



UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA  
TAMPA DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

CASE NO. 8:09-Cr-290-T-23EAJ

LEN R. BREIDERT

**PLEA AGREEMENT**

Pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 11(c), the United States of America, by A. Brian Albritton, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida, and the defendant, LEN R. BREIDERT, and the attorney for the defendant, Mary Mills, Assistant Federal Public Defender, mutually agree as follows:

A. **Particularized Terms**

1. **Count(s) Pleading To**

The defendant shall enter a plea of guilty to Counts One and Two of the Information. Count One charges the defendant with fraud and related activity in connection with computers, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 1030(a)(2)(B), 1030(c)(2)(A) and 18 U.S.C. § 2. Count Two charges the defendant with wrongfully obtaining a record concerning an individual, in violation of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552a(i)(3) and 18 U.S.C. § 2.

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AF Approval \_\_\_\_\_

2. Maximum Penalties

Count One carries a maximum sentence of one year imprisonment, a fine of not more than \$100,000, a term of supervised release of not more than one year, and a special assessment of \$25. Count Two carries a maximum sentence of a fine of not more than \$5,000, and a special assessment of \$5. With respect to certain offenses, the Court shall order the defendant to make restitution to any victim of the offense(s), and with respect to other offenses, the Court may order the defendant to make restitution to any victim of the offense(s), or to the community, as set forth below.

3. Elements of the Offense(s)

The defendant acknowledges understanding the nature and elements of the offense(s) with which defendant has been charged and to which defendant is pleading guilty. The elements of Count One are:

- First: that the Defendant intentionally accessed a computer without authorization or exceeded authorized access; and
- Second: that the Defendant thereby obtained information from any department or agency of the United States.

The elements of Count Two are:

- First: that the Defendant knowingly and willfully requested or obtained any record concerning an individual,
- Second: from an agency,
- Third: under false pretenses.

4. No Further Charges

If the Court accepts this plea agreement, the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida agrees not to charge defendant with committing

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any other federal criminal offenses known to the United States Attorney's Office at the time of the execution of this agreement, related to the conduct giving rise to this plea agreement.

5. Mandatory Restitution to Victim of Offense of Conviction

Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §§ 3663A(a) and (b), defendant agrees to make full restitution to U.S. Department of Education in the amount of \$385.80.

6. Guidelines Sentence

Pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 11(c)(1)(B), the United States will recommend to the Court that the defendant be sentenced within the defendant's applicable guidelines range as determined by the Court pursuant to the United States Sentencing Guidelines, as adjusted by any departure the United States has agreed to recommend in this plea agreement. The parties understand that such a recommendation is not binding on the Court and that, if it is not accepted by this Court, neither the United States nor the defendant will be allowed to withdraw from the plea agreement, and the defendant will not be allowed to withdraw from the plea of guilty.

7. Acceptance of Responsibility - Two Levels

At the time of sentencing, and in the event that no adverse information is received suggesting such a recommendation to be unwarranted, the United States will recommend to the Court that the defendant receive a two-level downward adjustment for acceptance of responsibility, pursuant to USSG §3E1.1(a). The defendant understands that this recommendation or request is not binding on the Court, and if not accepted by the Court, the defendant will not be allowed to withdraw from the plea.

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8. Cooperation - Substantial Assistance to be Considered

Defendant agrees to cooperate fully with the United States in the investigation and prosecution of other persons, and to testify, subject to a prosecution for perjury or making a false statement, fully and truthfully before any federal court proceeding or federal grand jury in connection with the charges in this case and other matters, such cooperation to further include a full and complete disclosure of all relevant information, including production of any and all books, papers, documents, and other objects in defendant's possession or control, and to be reasonably available for interviews which the United States may require. If the cooperation is completed prior to sentencing, the government agrees to consider whether such cooperation qualifies as "substantial assistance" in accordance with the policy of the United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida, warranting the filing of a motion at the time of sentencing recommending (1) a downward departure from the applicable guideline range pursuant to USSG §5K1.1, or (2) the imposition of a sentence below a statutory minimum, if any, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3553(e), or (3) both. If the cooperation is completed subsequent to sentencing, the government agrees to consider whether such cooperation qualifies as "substantial assistance" in accordance with the policy of the United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida, warranting the filing of a motion for a reduction of sentence within one year of the imposition of sentence pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 35(b). In any case, the defendant understands that the determination as to whether "substantial assistance" has been provided or what type of motion related thereto will be filed, if any, rests solely with the United States Attorney for the Middle

