



# Attorney General Doug Peterson

# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Nebraska Joins Combined \$16 Million Multistate Settlements over 2012 and 2015 Experian Data Breaches; Experian and T-Mobile Agree to Improve Data Protection Practices**

Lincoln, Nebraska – Attorney General Doug Peterson announced today that Nebraska, along with a coalition of other attorneys general, has obtained two multistate settlements with Experian concerning data breaches it experienced in 2012 and 2015 that compromised the personal information of millions of consumers nationwide. The coalition has also obtained a separate settlement with T-Mobile in connection with the 2015 Experian breach, which impacted more than 15 million individuals who submitted credit applications with T-Mobile. Under the settlements, the companies have agreed to improve their data security practices and to pay the states a combined amount of more than \$16 million. Nebraska will receive a total of \$139,279 from the settlements.

In September 2015, Experian, one of the big-three credit reporting bureaus, reported it had experienced a data breach in which an unauthorized actor gained access to part of Experian's network storing personal information on behalf of its client, T-Mobile. The breach involved information associated with consumers who had applied for T-Mobile postpaid services and device financing between September 2013 and September 2015, including names, addresses, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, identification numbers (such as driver's license and passport numbers), and related information used in T-Mobile's own credit assessments. 4,790 Nebraska residents were impacted by the 2015 breach. Neither Experian's consumer credit database, nor T-Mobile's own systems, were compromised in the breach.

A 40-state multistate group has obtained separate settlements from Experian and T-Mobile in connection with the 2015 data breach. Under a \$12.67 million settlement, Experian has agreed to strengthen its due diligence and data security practices going forward. Those include:

- Prohibition against misrepresentations to its clients regarding the extent to which Experian protects the privacy and security of personal information;

- Implementation of a comprehensive Information Security Program incorporating zero-trust principles, regular executive-level reporting, and enhanced employee training;
- Due diligence provisions requiring the company to properly vet acquisitions and evaluate data security concerns prior to integration;
- Data minimization and disposal requirements, including specific efforts aimed at reducing use of Social Security numbers as identifiers; and
- Specific security requirements, including with respect to encryption, segmentation, patch management, intrusion detection, firewalls, access controls, logging and monitoring, penetration testing, and risk assessments.

The settlement also requires Experian to offer five years of free credit monitoring services to affected consumers, as well as two free copies of their credit reports annually during that timeframe. This is in addition to other credit monitoring services which may have already been offered to affected consumers.

Affected consumers can enroll in the 5-year extended credit monitoring services and find more information on eligibility [here](#). The enrollment window will remain open for six months.

In a separate \$2.43 million settlement, T-Mobile has agreed to detailed vendor management provisions designed to strengthen its vendor oversight going forward. Those include:

- Implementation of a Vendor Risk Management Program;
- Maintenance of a T-Mobile vendor contract inventory, including vendor criticality ratings based on the nature and type of information that the vendor receives or maintains;
- Imposition of contractual data security requirements on T-Mobile's vendors and sub-vendors, including related to segmentation, passwords, encryption keys, and patching;
- Establishment of vendor assessment and monitoring mechanisms; and
- Appropriate action in response to vendor non-compliance, up to contract termination.

The settlement with T-Mobile does not concern the unrelated, massive data breach announced by T-Mobile in August 2021, which is still under investigation by a multistate coalition of attorneys general co-led by Connecticut.

Concurrently with the 2015 data breach settlements, Experian has agreed to pay an additional \$1 million to resolve a separate multistate investigation into another Experian-owned company—Experian Data Corp. (“EDC”)— in connection with EDC's failure to prevent or provide notice of a 2012 data breach that occurred when an identity thief posing as a private investigator was given access to sensitive personal information stored in EDC's commercial databases. Under that resolution, entered into by a separate group of 40 states, EDC has agreed to strengthen its vetting and oversight of third parties that it provides personal information, investigate and report data security incidents to the attorneys

general, and maintain a “Red Flags” program to detect and respond to potential identity theft.

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