

Plaintiffs Seek Expedited Hearing in Boston on Request to Consolidate Equifax Data Breach Lawsuits

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Plaintiffs in two of the dozens of lawsuits filed recently over a data breach reported by Equifax Inc. have asked a federal judicial panel to have similar cases from around the country transferred to a judge in Georgia.

In a motion filed Sept. 12 with the U.S. Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation, the plaintiffs contend that the recent data breach, which allowed unauthorized individuals to gain access to private personal information of nearly 143 million consumers, will result in numerous similar cases against Equifax, a consumer credit agency.

Based on the expected number of filings in courts throughout the country, a separate group of plaintiffs also filed a motion Sept. 12 asking the JPML to expedite consideration of the motion to create an MDL for the federal data breach cases. The motion requests that the motion to transfer be heard later this month at the JPML's regularly scheduled hearing in Boston, rather than its November hearing in St. Louis that is nearly two and a half months away.

"Given that Equifax's breach is so widespread, Movants assert that delay of a ruling from the Panel until the next Panel Session (November 30) almost certainly would result in piecemeal litigation of dozens of similar cases across the country, with attendant inefficiencies, uncertainty, and potential for conflicting actions for the next several months," the motion to expedite states.

Consumer credit agency Equifax reported the breach on Sept. 7, acknowledging that the stolen personal information included consumers' names, Social Security numbers, birth dates, addresses and, in some instances, debit card, credit card and driver's license numbers.

"[T]he consequences of Equifax's data breach are severe — the stolen personal and financial information can be used against victims in a variety of ways including identity theft and fraud," the motion to transfer states.

The plaintiffs are seeking transfer of all pending and future Equifax cases to the Northern District of Georgia, where Equifax is headquartered.

The motion to transfer was filed by Norman E. Siegel, Barrett J. Vahle and J. Austin Moore of Steuve Siegel Hanson in Kansas City Mo., John A. Yanchunis and Marisa Glassman of Morgan & Morgan in Tampa, Fla., and Roy E. Barnes, John R. Bevis and J. Cameron Tribble of The Barnes Law Group in Marietta, Ga.

The motion to expedite was filed by Adam J. Levitt, Amy E. Keller and Daniel R. Ferri of DiCello Levitt & Casey in Chicago., Kenneth S. Canfield of Doffermyre, Shields, Canfield & Knowles in Atlanta, James Pizzirusso of Hausfeld in Washington, D.C., Pat A. Cipollone and Robert B. Gilmore of Stein, Mitchell, Cipollone, Beato & Missner in Washington, D.C., and Andrew N. Friedman, Douglas J. McNamara and Sally Handmaker of Cohen, Milstein, Sellers and Toll in Washington, D.C.

In Re Equifax Inc. Data Breach Litigation, MDL No. n/a (JPML).

Documents Are Available Search www.harrismartin.com or Call (800) 496-4319 Motion to Transfer Ref# MDL-1709-01 Motion to Expedite Ref# MDL-1709-02

