

## Breached! Now What?

Over the last five years, data breaches have become a constant news story. Whether they're happening in retail stores, restaurants, insurance companies, universities, or the federal government, the outcome is likely the same. The chances your personal information has been exposed are high. You may not know it or feel the effects of it today, but at some point in time, you will. So, what should you be doing?

### 1. Monitor your credit report.

You can get a free credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus. I recommend spreading them out over the course of the year. In other words, pull one from Equifax in January, then TransUnion in May, and Experian in September. When January comes around again repeat the cycle. This will allow you to review any new credit along with any suspicious inquiries to extend credit. You won't receive your FICO® score with these inquiries. There's a fee to receive the actual score, however, for monitoring your credit, you don't need it. Visit [annualcreditreport.com](http://annualcreditreport.com) today to get a free credit report.

Consider adding a fraud alert or credit freeze to your credit report. You can do this by contacting one of the three credit bureaus; TransUnion, Equifax, or Experian. The one you call is obligated to notify the other two. With a fraud alert, businesses will need to verify your identity before issuing credit. This may mean you will receive a call asking if you are trying to gain credit. Fraud alerts only stay on your report for 90 days. If you want the alert to last longer, you will need to call in every three months. People who have been victims of identity theft are eligible for an extended fraud alert which will remain on their credit report for seven years.

With a credit freeze, no one (including you), can access your credit report. The bureau will issue a PIN which is to be used to temporarily lift the freeze, replace it, or permanently remove it. Fees may apply to freezing and unfreezing a credit report; which may be assessed by each credit bureau.

### 2. Add alerts to your accounts.

Most financial institutions and credit card companies offer alert services. This allows you to create measures, that if reached, you will be notified. A couple of examples are: any purchase over \$50.00, or if the account balance falls below \$100. By creating these notes, you will be notified if charges are being made with your credit or debit cards. This offers real-time notice, so if your card data has been compromised you can notify the Credit Union to close the card.

### 3. Use Mobimoney®.

Mobimoney® is an app for your phone, which allows you to manage your Bayer Heritage FCU debit and credit cards. You are in control of when and how your cards are used.

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You can block online transactions or turn your card on and off as you wish to use it; which is especially handy if you have a habit of losing things. Mobimoney® can be downloaded from the Apple Store or Google Play Store.

In this crazy world of scams, schemes, and breaches Bayer Heritage FCU it's dedicated Fraud Squad is here to help you through these troubling times. The latest scams along with information to help protect your identity can be found by clicking the Fraud Squad logo on our homepage at [www.bayerhfcu.com](http://www.bayerhfcu.com). If you prefer to speak to someone, please give us a call at 1-800-272-6003 ext. 1493. We are in the office from 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.