Southern Orthopaedic Surgeons Notifies Clients of Data Security Incident

Southern Orthopaedic Surgeons ("Southern") has become aware of an incident that may have exposed some patient data, including names, social security numbers, driver's license numbers, dates of birth, clinical information, and other limited treatment information. Southern takes its patients' privacy very seriously and has taken steps to notify any patients who may have been affected by this incident. Southern sincerely regrets any inconvenience that this incident may cause and remains dedicated to protecting patients' personal information.

***What Happened*:** On October 20, 2020, Southern discovered that one employee's email account had been accessed by an unknown individual. Upon discovery of the incident, Southern promptly engaged independent forensic experts and data review team to determine whether the incident resulted in the exposure of sensitive information. On June 11, 2021, the data review confirmed that protected heath information of Sothern's patients may have been exposed as a result of the unauthorized email compromise. Thereafter, Southern promptly began a thorough internal review to identify potentially impacted individuals whose information may have been exposed during the period of unauthorized access. The internal investigation was necessary to identify the individuals whose information may have been impacted by the incident.

***What Information Was Involved*:** Personal data including patients' name, social security number, driver's license number, date of birth, clinical information, doctor's notes, and other limited treatment information may have been viewed by an unauthorized individual. At this time, southern has no reason to believe that any personal information of Southern's patients has been misused as a result of this incident. Out of an abundance of caution, Southern notified the patients potentially impacted by the incident.

What We Are Doing: In response to this incident, Southern has taken the following steps: implemented policies prohibiting employees from emailing patient information, updating the firewall protections to include 24 hour monitoring and requiring regular password resets.

What You Can Do*:** Upon discovery of this incident, Southern has arranged for certain impacted individuals to enroll in complimentary credit monitoring. ***If you think you were impacted by this incident and believe you are eligible for the credit monitoring, please call the number below. Additionally, Southern recommends that you continue to remain vigilant in monitoring your personal information. Southern refers you to the *Additional Important Information* section of this letter, which provides you with further information to obtain your credit report, place fraud alerts and freeze your credit.

***More Information*:** Southern sincerely regrets any inconvenience that this incident may cause to its clients and remains dedicated to protecting their information. If you are a patient and have any questions or concerns about this incident, please contact 800-397-1203 between 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday.

Additional Important Information

For residents of *Hawaii, Michigan, Missouri, Virginia, Vermont,* and *North Carolina*: It is recommended by state law that you remain vigilant for incidents of fraud and identity theft by reviewing credit card account statements and monitoring your credit report for unauthorized activity.

For residents of *Illinois, Iowa, Maryland, Missouri, North Carolina, Oregon,* and *West Virginia*:
It is required by state laws to inform you that you may obtain a copy of your credit report, free of charge, whether or not you suspect any unauthorized activity on your account. You may obtain a free copy of your credit report from each of the three nationwide credit reporting agencies. To order your free credit report, please visit www.annualcreditreport.com, or call toll-free at 1-877-322-8228. You can also order your annual free credit report by mailing a completed Annual Credit Report Request Form (available at https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0155-free-credit-reports) to: Annual Credit Report Request Service, P.O. Box 105281, Atlanta, GA, 30348-5281.

For residents of *Iowa*:
State law advises you to report any suspected identity theft to law enforcement or to the Attorney General.

For residents of *Oregon*:
State laws advise you to report any suspected identity theft to law enforcement, including the Attorney General, and the Federal Trade Commission.

For residents of Arizona, Colorado, District of Columbia, Maryland, Rhode Island, Illinois, New York, and North Carolina:
You can obtain information from the Offices of the Attorney General and the Federal Trade Commission about fraud alerts, security freezes, and steps you can take toward preventing identity theft.
Maryland Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division 200, St. Paul Place Baltimore, MD 21202 1-888-743-0023 www.oag.state.md.us
Rhode Island Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection 150 South Main Street, Providence RI 02903 1-401-274-4400 www.riag.ri.gov
North Carolina Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division, 9001 Mail Service Center Raleigh, NC 27699-9001 1-877-566-7226 www.ncdoj.com
Federal Trade Commission Consumer Response Center, 600 Pennsylvania Ave, NW Washington, DC 20580 1-877-IDTHEFT (438-4338) www.ftc.gov/idtheft
New York Office of Attorney General Consumer Frauds & Protection, The Capitol Albany, NY 12224 1-800-771-7755 https://ag.ny.gov/consumer-frauds/identity-theft
Colorado Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection 1300 Broadway, 9th Floor, Denver, CO 80203 1-720-508-6000 www.coag.gov
Arizona Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection & Advocacy Section, 2005 North Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004 1-602-542-5025
Illinois Office of the Attorney General Consumer Protection Division 100 W Randolph St., Chicago, IL 60601 1-800-243-0618 www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov
District of Columbia Office of the Attorney General – Office of Consumer Protection: 400 6th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001; 202-727-3400; www.oag.dc.gov

For residents of *Massachusetts*: It is required by state law that you are informed of your right to obtain a police report if you are a victim of identity theft

For residents of all states:

Fraud Alerts: You can place fraud alerts with the three credit bureaus by phone and online with Equifax (https://assets.equifax.com/assets/personal/Fraud_Alert_Request_Form.pdf);TransUnion (https://www.transunion.com/fraud-alerts); or Experian (https://www.experian.com/fraud/center.html). A fraud alert tells creditors to follow certain procedures, including contacting you, before they open any new accounts or change your existing accounts. For that reason, placing a fraud alert can protect you, but also may delay you when you seek to obtain credit. As of September 21, 2018, initial fraud alerts last for one year. Victims of identity theft can also

get an extended fraud alert for seven years. The phone numbers for all three credit bureaus are at the bottom of this page.

Monitoring: You should always remain vigilant and monitor your accounts for suspicious or unusual activity.

Security Freeze: You also have the right to place a security freeze on your credit report. A security freeze is intended to prevent credit, loans, and services from being approved in your name without your consent. To place a security freeze on your credit report, you need to make a request to each consumer reporting agency. You may make that request by certified mail, overnight mail, regular stamped mail, or by following the instructions found at the websites listed below. The following information must be included when requesting a security freeze (note that if you are requesting a credit report for your spouse or a minor under the age of 16, this information must be provided for him/her as well): (1) full name, with middle initial and any suffixes; (2) Social Security number; (3) date of birth; (4) current address and any previous addresses for the past five years; and (5) any applicable incident report or complaint with a law enforcement agency or the Registry of Motor Vehicles. The request must also include a copy of a government-issued identification card and a copy of a recent utility bill or bank or insurance statement. It is essential that each copy be legible, display your name and current mailing address, and the date of issue. As of September 21, 2018, it is free to place, lift, or remove a security freeze. You may also place a security freeze for children under the age of 16. You may obtain a free security freeze by contacting any one or more of the following national consumer reporting agencies:

Equifax Security Freeze	**Experian Security Freeze**	**TransUnion (FVAD)**
P.O. Box 105788	P.O. Box 9554	P.O. Box 2000
Atlanta, GA 30348	Allen, TX 75013	Chester, PA 19022
https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services/credit-freeze/	www.experian.com/freeze	freeze.transunion.com
800-525-6285		800-680-7289

More information can also be obtained by contacting the Federal Trade Commission listed above.