

# NEWS & INFORMATION

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## Virginia Tech responds to Anthem data breach

*The following is an open letter from Associate Vice President for Human Resource Hal Irvin to the university community.*

Dear colleague,

You may have already heard that Anthem – the Commonwealth’s primary health insurance provider and the health insurance company used by the vast majority of our employees – experienced a major data breach. Virginia Tech does not manage the Anthem health insurance contract. The contract is managed by the Commonwealth’s Department of Human Resources Management.

We learned about the breach in this morning’s news cycle, and received no prior information about it from the Commonwealth’s Department of Human Resources Management or Anthem. The information we do know is all contained on this site from Anthem: [www.anthemfacts.com/](http://www.anthemfacts.com/).

The FAQ section of the site above explains that it may be several weeks before the individuals who have been impacted are contacted by Anthem. We are working closely with the Commonwealth’s Department of Human Resources Management to better understand Anthem’s next steps. In the end, however, Anthem is in the driver’s seat with communications about how to resolve this situation. They are responsible for what happened and responsible for communicating with the up to 80 million individuals who may have been impacted.

We care deeply about the security of the personal information of our current and former employees, and only hope that Anthem’s investigation finds that there was a limited impact on our community. We are committed to keeping you informed in the coming weeks as we become better informed about the scope of the issue and Anthem’s response.

Anthem has established a dedicated toll-free number and website that current and former Anthem customers can use if they have questions related to this incident. If you have any questions, or need assistance, please call 1-877-263-7995 or visit [www.anthemfacts.com](http://www.anthemfacts.com).

Thank you,

Hal Irvin, Associate Vice President  
Department of Human Resources

## Whistle Blower Protection Act Program/Whistle Blower Reward Fund

*The following is an open letter sent to all state employees on Feb. 3.*

Dear Fellow State Employees:

Citizens of the Commonwealth of Virginia (Commonwealth) can make significant contributions in promoting the highest level of ethics and principles in state government. The Office of the State Inspector General (OSIG) wants to hear from Commonwealth employees and citizens who have observed wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse in state agencies and have

something to say about it.

**Not just for state employees anymore:** Originally only applicable to employees of state government, the Whistle Blower Protection Act (WBPA) of 2009 was amended in 2014 to apply to all Commonwealth citizens who make “good faith reports” of instances of wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse committed by state agencies or independent contractors of state agencies.

**What is meant by a good faith report of wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse?** A good faith report of wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse is a report made truthfully and in good conscience, without ill intent or malice, and with supportive evidence that the wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse has occurred.

**Wait, there’s a reward, too?** As well as strengthening Commonwealth state government, a claim with the Fraud and Abuse Whistle Blower Reward Fund (Fund) also rewards good faith reporters of wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse. Any Commonwealth citizen who discloses information that leads to a recovery of at least \$5,000 may file a claim under the Fund. The reward may be up to 10 percent of the actual sums recovered by the Commonwealth as a result of the disclosure of the wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse, not to exceed the balance of the Fund.

**What qualifies as wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse?** A wrongdoing or act of fraud is a violation of federal or state law, or a violation of a formally adopted code of conduct or ethics that protects the interest of the public or employees. An abuse involves excessive or improper use, including the extravagant or excessive use of an individual’s position or authority, or employment of something in a manner contrary to its natural or legal use.

**Is a whistle blower protected from retaliation?** A whistle blower, who makes a good faith report of wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse, is protected under the WBPA. Reckless disclosures or disclosures the employee or citizen knew or should have known were false, confidential by law, or made with malicious intent are not deemed good faith reports and are not protected.

### State Employee Protections

-- No employer may discharge, threaten, or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against a whistle blower, whether acting individually or under the direction of another individual.

-- No employer may discharge, threaten, or otherwise discriminate or retaliate against a whistle blower who is requested or subpoenaed by an appropriate authority to participate in an investigation, hearing, or inquiry.

-- Nothing shall prohibit an employer from disciplining or discharging a whistle blower who is guilty of misconduct or violation of criminal law.

-- Any whistle blower covered by the state grievance procedure may initiate a grievance alleging retaliation for reporting wrongdoing, fraud, and/or abuse through the WBPA program and may request relief throughout that procedure.

### Commonwealth Citizen Protections

-- A state agency may not threaten or otherwise discriminate



or retaliate against a citizen whistle blower because the whistle blower is requested or subpoenaed by an appropriate authority to participate in an investigation, hearing, or inquiry.

**WBPA or State Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline?** Individuals who wish to remain anonymous are not eligible under the WBPA program, and may choose to report information to the anonymous State Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline (Hotline) instead. All individuals who contact OSIG may be asked by the OSIG employee whether the individual would like to report under the WBPA or the Hotline.

