

Anson Correctional Institution Opens to House Female Offenders

The former Lanesboro Prison has a new mission, renamed Anson Correctional Institution

The North Carolina Division of Adult Correction and Juvenile Justice today announced the impending arrival of female offenders to the former Lanesboro Correctional Institution, which has been renamed the Anson Correctional Institution.

"This is a new day for the prison formerly known as the Lanesboro Correctional Institution," said Director of Prisons Kenneth Lassiter. "It has a new warden, a new and very different offender population and a new mission."

Most of the female offenders to be housed at the newly renamed prison will be in medium custody. The prison's layout gives management flexibility to house other custody levels in the future and provides for potential growth of the state's female offender population.

The male offenders who had been housed at the facility have been moved to other adult male institutions, including Southern Correctional Institution in Troy (Montgomery County) and Eastern Correctional Institution in Maury (Greene County). Those male offenders were classified as medium or closed custody, which is the highest level of supervision within state prisons, and they are now in smaller facilities or smaller housing units to provide increased security.

The female offenders who will soon be moved into the new Anson facility will mostly come from the North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women, which consistently operates above its capacity causing safety issues and stresses on the facility's infrastructure. Other female offenders going to Anson will come from Neuse Correctional Institution (Wayne County), which will be converted to a male facility.

The still-existing Lanesboro minimum custody unit will continue to house minimum custody male offenders at the former Brown Creek facility, which is adjacent to the newly renamed Anson CI was chosen as the name of the prison because it is in Anson County.

For more than a year, the Department of Public Safety has conducted a comprehensive review of security measures in state corrections facilities and taken steps to increase the safety of prison employees and offenders statewide.

\$600 Million Equifax Settlement Following 2017 Data Breach

Information about how to check your eligibility for a \$125 settlement offer & more

North Carolina Attorney General Josh Stein announced that he has reached a settlement with Equifax as a result of an investigation into a massive 2017 data breach. The investigation found that Equifax failed to maintain a reasonable security system - allowing hackers to penetrate its systems and expose the data of 56 percent of American adults. This was the largest-ever breach of consumer data. The settlement includes a Consumer Restitution Fund of up to \$425 million, \$175 million payment to the coalition of states that entered into the settlement, and injunctive relief. North Carolina's share is more than \$4.5 million. This is the largest data breach settlement in history.

To find out if you have been affected by the breach are eligible for a settlement, visit this site: eligibility.equifaxbreachsettlement.com. If your information was impacted by the breach, the site will direct you to the settlement application which can be done online.

You can file a claim for:

Free Credit Monitoring and Identity Theft Protection Services - Up to 10 years of free credit monitoring OR \$125 if you decide not to enroll because you already have credit monitoring. The free credit monitoring includes:

- At least four years of free monitoring of your credit report at all three credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion) and \$1,000,000 of identity theft insurance.
- Up to six more years of free monitoring of your Equifax credit report.
- If you were a minor in May 2017, you are eligible for a total of 18 years of free credit monitoring.

Cash Payments (capped at \$20,000 per person)

- For expenses you paid as a result of the breach, like:
 - Losses from unauthorized charges to your accounts
 - The cost of freezing or unfreezing your credit report
 - The cost of credit monitoring
 - Fees you paid to professionals like an accountant or attorney
 - Other expenses like notary fees, document shipping fees and postage, mileage, and phone charges
- For the time you spent dealing with the breach. You can be compensated \$25 per hour up to 20 hours.

- If you submit a claim for 10 hours or less, you must describe the actions you took and the time you spent doing those things.
- If you claim more than 10 hours, you must describe the actions you took AND provide documents that show identity theft, fraud, or other misuse of your information.

- For the cost of Equifax credit monitoring and related services you had between September 7, 2016, and September 7, 2017, capped at 25 percent of the total amount you paid.

Even if you do not file a claim, you can get 1) Free Help Recovering from Identity Theft - For at least seven years, you can get free identity restoration services. If you discover misuse of your personal information, call the settlement administrator at 1-833-759-2982. You will be given instructions for how to access free identity restoration services. 2) Free Credit Reports for All U.S. Consumers - Starting in 2020, all U.S. consumers can get 6 free credit reports per year for 7 years from the Equifax website. That's in addition to the one free Equifax report (plus your Experian and TransUnion reports) you can get at AnnualCreditReport.com. Sign up for email updates to get a reminder in early 2020.

"Equifax had access to people's most sensitive personal information," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "The company had a responsibility to keep that data secure. Because it did not, one in every two Americans' personal information was exposed to hacking. Thanks to this settlement, Equifax will be held accountable and affected North Carolinians will see restitution."

On September 7, 2017, Equifax, one of the largest consumer reporting agencies in the world, announced a data breach affecting more than 147 million consumers - nearly half of the U.S. population. Breached information included social security numbers, names, dates of birth, addresses, credit card numbers, and in some cases, driver's license numbers. Shortly after, Attorney General Josh Stein joined the executive committee of a coalition that grew to 50 Attorneys General undertaking a multi-state investigation into the breach. The investigation found that the breach occurred because Equifax failed to implement an adequate security program to protect consumers' highly sensitive personal information. Despite knowing about a critical vulnerability in its software, Equifax failed to fully patch its systems. Moreover, Equifax failed to replace software that monitored the breached network for suspicious activity. As a result, the attackers penetrated Equifax's system and went unnoticed for 76 days.

Under the terms of the settlement, Equifax agreed to provide a single Consumer Restitution Fund of up to \$425 million - with \$300 million dedicated to consumer redress. If the \$300 million is exhausted, the Fund can increase by up to an additional \$125 million. The company will also offer affected consumers extended credit-monitoring services for a total of 10 years.

Equifax has also agreed to take several steps to assist consumers who are either facing identity theft issues or who have already had their identities stolen including:

- making it easier for people to freeze and thaw their credit;
- making it easier for people to dispute inaccurate information in credit reports; and
- requiring Equifax to maintain sufficient staff dedicated to assisting consumers who may be victims of identity theft.

Equifax has also agreed to strengthen its security practices going forward, including:

- reorganizing its data security team;
- minimizing its collection of sensitive data and the use of consumers' Social Security numbers;
- performing regular security monitoring, logging, and testing;
- employing improved access control and account management tools;
- reorganizing and segmenting its network; and
- reorganizing its patch management team and employing new policies regarding the identification and deployment of critical security updates and patches.

Equifax also agreed to pay the states a total of \$175 million, which includes \$4,563,223.03 for North Carolina.

North Carolinians who are eligible for redress will be required to submit claims online or by mail. Paper claim forms can also be requested over the phone. People will be able to obtain information about the settlement, check their eligibility to file a claim, and file a claim on the Equifax Settlement Breach online registry at www.equifaxbreachsettlement.com. To receive email updates regarding the launch of this online registry, consumers can sign up at www.ftc.gov/Equifax or call the settlement administrator at 1-833-759-2982 for more information. The program to pay restitution to consumers will be conducted in connection with settlements that have been reached in the multi-district class actions filed against Equifax, as well as settlements that were reached with the Federal Trade Commission and Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.



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