

Jacksonville Beach and other US municipalities report data breaches following cyberattacks

By Jonathan Greig

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Thousands of people have had their information accessed by hackers following attacks on multiple state and local governments in recent months, according to new regulatory filings.

The city government of Jacksonville Beach was just the latest to report such an incident, [disclosing](#) Wednesday evening that 48,949 people had personal information accessed during a January cyberattack. In letters to victims, the city said names and Social Security numbers were obtained by the hackers.

“On or about January 29, 2024, [City of Jacksonville Beach] began experiencing information system issues as a result of a cybersecurity event,” the city said, noting that the investigation finished in late February.

“This investigation determined that certain files in COJB systems were subject to unauthorized access and that information may have been taken from the network between January 22, 2024 through January 29, 2024. As a result, COJB began a thorough review of the data stored within these files to determine the type of information was contained within them and to whom the information relates.”

In February, the attack was [claimed](#) by the LockBit ransomware gang. In a [separate statement](#) on the city website on Wednesday, officials acknowledged the posting and confirmed that they are still working with federal law enforcement agencies on the investigation.

The attack [caused days of issues](#) for the city government, knocking out its email system and forcing officials to take in-person payments for [energy services](#) and more. Emergency services and waste services were not affected, the city said.

“While we have encountered some challenges with our accounting functions, I want to reassure our employees and vendors that we can process pension payroll and employee payroll. We are also making progress in restoring our ability to pay vendors, albeit in a limited fashion,” the city council said last month.

A national issue

The Jacksonville Beach disclosure follows another Florida city — Pensacola — announcing [a cyberattack](#) earlier in the week that caused issues for the local government. It was the 21st U.S. municipality to announce a crippling cyberattack this year, according to cybersecurity experts.

Dallas, which was hit by a ransomware attack last year, updated this week the number of people who had data stolen during the incident to 26,499.

“The change in the number of Texans Impacted is based upon the completion of all forensics accounting activities of the breach and no further updates or changes are expected,” a spokesperson for the government of Dallas told Recorded Future News.

The government of Colorado has also [provided an update](#) on its own ransomware incident that occurred last month affecting the state’s Office of the Colorado State Public Defender. The incident began on February 9 when parts of their system were “locked with malware.”

They shut down systems in an effort to contain the attack and began notifying the public on February 11.

The hackers — who have yet to identify themselves publicly — gained access to names, Social Security numbers, driver’s license numbers, identification card numbers, other government identification numbers, medical information and health insurance identification numbers.

All public defenders were locked out of the state systems for days following the attack, blocking them from looking through case files.

In the statement provided by the office on Friday, officials said “certain administrative functions” have been recovered but were vague when it came to concerns that the attack may affect the representation provided to those facing charges.

“If cases are affected, we will work to reschedule clients’ hearings and trials to ensure they are provided fulsome and effective representation,” they said, noting that trial postponements will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

The office would not say if the outage would cause mistrials, only saying their focus “remains protecting the integrity of justice and will address matters on a case-by-case basis.”

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