

## Notice of Data Event

### The Dental Specialists Notice of Data Incident

A recent data incident involving The Dental Specialists may affect the security of information related to certain The Dental Specialists patients. Although we are unaware of any identity theft or fraud in relation to this event, we are providing our patients with information about the event, our response, and additional measures they can take to help protect their information, should they feel it appropriate to do so. Please note that the event detailed below was limited to our Microsoft 365 cloud environment and did not involve a compromise of its internal computer network or patient records database.

#### What Happened?

On January 23, 2024, The Dental Specialists became aware of unauthorized activity for a limited number of employee email accounts. In response, we immediately took steps to secure the email accounts. With the assistance of third-party cyber security specialists, we then launched an investigation into the nature and scope of the event. Our investigation learned there was unauthorized access to a limited number of employee email accounts between January 11 and January 23, 2024, during which an unauthorized actor potentially viewed or accessed certain information stored within the email accounts and/or related file shares.

In an abundance of caution, we worked with third-party specialists to conduct a thorough and time-consuming review of the potentially impacted files to determine whether they may contain personal information and to whom it related. This review was recently completed on June 10, 2024, and we have mailed notice to impacted patients for whom address information was able to be identified.

**What Information Was Involved?** The investigation determined that the types of information that may have been impacted vary by individual and include: name, demographic information, medical information, health insurance information, and dates of birth. Additionally, the following were potentially impacted for a limited number of individuals: Social Security number, driver's license number, and financial account information.

**What We Are Doing.** Along with providing the highest quality patient care, the confidentiality, privacy, and security of information within its system are among The Dental Specialists' highest priorities. When The Dental Specialists learned of unusual activity in its system, it promptly took steps to secure the system and investigate the full scope of the event. While we have safeguards in place to protect data in our care, such as multifactor identification prompts to access data within our environment, we are working to review and further enhance these protections as part of our ongoing commitment to the privacy of personal information and our data security. The Dental Specialists is notifying the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Additionally, The Dental Specialists has contacted individuals directly who are or may be affected by this incident.

**What You Can Do.** The Dental Specialists is providing information on steps individuals may take to better protect their personal information from misuse. Specifically, The Dental Specialists encourages its patients to remain vigilant against incidents of identity theft and fraud by reviewing their account statements and explanations of benefits, and monitoring their free credit reports for suspicious activity and to detect errors. Under U.S. law, a consumer is entitled to one free credit report annually from each of the three major credit reporting bureaus, Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion. To order a free credit report, visit [www.annualcreditreport.com](http://www.annualcreditreport.com) or call, toll-free, 1-877-322-8228. Consumers may also directly contact the three major credit reporting bureaus listed below to request a free copy of their credit report. Consumers have the right to place an initial or extended "fraud alert" on a credit file at no cost. An initial fraud alert is a 1-year alert that is placed on a consumer's credit file that direct a business to take steps to verify the consumer's identity before extending new credit. Victim of identity theft are entitled to an extended, 7-year fraud alert. Consumers also have the right to place a "credit freeze" on a credit report, which will prohibit a credit bureau from releasing information in the credit report without the consumer's express authorization. Consumers should be aware that using a credit freeze to take control over who gets access to the personal and financial information in their credit report may delay, interfere with, or prohibit the timely approval of any subsequent request or application they make regarding a new loan, credit, mortgage, or any other account involving the extension of credit. Pursuant to federal law, consumers cannot be charged to place or lift a credit freeze on their credit report. Should consumers wish to place a credit freeze or fraud alert, they may contact the three major credit reporting bureaus: **Equifax**—[www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com) and 1-888-298-0045; **Experian**—[www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com) and 1-888-397-3742; **TransUnion**—

[www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com) and 1-800-916-8800. Consumers may further educate themselves regarding identity theft, fraud alerts, credit freezes, and the steps they can take to protect their personal information by contacting the consumer reporting bureaus, the Federal Trade Commission, or their state Attorney General. The Federal Trade Commission may be reached at: 600 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Washington, DC 20580; [www.identitytheft.gov](http://www.identitytheft.gov); 1-877-ID-THEFT (1-877-438-4338); and TTY: 1-866-653-4261.

**For More Information.** Individuals with questions regarding this event may call 888-449-6729, from 8:00 am – 6:00 pm Central Time, excluding major holidays.