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District of Florida, and the defendant agrees that defendant cannot and will not challenge that determination, whether by appeal, collateral attack, or otherwise.

9. Use of Information - Section 1B1.8

Pursuant to USSG §1B1.8(a), the United States agrees that no self-incriminating information which the defendant may provide during the course of defendant's cooperation and pursuant to this agreement shall be used in determining the applicable sentencing guideline range, subject to the restrictions and limitations set forth in USSG §1B1.8(b).

10. Cooperation - Responsibilities of Parties

a. The government will make known to the Court and other relevant authorities the nature and extent of defendant's cooperation and any other mitigating circumstances indicative of the defendant's rehabilitative intent by assuming the fundamental civic duty of reporting crime. However, the defendant understands that the government can make no representation that the Court will impose a lesser sentence solely on account of, or in consideration of, such cooperation.

b. It is understood that should the defendant knowingly provide incomplete or untruthful testimony, statements, or information pursuant to this agreement, or should the defendant falsely implicate or incriminate any person, or should the defendant fail to voluntarily and unreservedly disclose and provide full, complete, truthful, and honest knowledge, information, and cooperation regarding any of the matters noted herein, the following conditions shall apply:

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(1) The defendant may be prosecuted for any perjury or false declarations, if any, committed while testifying pursuant to this agreement, or for obstruction of justice.

(2) The United States may prosecute the defendant for the charges which are to be dismissed pursuant to this agreement, if any, and may either seek reinstatement of or refile such charges and prosecute the defendant thereon in the event such charges have been dismissed pursuant to this agreement. With regard to such charges, if any, which have been dismissed, the defendant, being fully aware of the nature of all such charges now pending in the instant case, and being further aware of defendant's rights, as to all felony charges pending in such cases (those offenses punishable by imprisonment for a term of over one year), to not be held to answer to said felony charges unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, and further being aware that all such felony charges in the instant case have heretofore properly been returned by the indictment of a grand jury, does hereby agree to reinstatement of such charges by revision of any order dismissing them or, alternatively, does hereby waive, in open court, prosecution by indictment and consents that the United States may proceed by information instead of by indictment with regard to any felony charges which may be dismissed in the instant case, pursuant to this plea agreement, and the defendant further agrees to waive the statute of limitations and any speedy trial claims on such charges.

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(3) The United States may prosecute the defendant for any offenses set forth herein, if any, the prosecution of which in accordance with this agreement, the United States agrees to forego, and the defendant agrees to waive the statute of limitations and any speedy trial claims as to any such offenses.

(4) The government may use against the defendant the defendant's own admissions and statements and the information and books, papers, documents, and objects that the defendant has furnished in the course of the defendant's cooperation with the government.

(5) The defendant will not be permitted to withdraw the guilty pleas to those counts to which defendant hereby agrees to plead in the instant case but, in that event, defendant will be entitled to the sentencing limitations, if any, set forth in this plea agreement, with regard to those counts to which the defendant has pled; or in the alternative, at the option of the United States, the United States may move the Court to declare this entire plea agreement null and void.

#### 11. Forfeiture of Assets

The defendant agrees to forfeit to the United States immediately and voluntarily any and all assets and property, or portions thereof, subject to forfeiture, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 982(a)(2)(B), whether in the possession or control of the United States or in the possession or control of the defendant or defendant's nominees. The defendant agrees and consents to the forfeiture of these assets pursuant to any federal criminal, civil, and/or administrative forfeiture action. The defendant also hereby agrees that the forfeiture described herein is not excessive and, in any event, the defendant

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wavers any constitutional claims that the defendant may have that the forfeiture constitutes an excessive fine.

