

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE—

January 26, 2024 – As a follow-up to its December 22, 2023 notice, Clay County is notifying additional individuals who currently receive or have received social services from Clay County and certain other Minnesota county social service entities, and/or their household members, that their protected health information and/or personally identifiable information was acquired without authorization during a recent cyber attack.

On October 27, 2023, Clay County determined that its network had been impacted by a ransomware attack that affected the electronic document management system (“CaseWorks”), which is hosted by Clay County and used by other Minnesota County social services entities. Clay County immediately initiated its incident response process and began working with its local information technology partner to investigate, to securely restore operations, and determine the effects of the incident. Clay County also worked with a nationally recognized digital forensics firm to assist with the investigation and notified federal law enforcement and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Through the investigation, Clay County determined that there was unauthorized access to its network between October 23, 2023 and October 26, 2023, and that the cyber criminals responsible for this attack took some data belonging to certain county social service entities from Clay County’s network. As soon as Clay County learned this, it started notifying the impacted counties and began an extensive review to determine what information may have been involved and who may have been affected, so that it could provide notice. Recently, Clay County completed that review, and is providing notice to the identified impacted individuals.

Clay County is providing notice on behalf of the following county social service entities: Clay County Social Services, Pennington County Human Services, Otter Tail County Human Services, Becker County Human Services, Isanti County Health and Human Services Division, Marshall County Social Services, Roseau County Social Services, Kittson County Social Services, Mahnomon County Social Services, Red Lake County Social Services, and Polk County Social Services. Based upon its investigation the affected data varied, but included an individual’s name, together with some or all of the following kinds of information: Social Security number, address, date of birth, information regarding services provided to the individual by the social services entity, such as locations of service, dates of service, client identification number or unique identifiers related to services provided to individuals, insurance identification number, and/or insurance or billing information. For some individuals, the information may also have included financial account information, driver’s license number, state identification number, government identification number, immigration or tribal identification number, individual taxpayer identification number, physician or medical facility information, medical record number and/or information related to a medical diagnosis, condition and/or treatment.

As a precautionary measure, Clay County urged potentially impacted individuals to take appropriate steps to protect their personal information by remaining vigilant to the possibility of fraud and identity theft by reviewing and monitoring any account statements, free credit reports and health insurance Explanation of Benefits (EOB) forms for unauthorized or suspicious activity. If an individual’s Social Security number or driver’s license was involved, Clay County is offering credit monitoring services at no cost to the affected individual. Clay County indicated that any unauthorized or suspicious activity should be reported immediately to the appropriate authorities, including local law enforcement. In addition, consistent with its compliance obligations and responsibilities, Clay County is providing notice of this incident to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and all appropriate state regulators.