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PRESS RELEASE



FROM THE LOUISIANA OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

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Back-Up Media Lost by State Contractor

BATON ROUGE -- Iron Mountain Incorporated has notified the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance (LOSFA) that it lost back-up media belonging to LOSFA on September 19, 2007. Iron Mountain Incorporated, a private, international data storage company that the State of Louisiana contracts with to store its data, began efforts to locate the media the same day after discovering the loss. LOSFA immediately reported the incident to appropriate state authorities and has begun its public notifications. To date, the media has not been found, and the investigations by state and local law enforcement are ongoing.

The lost media includes some personal information on individuals participating in, or considered for participation in, programs administered by LOSFA. The data is compressed and requires special software, specific computer equipment and sophisticated computer skills to access it.

“We have no reason to believe that the information has been accessed or that it has been misused in any way,” said Melanie Amrhein, Executive Director of the Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance. “However, we believe that our clients are entitled to be informed of the risks associated with the loss of this media and of the steps that they can take to protect themselves.”

“The Louisiana Office of Student Financial Assistance is working diligently to notify all potentially affected individuals. LOSFA has set up a call center and a

web site to advise them of ways to protect their privacy,” said Amrhein. She added that LOSFA has contracted with a nationally recognized organization specializing in the field of identity theft to assist it in providing the best information available to LOSFA’s clients.

LOSFA urges anyone who falls into the following categories to log on to <http://www.osfa.la.gov/Notice.htm> or to call (1-800-259-5626, ext. 1012) to learn what steps can be taken to minimize the potential risk of identity theft:

- Anyone who has a Louisiana College Savings account (START Saving Program).
- Any resident of the state of Louisiana who has completed a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Anyone who has completed a FAFSA and included a Louisiana postsecondary institution as an institution to which FAFSA data should be sent.
- Anyone who has applied for or received a Tuition Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) Scholarship.
- Anyone who has applied for or who has received student financial aid in the State of Louisiana.

“LOSFA is committed to ensuring data security for our clients, and is taking all steps necessary to help those who are affected. We will make ongoing efforts to safeguard our clients’ personal privacy.” Amrhein continued. “Details regarding the lost data must remain confidential to ensure that the opportunity to use the data is minimized. Once deemed appropriate, further information will be released.”

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