

Stolen gov't laptop has info on 1 million

by UPI

OKLAHOMA CITY -- A stolen state government laptop computer contains personal information about more than 1 million Oklahoma residents, officials said.

The state Department of Human Services said Thursday the laptop, stolen from a state employee's vehicle in Oklahoma City on April 3, has not yet been recovered, The Oklahoman newspaper reported.

"The risk of the data being accessed is low because the computer uses a password-protected system," DHS Director Howard Hendrick said in a news release. "Nevertheless, we have contacted our clients to inform them there is a possibility their personal information may be viewed."

Despite the reassurances, others said the potential for the spread of personal information held on the computer is greater than officials have acknowledged because the data was not encrypted.

"Really, anybody could take that hard drive and stick it in another machine and read everything on it," Mark Weiser, director of Oklahoma State University's Center for Telecommunications and Network Security, told the newspaper.

A DHS spokesman told the Oklahoman the computer held the names and Social Security numbers for about a million people who use such state programs as Medicaid, childcare assistance, food stamps and disability coverage.

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