

Police report

The Civil Services Agency is recommended for a fine

Date: 12-05-2022

Decision

Public authorities

Police report

Complaint

Sensitive information

Treatment safety

Unintentional disclosure

The Danish Data Protection Authority reports the Civil Services Agency to the police and recommends a fine of DKK 100,000.

The supervisory authority assesses that the Civil Services Agency has not met the requirements for an appropriate level of security and the requirement to report a breach of personal data security according to the data protection regulation.

The Danish Data Protection Authority became aware of the case when a complainant's party representative complained about the Civil Agency's handling of the complainant's information.

It appears from the case that the Civil Agency v/Erstatningsnævnet returned a USB stick to the complainant, which contained more than 800 pages of information about complaints of a sensitive and confidential nature, which had been lost when the complainant received it.

The USB plug was not encrypted, and the agency did not otherwise have guidelines aimed at the agency's case handlers with regard to any handling of removable storage devices and portable media.

The Danish Civil Service became aware of the breach on 26 August 2020, but then did not report the breach to the Danish Data Protection Authority in violation of the rules in Article 33 of the Data Protection Regulation.

Lack of technical and/or organizational measures

The Danish Data Protection Authority finds that the Danish Civil Agency's processing of personal data has not been in accordance with the rules on adequate security.

In the assessment, the Danish Data Protection Authority emphasized that encryption of removable storage devices containing

personal data (including USB sticks) must be considered a necessary and required security measure.

In continuation of this, the supervisory authority has attached the importance that removable storage devices with personal data have a heightened risk profile in relation to the handling of personal data, and that encryption is a measure that is relatively easy for the data controller to implement.

In addition, the Danish Data Protection Authority emphasized that the agency did not have targeted guidelines and known to the agency's case handlers in relation to any handling of USB sticks, including sending.

Why report to the police?

The Norwegian Data Protection Authority always makes a concrete assessment of the seriousness of the case in accordance with the regulation's article 83, subsection 2, when assessing which sanction is, in the opinion of the supervisory authority, the most appropriate.

In making the recommendation to the police, the Data Protection Authority has, among other things, emphasized that it is an essential security measure to have procedures that include all processing and to ensure encryption of USB sticks.

Furthermore, encryption has been a widespread and recognized technical measure for many years, which should be easily countered by the data controller.

In addition, this is a board of a state authority that can generally be assumed to process large amounts of sensitive and confidential information, and where it must be considered essential that guidance has been drawn up targeting the agency's case handlers in relation to any handling of USB - plug.

Do you want to know more?

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