

## Public Notice to Current and Former INRS Students and Employees: Privacy Incident Concerning your Personal Information

Following its obligations under the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information*, the Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS) wishes to inform you of a privacy incident that occurred on or around August 17, 2022. During this incident, some data on our systems, including personal information on current and former students and employees, may have been compromised and exfiltrated by an unauthorized third party.

Once aware of the event, INRS immediately hired a firm of cybersecurity experts to contain the incident and investigate its circumstances and impact. All necessary measures were taken rapidly to block the unauthorized access, restart the system safely, and deploy additional cybersecurity measures.

INRS has already taken all necessary steps to notify affected individuals. The purpose of this public notice is to ensure that anyone who should have been notified, but whose contact information was incomplete, outdated, or unavailable at the time of the notification process, can come forward and benefit from the same protections.

### What personal information is involved?

The investigation we conducted with our team of experts revealed that some personal information about our current and former students and employees may have been compromised. Despite the steps we have taken, we are unable to identify it precisely, in part because of the number of documents of all kinds contained on our servers.

It is important to note that at this time, there is no evidence suggesting that your personal information has been used for malicious purposes. That said, protecting your personal information and that of our entire community remains our priority, which is why we are offering a credit monitoring service, explained below.

### Equifax credit monitoring

INRS is offering 12 months of free credit monitoring and identity theft protection with Equifax to **eligible individuals**. This protection applies to your credit file in Canada only.

To be **eligible** for this service, you must:

1. have worked for **or** studied at INRS;
2. have not already received an individual notice and a unique Equifax activation code in connection with this incident; and
3. have a credit history in Canada.

To take advantage of this service, please contact INRS before **October 1, 2023**, by email at [protection-cyber@inrs.ca](mailto:protection-cyber@inrs.ca). In your email, please include:

- your first and last name;
- your status (employee or student, current or former); and
- the date your employment or studies ended, if applicable.

Within a few days, you will receive a unique activation code and instructions on how to register for the Equifax service mentioned above.

## Other ways to protect yourself

We encourage you to remain aware and limit any potential damage by adopting preventive measures.

- Keep an eye on your bank accounts. If you have any concerns, or if you notice any fraudulent or suspicious transactions on your credit or debit card, contact your financial institution, the police, the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre (1-888-495-8501), or Equifax directly (1-800-465-7166).
- Change your passwords regularly and make sure they're secure—especially when an account is linked to your social insurance number. Never use the same passwords for multiple accounts.
- Be careful when sharing your personal information, whether by phone, email, or online.
- Avoid clicking on links or downloading attachments in suspicious emails.
- If you notice any suspicious activity, report the incident to the appropriate authorities.
- Contact us and register for the offered Equifax services.

This website offers additional tips and resources to help you protect your identity: [https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/identities/identity-theft/guide\\_idt/](https://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/identities/identity-theft/guide_idt/).

## For more information

If you have any questions about this privacy incident, please contact us at [protection-cyber@inrs.ca](mailto:protection-cyber@inrs.ca).

The entire INRS team thanks you for your trust and understanding, and assures you of its full cooperation.



**Michel Fortin**  
General Secretariat  
Institut national de la recherche scientifique