The defendant admits and agrees that the conduct described in the Factual Basis below provides a sufficient factual and statutory basis for the forfeiture of the property sought by the government. Pursuant to the provisions of Rule 32.2(b)(1), the United States and the defendant request that at the time of accepting this plea agreement, the court make a determination that the government has established the requisite nexus between the property subject to forfeiture and the offense(s) to which defendant is pleading guilty and enter a preliminary order of forfeiture. Pursuant to Rule 32.2(b)(3), the defendant agrees that the preliminary order of forfeiture shall be final as to the defendant at the time it is entered, notwithstanding the requirement that it be made a part of the sentence and be included in the judgment.

The defendant agrees to forfeit all interests in the properties described above and to take whatever steps are necessary to pass clear title to the United States. These steps include, but are not limited to, the surrender of title, the signing of a consent decree of forfeiture, and signing of any other documents necessary to effectuate such transfers.

Defendant further agrees to take all steps necessary to locate property and to pass title to the United States before the defendant's sentencing. To that end, defendant agrees to fully assist the government in the recovery and return to the United States of any assets, or portions thereof, as described above wherever located. The defendant agrees to make a full and complete disclosure of all assets over which defendant exercises control and those which are held or controlled by a nominee. The

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defendant further agrees to be polygraphed on the issue of assets, if it is deemed necessary by the United States.

The defendant agrees that the United States is not limited to forfeiture of the property described above. If the United States determines that property of the defendant identified for forfeiture cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence; has been transferred or sold to, or deposited with, a third party; has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the Court; has been substantially diminished in value; or has been commingled with other property which cannot be divided without difficulty; then the United States shall, at its option, be entitled to forfeiture of any other property (substitute assets) of the defendant up to the value of any property described above. This Court shall retain jurisdiction to settle any disputes arising from application of this clause. The defendant agrees that forfeiture of substitute assets as authorized herein shall not be deemed an alteration of the defendant's sentence. Forfeiture of the defendant's assets shall not be treated as satisfaction of any fine, restitution, cost of imprisonment, or any other penalty this Court may impose upon the defendant in addition to forfeiture.

**B. Standard Terms and Conditions**

1. Restitution, Special Assessment and Fine

The defendant understands and agrees that the Court, in addition to or in lieu of any other penalty, shall order the defendant to make restitution to any victim of the offense(s), pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3663A, for all offenses described in 18 U.S.C. § 3663A(c)(1) (limited to offenses committed on or after April 24, 1996); and the Court may order the defendant to make restitution to any victim of the offense(s), pursuant to

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18 U.S.C. § 3663 (limited to offenses committed on or after November 1, 1987), including restitution as to all counts charged, whether or not the defendant enters a plea of guilty to such counts, and whether or not such counts are dismissed pursuant to this agreement. On each count to which a plea of guilty is entered, the Court shall impose a special assessment, to be payable to the Clerk's Office, United States District Court, and due on date of sentencing. The defendant understands that this agreement imposes no limitation as to fine.

2. Supervised Release

The defendant understands that the offense(s) to which the defendant is pleading provide(s) for imposition of a term of supervised release upon release from imprisonment, and that, if the defendant should violate the conditions of release, the defendant would be subject to a further term of imprisonment.

3. Sentencing Information

The United States reserves its right and obligation to report to the Court and the United States Probation Office all information concerning the background, character, and conduct of the defendant, to provide relevant factual information, including the totality of the defendant's criminal activities, if any, not limited to the count(s) to which defendant pleads, to respond to comments made by the defendant or defendant's counsel, and to correct any misstatements or inaccuracies. The United States further reserves its right to make any recommendations it deems appropriate regarding the disposition of this case, subject to any limitations set forth herein, if any.