Individuals should know that anonymity and confidentiality are not guaranteed when filing a claim under the Fund.

**How do you make an allegation?** Making a good faith report is easy and can be done by contacting OSIG one of four ways:

- Calling the State Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline at 1-800-723-1615 (toll-free within Virginia)
- Sending a fax to 804-371-0165
- Sending an email to [covhotline@osig.virginia.gov](mailto:covhotline@osig.virginia.gov)
- Mailing correspondence via United States Postal Service to: Office of the State Inspector General, Attention: State Fraud, Waste, and Abuse Hotline, 101 North 14th Street, 7th Floor, Richmond, VA 23219

Help Virginia state government run efficiently, effectively, and ethically. For more information, call OSIG at 804-625-3255 or visit OSIG's website at: <https://osig.virginia.gov/program-areas/citizen-services/whistle-blower-fund/>.

Sincerely,

June Jennings

State Inspector General

## English classes available for international spouses and partners

A new program allows the spouses and partners of Virginia Tech's international students, faculty, employees, visiting scholars, and other affiliates to take English classes at the Language and Culture Institute.

Eligible spouses and partners can participate in the institute's Intensive English Program, which offers instruction in all skill areas, including listening, speaking, reading, writing, and pronunciation, from beginning through advanced proficiency levels.

Individuals in F-2, H-4, J-1, and J-2 statuses are eligible. The cost is \$50 per class. Course books must be purchased separately.

For more information, including details on how to sign up, go to [www.lci.vt.edu/spouses](http://www.lci.vt.edu/spouses) or call 540-231-9192.

This program is an InclusiveVT initiative sponsored by the vice president for outreach and international affairs.

## Be sure windows are closed when temperatures drop below freezing

Please ensure that windows in your work area are closed, especially overnight, during the winter.

Temperatures below freezing, especially for an extended period, can freeze pipes and cause them to rupture. Broken water pipes can cause significant damage to campus buildings. A frequent source for pipe freeze ups are open windows.

If you need assistance in checking on potential open windows contact Facilities Customer Service at 540-231-4300.

## Scholarship available to help employees' children invent the future

Since 1999, the Employees' Spouse and Dependent Scholarship has provided financial support to employees' spouses and dependent children who have enrolled at Virginia Tech. This scholarship can range from \$400-\$1,000 per student depending on availability of funds, which are generated by the Virginia Tech Faculty and Staff Campaign conducted by University Development each May. All donations are payroll and tax deductible.

To be eligible, you must be a parent or spouse of a current employee, freshman, or first year transfer student. To apply, fill out the Virginia Tech Scholarship application and the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

More information is available at [www.givingto.vt.edu/AnnualGiving/employees-spouse-dependent-scholarship-fund.html](http://www.givingto.vt.edu/AnnualGiving/employees-spouse-dependent-scholarship-fund.html)

## Interested in knowing what the future holds for the Corps of Cadets?

On Feb. 17, from 12 - 1 p.m. faculty and staff are invited to participate in an "Our VT: Building Community at Virginia Tech" brown-bag webinar with the commandant of Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets, Major General Randal Fullhart, as he provides an overview of the Corps, its programs, and the exciting things underway for the future.

The Corps of Cadets is more than 1,000 students strong this year. The Corp has produced military, public, and corporate leaders since the university was founded in 1872. It is one of just two military corps within a large public university.

Employees participating in a webinar will be invited, and encouraged, to ask the speaker questions during the one-hour discussion. Registration is required. Participants will receive an email with a link to the session prior to the webinar.

For more information or help registering, contact the Department of Human Resources at 540-231-9331.

## 2014 tax documents now available

Electronic W-2s and/or 1042Ss for 2014 are now available via the Virginia Tech Student, Faculty, and Employee Information Gateway. The printed electronic form is an IRS acceptable version of the Form W-2 and 1042S. Employees must have a PID and password to log in.

Retrieval of the electronic version acknowledges consent to electronic receipt, and a paper version will not be provided.

Detailed directions to access the electronic forms at Electronic W-2s and/or 1042Ss for 2014 are now available via the Virginia Tech Student, Faculty, and Employee Information Gateway. The printed electronic form is an IRS acceptable version of the Form W-2 and 1042S. Employees must have a PID and password to log in.

For more information, contact the Payroll Office at 540-231-5201.

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*Virginia Tech News* is published weekly during fall and spring semester and bimonthly during the summer sessions, by the Department of Human Resources and the Office of University Relations as a service to university employees who do not have computer access on campus. For more information, or to discuss submission of items call 540-231-7643.