

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
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CONSUMER ALERT

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Attorney General Racine Alerts District Consumers to Protect Their Identities in Wake of Premera Blue Cross Security Breach

Washington State-Based Insurance Company's Breach May Have Affected District Residents

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In the wake of another breach of a major health insurance provider's records, Attorney General Karl A. Racine today alerted District residents to be vigilant about their personal information.

Premera Blue Cross recently reported that a security breach it discovered in January meant that the personal information (including names, Social Security numbers, banking information and medical records) of as many as 11 million of its customers and business associates might have been exposed.

The news comes shortly after [a similar reported attack on Anthem](#), the nation's second-largest health insurer, which affected District residents.

"This latest attack underscores the importance of all District residents taking measures to monitor and safeguard their identities and credit," Attorney General Racine said. **"There are multiple resources available to you if you have reason to believe you've been exposed in this particular breach or any other."**

Although Premera's customers are mostly located in Washington state and Alaska, some current and former Premera customers and business associates who now live in the District might have been affected. The company reports that the initial security breach occurred on May 5, 2014 and that records dating back to 2002 have been accessed. In addition, the breach affects Premera Blue Cross affiliates Premera Alaska Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alaska, Vivacity, and Connexion Insurance Solutions, Inc.

Premera has established a website (<http://www.premeraupdate.com/>) with more information about the attack and resources available to those whose information may have been exposed. The company has said it

will provide affected individuals with two years of free credit-monitoring services and identity-theft protection through the credit agency Experian.

Premera has also established a dedicated call center for its members and other affected individuals. If you believe you may have been affected by this security breach and have not received a letter from Premera informing you about it by April 20, 2015, the company encourages you to call **1-800-768-5817**, Monday through Friday, between 5:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Pacific Time (8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Eastern).

For those who believe their personal information might have been exposed in the cyberattack on Premera or in any other security breach, there are several additional resources available online:

- **Freeze your credit:** A credit freeze or security freeze allows consumers to limit access to their credit report, making it more difficult for would-be for identity thieves to use your name to open new accounts. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) offers a helpful Frequently Asked Questions page about whether and how to freeze your credit at <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0497-credit-freeze-faqs>.
- **Place a fraud alert on your banking and credit accounts:** For those who would rather stop short of a credit freeze, you can place a 90-day fraud alert on your accounts – making it more difficult for would-be criminals to open new accounts in your name. FTC information on fraud alerts is available at <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0275-place-fraud-alert>.
- **Review your credit report periodically:** Whether or not you believe your personal information may have been exposed in an incident such as the Anthem hack, it is a good idea for *all* consumers to review their credit reports on a regular basis. Federal law allows you to get a free copy of your report once a year from each of the three nationwide credit bureaus. Go to <https://www.annualcreditreport.com> or call 1-877-322-8228.
- **If you find an account on your credit report you don't remember opening:** If you don't recognize an account that appears on your report, it could be an incident of identity theft. For more information on identity theft, please visit the FTC's identity-theft-resource page at <http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/feature-0014-identity-theft>

If you are a District resident who has further questions about any consumer-protection issue:

- District residents who have further questions or concerns about identity theft, online security or other consumer-protection issues can visit OAG's resource page for consumers (<http://oag.dc.gov/service/consumer-protection-asst>); call OAG's Consumer Protection Hotline at **202-442-9828**; or send an e-mail to consumer.protection@dc.gov.

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