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Pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3664(d)(3) and Fed. R. Crim. P. 32(d)(2)(A)(ii), the defendant agrees to complete and submit, upon execution of this plea agreement, an affidavit reflecting the defendant's financial condition. The defendant further agrees, and by the execution of this plea agreement, authorizes the United States Attorney's Office to provide to, and obtain from, the United States Probation Office or any victim named in an order of restitution, or any other source, the financial affidavit, any of the defendant's federal, state, and local tax returns, bank records and any other financial information concerning the defendant, for the purpose of making any recommendations to the Court and for collecting any assessments, fines, restitution, or forfeiture ordered by the Court.

4. Sentencing Recommendations

It is understood by the parties that the Court is neither a party to nor bound by this agreement. The Court may accept or reject the agreement, or defer a decision until it has had an opportunity to consider the presentence report prepared by the United States Probation Office. The defendant understands and acknowledges that, although the parties are permitted to make recommendations and present arguments to the Court, the sentence will be determined solely by the Court, with the assistance of the United States Probation Office. Defendant further understands and acknowledges that any discussions between defendant or defendant's attorney and the attorney or other agents for the government regarding any recommendations by the government are not binding on the Court and that, should any recommendations be rejected, defendant will not be permitted to withdraw defendant's plea pursuant to this plea agreement. The government expressly reserves the right to support and defend

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any decision that the Court may make with regard to the defendant's sentence, whether or not such decision is consistent with the government's recommendations contained herein.

5. Defendant's Waiver of Right to Appeal and Right to Collaterally Challenge the Sentence

The defendant agrees that this Court has jurisdiction and authority to impose any sentence up to the statutory maximum and expressly waives the right to appeal defendant's sentence or to challenge it collaterally on any ground, including the ground that the Court erred in determining the applicable guidelines range pursuant to the United States Sentencing Guidelines, except (a) the ground that the sentence exceeds the defendant's applicable guidelines range as determined by the Court pursuant to the United States Sentencing Guidelines; (b) the ground that the sentence exceeds the statutory maximum penalty; or (c) the ground that the sentence violates the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution; provided, however, that if the government exercises its right to appeal the sentence imposed, as authorized by 18 U.S.C. § 3742(b), then the defendant is released from his waiver and may appeal the sentence as authorized by 18 U.S.C. § 3742(a).

6. Middle District of Florida Agreement

It is further understood that this agreement is limited to the Office of the United States Attorney for the Middle District of Florida and cannot bind other federal, state, or local prosecuting authorities, although this office will bring defendant's cooperation, if any, to the attention of other prosecuting officers or others, if requested.

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7. Filing of Agreement

This agreement shall be presented to the Court, in open court or in camera, in whole or in part, upon a showing of good cause, and filed in this cause, at the time of defendant's entry of a plea of guilty pursuant hereto.

8. Voluntariness

The defendant acknowledges that defendant is entering into this agreement and is pleading guilty freely and voluntarily without reliance upon any discussions between the attorney for the government and the defendant and defendant's attorney and without promise of benefit of any kind (other than the concessions contained herein), and without threats, force, intimidation, or coercion of any kind. The defendant further acknowledges defendant's understanding of the nature of the offense or offenses to which defendant is pleading guilty and the elements thereof, including the penalties provided by law, and defendant's complete satisfaction with the representation and advice received from defendant's undersigned counsel (if any). The defendant also understands that defendant has the right to plead not guilty or to persist in that plea if it has already been made, and that defendant has the right to be tried by a jury with the assistance of counsel, the right to confront and cross-examine the witnesses against defendant, the right against compulsory self-incrimination, and the right to compulsory process for the attendance of witnesses to testify in defendant's defense; but, by pleading guilty, defendant waives or gives up those rights and there will be no trial. The defendant further understands that if defendant pleads guilty, the Court may ask defendant questions about the offense or offenses to which defendant pleaded, and if defendant answers those questions under oath, on the record, and in

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the presence of counsel (if any), defendant's answers may later be used against defendant in a prosecution for perjury or false statement. The defendant also understands that defendant will be adjudicated guilty of the offenses to which defendant has pleaded and, if any of such offenses are felonies, may thereby be deprived of certain rights, such as the right to vote, to hold public office, to serve on a jury, or to have possession of firearms.

