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STATE OF ALABAMA
**DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
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JOHN M. HOUSTON
COMMISSIONER

May 16, 2008

This letter is to make you aware that certain personal information about you has been compromised at Greil Hospital, a public psychiatric facility in Montgomery, Alabama, operated by the Alabama Department of Mental Health. We have determined that a number of indexes, including one containing your name, social security number, and date of birth, are missing at the facility and might have been removed without authorization. I regret that this has happened and want to assure you that we are doing everything we can to identify who is responsible and to recover the missing information.

The Department's Bureau of Special Investigations is coordinating a criminal investigation that will include other law enforcement agencies as necessary. Additional administrative measures have also been taken at the hospital to enhance physical security of all patient information. Additionally, policies and procedures are being scrutinized to determine necessary modifications to help minimize the possibility of any recurrence. We have also established a help line locally at 353-7538 or toll-free at 1-866-577-7299 to provide additional information and assistance, and to allow you to report any information that you believe might be helpful in our investigation. This line will be open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. beginning on Monday, May 19, 2008. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call the 800 number by either Alabama Relay (711) or video relay and leave a call back number. We will contact you back directly by the means of your choice.

Our primary focus at this point is to alert you to this situation and to assist you in taking measures to lessen your risk for identity theft. We have also included a brochure about identity theft to give you more detailed information. Should you suspect that you have been a target for identity theft, please consider the following actions.

- Contact your financial institution to determine whether there have been any attempts by unauthorized persons to gain access to your account.
- Monitor your financial account statements and immediately report any suspicious or unusual activity to your financial institution.
- Place an initial fraud alert on credit reports. You only need to contact one of the three companies to place an alert. The company you call is required to contact the other two, which will also place an alert on their versions of your report. The contact number for the three major credit bureaus is listed below.
 - **Equifax:** 1-800-525-6285; www.equifax.com; P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
 - **Experian:** 1-888-397-3742; www.experian.com; P.O. Box 9532; Allen, TX 75013

- **TransUnion:** 1-800-680-7289; www.transunion.com; Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834-6760
- Review resources provided on the Federal Trade Commission identity theft website, www.ftc.gov/idtheft. This website maintains a variety of publications providing comprehensive information on breaches and identity theft.
- Be aware that the public announcement of this breach at Greil Hospital could itself cause criminals to contact you under the guise of offering assistance. Unscrupulous individuals could further try to deceive you and try to convince you to disclose other sensitive information. Advice on avoiding such frauds is available on the web at www.ftc.gov/bcp/edu/pubs/consumer/alerts/alt166.htm.
- Review Attorney General Troy King's "Guide to Protecting Your Good Name from Identify Thieves and Restoring Your Good Name If You Are the Victim of Identity Theft."

Again, let me assure you that we will do everything we can to resolve this matter and to assist those who have been affected by it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John M. Houston". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

John M. Houston
Commissioner