

Municipality recommended for fine

Date: 09-12-2020

Decision

Public authorities

Police report

Complaint

Notification of breach of personal data security

Notification of data subjects in the event of a breach of personal data security

Unintentional disclosure

The Danish Data Protection Authority assesses that Guldborgsund Municipality has not shown the necessary vigilance in connection with a security breach.

The Data Protection Authority has reported Guldborgsund Municipality to the police and proposed a fine of DKK 50,000. The Data Protection Authority became aware of the case when a citizen of Guldborgsund Municipality complained to the Data Protection Authority regarding a serious breach of personal data security that took place in 2018.

By mistake, the municipality had sent a decision via Digital Post containing information about the complainant's child's whereabouts to the complainant's child's father, even though the father had been deprived of parental authority. Concretely, the security breach had major consequences for the complainant and the complainant's child. The complainant had not been properly informed by the municipality, so that the complainant could take his own precautions, and the municipality had also not reported the security breach to the Danish Data Protection Authority.

Big consequences

"It is important that citizens can be safe when their information is processed by the municipality. If it still happens that the municipality, in a case like this, where the consequences for the citizen are great, gets to send a decision to the wrong recipient, it is important that the municipality quickly limits the harmful effects. And this applies in particular when the consequence of unauthorized access is particularly high for the citizen," says Frederik Viksøe Siegumfeldt, head of office at the Data Protection Authority.

In most European countries, the national data supervisors can themselves issue administrative fines, but the rules are different

in e.g. Denmark.

Here it works in such a way that the Data Protection Authority reports the data controller to the police after clarifying and assessing the case. The police then investigate whether there is a basis for laying a charge, etc., and finally a possible fine will be decided by a court.

Do you want to know more?

Press inquiries can be directed to communications consultant Anders Due on tel. 29 49 32 83.