

Rhode Island's online benefits system shuts down after cyberattack

Rhode Island took its RIBridges system for applying for public assistance programs like Medicaid offline Friday following a cyberattack that may have exposed the personal data of hundreds of thousands of people, reports CBS affiliate *WPRI 12*.

With its RIBridges system offline, Rhode Islanders won't be able to log into RIBridges' web portal or app, used to apply for Medicaid, food stamps, and other state benefits, says a government site providing updates on the breach. Governor Dan McKee said during a press briefing that attackers may have gotten personal info like names, addresses, and social security numbers of those who've used the system between 2019 to now.

State Chief Digital Officer and Chief Information Officer Brian Tardiff, who also spoke at the briefing, said the attack is not ransomware, but "more of an extortion type activity by this cybercriminal group."

The attack also affected HealthSource RI, Rhode Island's healthcare marketplace. The state hopes to get the system back online before the healthcare open enrollment period ends on January 31st, as *WPRI* writes. In the meantime, mail-in paper applications and instructions for using them are available at the state's Department of Human Services website.

The breach update site says that tomorrow, the state will publish the number of a call center for help with the breach,

available from 11AM to 8PM ET Sunday morning and from 9AM to 9PM ET Monday through Friday after that. The Rhode Island government also plans to mail instructions for free credit monitoring to those impacted.

<https://www.theverge.com/2024/12/14/24321065/rhode-island-cyberattack-ribridges-benefits-offline-personal-information-social-security-snap>