credit history for any fraudulent or suspicious activities they have not authorized. A free report can be obtained at www.annualcreditreport.com.

The Department of Health takes its role of safeguarding client's personal information very seriously, and is keenly aware of how important this information is to everyone and is fully committed to safeguarding all confidential information. The department trains staff on the importance of safeguarding protected health information by requiring annual HIPAA and Privacy and Information Security training to all employees.

Individuals who received a letter or have been a medical client and have questions on this incident can call 1-855-438-2778, 8 AM to 5 PM Monday through Friday.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](https://twitter.com/HealthyFla) and on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HealthyFla). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.

What Can I do to Protect My Information?

If you believe that you have been a victim of identity theft and provide the credit reporting agency with a valid police report the reporting agency cannot charge you to place, lift or remove a security freeze on your credit reports. In all other cases, a credit reporting agency may charge you up to \$5.00 each time you place temporarily lift or permanently remove a security freeze.

You may also want to place a fraud alert on your credit report. You are entitled to receive a free credit report annually from each of the three credit bureaus. Even if you do not find suspicious activity on your initial credit report, the Federal Trade Commission recommends that you check your credit reports and credit card statement periodically. For more information, visit www.annualcreditreport.com or call 1-877-322-8228 or contact these agencies:

- TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289; www.transunion.com; Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P. O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834-6790.
- Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; www.equifax.com; P. O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
- Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); www.experian.com; P. O. Box 9554, Allen, TX 75013

In addition, if you believe that you have been the victim of identity theft, you have the right to file a police report and to obtain a copy of that report. Many creditors will require the information from the police report before excusing you from paying for any fraudulent charges or debts.

You can also file a complaint with the Federal Trade commission at www.ftc.gov or at 1-811- ID-Theft (877-438-4338)

Here are some things that could help you determine that your medical information may have been used by someone else:

- Getting a bill for medical services you didn't receive
- Being contacted by a debt collector about medical debt you don't owe
- Seeing medical collection notices on your credit report that you do not recognize
- Attempting to make a legitimate insurance claim and being told by your health plan that you've reached your limit on benefits
- Being denied insurance because your medical record shows a condition you don't have
- Noticing on a statement from your health plan that the health plan paid claims for care you did not receive

If you believe someone else may have used your medical information, you may wish to consider taking additional steps which are outlined on the Federal Trade commission's website at www.ftc.gov.