



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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NEWS RELEASE

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County SharePoint Platform Exposes Sensitive Information of Vulnerable Populations, OIG Publication #21-003

Rockville, Maryland – Montgomery County Maryland Inspector General Megan Davey Limarzi announced today the release of the results of an OIG investigation, [County SharePoint Platform Exposes Sensitive Information of Vulnerable Populations, OIG Publication #21-003](#), into the discovery of sensitive and personally identifiable information (PII) on a County information sharing platform. The investigation, which was prompted by a referral from a County employee, found copious unsecured sensitive documents on the County’s SharePoint platform available to any County employee or contractor using it.

Among the large number of documents discovered, numerous contained the names, biographical data, medical information, and clinician notes pertaining to children evaluated by the Tree House Child Advocacy Center of Montgomery County Maryland, Inc. (“Tree House”). Tree House is a non-profit agency that contracts with the County to provide medical evaluations, forensic interviews, ongoing mental health therapy, victim support and advocacy services, integrated care coordination, and other related services to child victims of sexual/physical abuse and neglect.

The investigation also uncovered a multitude of unsecured documents, some containing PII, connected to various County Departments, including the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Department of Finance, Department of General Service, Department of Technology Services, and the Department of Transportation. For example, some documents pertaining to the Public Health Emergency Grant Program (PHEG), a program overseen by the Department of Finance, contained tax information and the social security numbers of applicants.

In February and May of this year, the OIG alerted County management to similar issues concerning the security of documents housed on a different but similar technology platform. The reported actions by County management did not resolve the OIG’s concerns and have not prevented the needless exposure of sensitive documents.

The full report, including the administration’s response and the OIG’s comments, can be found at the following location, [County SharePoint Platform Exposes Sensitive Information of Vulnerable Populations, OIG Publication #21-003](#).

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