

**Subject line:** Important Security Information for Yahoo Users

## **NOTICE OF DATA BREACH**

Dear [personalized salutation],

We are writing to inform you about a data security issue that may involve your Yahoo account information. We have taken steps to secure your account and are working closely with law enforcement.

### **What Happened?**

Law enforcement provided Yahoo in November 2016 with data files that a third party claimed was Yahoo user data. We analyzed this data with the assistance of outside forensic experts and found that it appears to be Yahoo user data. Based on further analysis of this data by the forensic experts, we believe an unauthorized third party, in August 2013, stole data associated with a broader set of user accounts, including yours. We have not been able to identify the intrusion associated with this theft. We believe this incident is likely distinct from the incident we disclosed on September 22, 2016.

### **What Information Was Involved?**

The stolen user account information may have included names, email addresses, telephone numbers, dates of birth, hashed passwords (using MD5) and, in some cases, encrypted or unencrypted security questions and answers. Not all of these data elements may have been present for your account. The investigation indicates that the stolen information did not include passwords in clear text, payment card data, or bank account information. Payment card data and bank account information are not stored in the system we believe was affected.

### **What We Are Doing**

We are taking action to protect our users:

- We are requiring potentially affected users to change their passwords.
- We invalidated unencrypted security questions and answers so that they cannot be used to access an account.
- We continuously enhance our safeguards and systems that detect and prevent unauthorized access to user accounts.

### **What You Can Do**

We encourage you to follow these security recommendations:

- Change your passwords and security questions and answers for any other accounts on which you used the same or similar information used for your Yahoo account.
- Review all of your accounts for suspicious activity.
- Be cautious of any unsolicited communications that ask for your personal information or refer you to a web page asking for personal information.
- Avoid clicking on links or downloading attachments from suspicious emails.

Additionally, please consider using Yahoo Account Key, a simple authentication tool that eliminates the need to use a password on Yahoo altogether.

## **For More Information**

For more information about this issue and our security resources, please visit the Yahoo Account Security Issues FAQs page available at <https://yahoo.com/security-update>.

Protecting your information is important to us and we work continuously to strengthen our defenses.

Sincerely,

Bob Lord  
Chief Information Security Officer  
Yahoo

## **Subject line:** Important Security Information for Yahoo Users

Dear [personalized salutation],

We are writing to inform you about a data security issue that involves your Yahoo account. We have taken steps to secure your account and are working closely with law enforcement.

Our outside forensic experts have been investigating the creation of forged cookies that could allow an intruder to access users' accounts without a password. Based on the ongoing investigation, we believe a forged cookie may have been used in 2015 or 2016 to access your account. We have connected some of the cookie forging activity to the same state-sponsored actor believed to be responsible for the data theft we disclosed on September 22, 2016. Those users targeted by the state-sponsored actor were sent an additional notification like the one found here: <https://help.yahoo.com/kb/SLN26995.html>.

We invalidated the forged cookies and hardened our systems to secure them against similar attacks. We continuously enhance our safeguards and systems that detect and prevent unauthorized access to user accounts.

We encourage you to follow these security recommendations:

- Review all of your accounts for suspicious activity.
- Be cautious of any unsolicited communications that ask for your personal information or refer you to a web page asking for personal information.
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Additionally, please consider using Yahoo Account Key, a simple authentication tool that eliminates the need to use a password on Yahoo altogether.

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Our outside forensic experts have been investigating the creation of forged cookies that could allow an intruder to access users' accounts without a password. Based on the ongoing investigation, we have found that a forged cookie was created for your account and taken from Yahoo's systems in 2015 or 2016, but we do not believe at this time that the cookie was used to access your account. We have connected some of the cookie forging activity to the same state-sponsored actor believed to be responsible for the data theft we disclosed on September 22, 2016.

We invalidated the forged cookies and hardened our systems to secure them against similar attacks. We continuously enhance our safeguards and systems that detect and prevent unauthorized access to user accounts.

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