



## MONTANA SECRETARY OF STATE

LINDA McCULLOCH

### **SCAM NOTICE: UPDATED MARCH 31, 2014**

This is the second notice regarding an email scam circulating the Internet, in which the email sender falsely affiliates himself with the Montana Secretary of State's Office. After further investigation, it appears **the target of the email scam is Registered Agents.**

In order to be proactive in helping our customers prevent theft of information stored on their personal or work computers, we previously reported that all Business Services Customers may be at risk.

It appears at this time that only the Registered Agents whose emails are voluntarily listed in the public directory on the Secretary of State's website have received the email scam. Therefore, we advise Registered Agents to be mindful of all email communication and to take the necessary precautions to protect their personal or business data.

Protecting your confidential information remains a top priority in the Secretary of State's Office. As always, we will continue to work diligently to protect the security of all information shared with this office.

### **SCAM DETAILS**

The scammer uses the Secretary of State Office's name in order to send emails to Registered Agents, and asks the recipient of the email to click on a malicious link that may compromise the information stored on **his/her personal or work computer**. The intent of the scam is theft of data or other personal identifiers stored on the email recipient's computer. The scam does not appear to target Secretary of State Office data.

### **Example of email scam:**

From: Montana Secretary of State's Office [mailto:[keithbrian2014@gmail.com](mailto:keithbrian2014@gmail.com)]  
Sent: Thursday, March 27, 2014 2:06 PM  
To: undisclosed-recipients:  
  
**Subject:** Re. Very Important Document  
  
Dear Sir / Madam ,  
  
A very important document have been uploaded for you to enable us finalize the activation of your agent agreement with us .  
  
[Click here \( MCA 35-7-105 Final Activation Form \)](#) to download and follow the instruction on your screen .  
  
Thank you  
  
Best Regards  
  
Mr Keith Brian  
Montana Secretary of State Linda McCulloch  
State Capitol Building  
1301 E. 6th Avenue  
Helena, MT 596

## **RECOGNIZING THE SCAM**

The email scam exemplified above appears to customers as being sent from the Montana Secretary of State's Office, but in reality, the message is sent from "keithbrian2014@gmail.com".

The person/people behind this email are actively pursuing the fraud, and go as far as replying to customer inquiries regarding the security certificate on the email. When asked, the email sender "keithbrian2014@gmail.com" confirms that he is a Secretary of State employee and that the email link is safe to open. He is not one of our employees.

Secretary of State Office notices are never sent from the email domain "gmail.com". The following domains may indicate an official Secretary of State Office email:

### **Secretary of State Office domains:**

- **mt.gov**
- **egovmt.com**
- **montanasos.com**
- **montanasecretaryofstate.net**

It was previously reported that all Business Services employees use the email domain "mt.gov". While this is true for individual employee email addresses, the additional domains listed above may also be used by the Business Services Division.

## **YOUR DATA SECURITY**

SOS customer data is secured using the State of Montana security controls. **At this time, our concern remains the security of your personal or work computer, and the information that may be stored on it.**

If you are concerned about Personal or Business Identify Theft, it may be helpful to review our "Business Alerts and Scams" and "Identity Theft" resources located on our website at [sos.mt.gov/Business](https://sos.mt.gov/Business).

## **REPORTING THE SCAM**

Please do not reply to any email sent from an unverified source, or open any links or attachments that may accompany it. Additional information regarding Consumer Protection may be obtained from the Montana Department of Justice's [Office of Consumer Protection](#).