# Macon-Bibb County, GA
## MEMORANDUM

700 Poplar Street |P.O.Box247, Macon, Georgia 31202-0247 | (478) 751-7170

TO: Macon-Bibb County Employees

FROM: Mayor's Office

DATE: April 29, 2014

SUBJECT: Personal Identification Information Breach Update

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As part of its ongoing internal and public notifications, Macon-Bibb County mailed 12,378 letters on Monday, April 28, 2014, to applicants whose personal information was potentially exposed earlier this month. Along with that letter, we sent safety tips for safeguarding their identity, and those tips are included with this memo.

Though the law requires notification only to people with specific information exposed, we notified ***every*** person with any type of information included in the exposed files. Earlier this month, we also took the extra steps of notifying every employee of Macon-Bibb County (whether their information was included or not), updating the Commission, and sending updates to the media and public.

To review safety tips about safeguarding your identity, visit www.ftc.gov/idtheft. If you need to access a computer, contact Human Resources and one will be made available to you. Information from the Better Business Bureau about daily steps you can take to protect your identity are also included with this memo.

In addition, we recommend that you obtain a free copy of your credit report by visiting www.annualcreditreport.com. You will also have the ability to place a fraud alert on your credit report. If you see any suspicious activity, contact local law enforcement and, if necessary, request a credit freeze.

Should you have questions about this situation, the measures that were taken to ensure the information was removed, and/or need to access a computer, contact Desmond Schneider in Human Resources at 478-751-2720 or dschneider@maconbibb.us.

Should additional steps be taken – or opportunities arise for helping people safeguard their identities – we will provide you with that information.

**About the Security Breach**

On Tuesday, April 1, Macon-Bibb County was notified of a security breach on its website and network. This breach has resulted in the potential exposure of people's personal information, including social security numbers, driver's licenses, and birth certificates. On early reviews of the information that was exposed, it appears that information was linked to the online application module used by the former City of Macon, meaning it could impact people that applied for jobs with the City going back four years.

The data has been removed from the web and database server that the hosted the files, meaning it is no longer accessible to external sources and the web server has been locked down internally. The files are now offline and encrypted. The information has also been removed from all web caches that we could locate, and has not been found in any other location. The IT Department continues to search other search engines and internet caches for the information, and an external audit of network security is going to be conducted.

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## Secure Your ID Day

### Everyday Habits to Safeguard Your Identity

**Shred statements and applications you get in the mail that you don't want to keep**, including credit card applications, insurance forms, financial statements, health forms, billing statements for utilities, phone service, etc.

**Cut up expired credit and debit cards,** cutting through the numbers.

**Protect your Social Security number, all account numbers and your passwords.** Don't carry these numbers in your wallet. Give out your Social Security number only if absolutely necessary, and offer to provide another type of personal identifier, if possible.

**Secure your personal documents at home,** especially if you have roommates, employ outside help, or are having work done in your house.

**Minimize the personal information you print on checks.** You don't need to include your Social Security number, phone number or driver's license number.

**Monitor your bank and credit card transactions for unauthorized transactions.** Crooks with your account number generally start with small transactions to see if you'll notice.

**Pay attention to your billing cycles.** If bills do not arrive on time, follow up with your creditors.

**Don't create obvious passwords,** such as your birth date, child's name or birth date, mother's maiden name or the last four digits of your Social Security number.

**If you conduct business online, use your own computer.** A public computer is less secure.

**Never respond to emails requesting to "verify" your personal information and identifiers.** Your bank, credit card company, online payment system, the IRS – none of these types of organizations will call or e-mail asking for your confidential information. They already have it.

**Never use e-mail to communicate sensitive personal information** such as your user name, password, Social Security number or credit card number.

**Don't use your PDA or cell phone to store credit card numbers or other financial information.**

**Don't store passwords, tax returns or other financial information on your computer hard drive.**

**Back up your computer data and store it away from your computer.**

**Keep your computer system and browser software up to date,** and set to the highest security level you can tolerate.

**Check your credit report at least once/year.** There is only one source authorized to give you ONE FREE annual credit file disclosure/year from each of the three consumer credit reporting companies: Call 877-322-8228 or visit www.AnnualCreditReport.com.

**If your ID or credit cards are lost or stolen**, immediately notify your credit providers by phone and then notify each of the three credit bureaus to request a "Fraud Alert" be placed on your file. Placing this alert tells creditors to follow certain procedures before they open new accounts in your name or make changes to your existing accounts. Posting a Fraud Alert will also make it difficult for you to open instant credit, so be sure to read all information before engaging a Fraud Alert. It also entitles you to free copies of your credit report. When reviewing your credit report, look for inquiries from companies you have not contacted, accounts you did not open, and debts on your accounts that you can't explain. Close any accounts that have been tampered with or established fraudulently.

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