FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Veterans Health Administration notification of compromised Veteran personal information

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Veterans Health Administration (VHA) announced today actions taken to protect Veterans' personal information following a recent privacy breach.

VHA was notified June 4 by former contractor Benefits Recovery Specialists, Inc. (BRSI) of a data incident involving VHA files from the Walla Walla VA Medical Center (VAWW).

BRSI discovered malware or malicious software, April 30, impacting certain company systems; subsequently, notifying federal law enforcement. Moreover, BRSI hired cybersecurity specialists and immediately began an internal investigation taking the affected systems offline to remove the malware and ensure the security of its information systems. A forensic investigation concluded on or about May 29 an unauthorized actor deployed Maze ransomware within BRSI's systems.

Additionally, VHA files containing personal information provided to BRSI as part of prior VA contracts may have been among those accessed and/or acquired between April 20 to April 30 by this unauthorized actor. BRSI performed a comprehensive review of VHA files in its possession and determined the exact personal information impacted by this event to be full name, date of birth, full or partial social security number and facility.

To date, there is no indication any information accessed or taken by the unauthorized actor has been misused. VAWW is notifying and alerting the 687 affected Veterans whose information was involved in BRSI’s ransomware attack of the potential risk to their personal information via written correspondence.
Veterans Affairs (VHA) has mailed notification letters to all affected Veterans or the next-of-kin of affected deceased Veterans. VHA is also offering complimentary access to credit monitoring services for Veterans who may have had their full social security number compromised in the BRISI data incident. Information and enrollment instructions for the services provided by ID Experts were included in the credit monitoring letters mailed to impacted Veterans.

Veterans receiving care from VAWW who have questions about their personal data should follow the instructions in the letter. Contact the privacy officer at the Walla Walla VA at 509.525.5200, extension 26428 (between the hours of 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. PT Monday-Thursday and 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. PT on Friday) with questions or concerns regarding whether a Veteran’s personal information may have been involved.

For more information visit VAWW’s website at www.wallawalla.va.gov.

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