9. Factual Basis

Defendant is pleading guilty because defendant is in fact guilty. The defendant certifies that defendant does hereby admit that the facts set forth below are true, and were this case to go to trial, the United States would be able to prove those specific facts and others beyond a reasonable doubt:

FACTS

A. LEN R. BREIDERT was employed as a Senior Financial Specialist for Student Funding Services (SFS), located at 7995 114th Avenue, Largo, Florida. SFS was a loan consolidation company which marketed and obtained federal consolidation loan applications from borrowers.

B. The National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) is a comprehensive computerized database containing personal and financial information related to an individual's receipt of federal student financial aid. The database was maintained by the Department of Education, a department of the Executive Branch of the United States. NSLDS stored information about loans, grants, students, borrowers, lenders, guaranty agencies, schools and loan servicers. BREIDERT applied for and was granted access to NSLDS while employed at SFS. At that time, BREIDERT

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understood that limited access to information contained in NSLDS is made available for the purpose of assisting with determining the eligibility of an applicant for Federal student aid, and NSLDS information may not be used for any other purpose, including the marketing of student loans.

C. On August 23, 2005 and March 7, 2006, the Department sent BREIDERT letters with his NSLDS User ID. Included in the letters was a set of instructions for NSLDS users. This document advised the user that NSLDS data is a confidential database and is protected by the Privacy Act of 1974. The document further advised the user that failure to comply with NSLDS access requirements could result in a person being subject to applicable sanctions, which could include criminal penalties in accordance with the Privacy Act and/or other provisions of law.

D. The Department subsequently sent BREIDERT separate letters with his NSLDS passwords. In those letters, BREIDERT was reminded that each time he logged into NSLDS, he had to affirm that he agreed to abide by the Privacy Act of 1974. He was further reminded to never give his User ID and password to another person, and to never allow another person to use an online session he initiated with his NSLDS logon.

E. As a Financial Specialist, BREIDERT was given access to NSLDS for the purpose of reviewing the loan history of a client who had initiated or expressed an interest in a Federal loan consolidation. BREIDERT was required to get consent from the borrower prior to accessing his/her NSLDS loan history.

F. A review of BREIDERT's NSLDS account usage history indicates that from September 3, 2005 to March 9, 2007, he accessed the system 5,560 times. Of that number, BREIDERT's accesses resulted in "N" response (no record found) 1,807 times. This represents a failure rate of 32.5 percent. This demonstrates that, instead of accessing the NSLDS only with the permission of the borrower, who was contemporaneously providing BREIDERT with a valid social security number, BREIDERT was instead using partial social security numbers to query the database for marketing purposes. BREIDERT's access to NSLDS was revoked on March 9, 2007 because he was engaging in data mining of the database.

G. A search warrant was executed at SFS on May 23, 2007. BREIDERT was subsequently interviewed. BREIDERT admitted to data mining the NSLDS database. He explained that since the lists of leads SFS bought from credit bureaus were missing a digit of the borrowers' Social Security Number (SSN), he would try different digits until he got a match on the SSN. He advised that in these cases, he would not have received consent from the potential clients prior to accessing their loan histories.

H. Despite knowing that each employee had a unique password and that he was only authorized to access NSLDS information by using his own password, BREIDERT used other employees' passwords on occasion to gain access to NSLDS.

I. As a result of these actions, BREIDERT was able to obtain unauthorized access to a government computer system, including records of individuals relating to the receipt of federal student financial aid. According to calculations made

by the Department of Education, the loss associated with the costs of operating NSLDS during the unauthorized accesses is at least \$385.80

10. Entire Agreement

This plea agreement constitutes the entire agreement between the government and the defendant with respect to the aforementioned guilty plea and no other promises, agreements, or representations exist or have been made to the defendant or defendant's attorney with regard to such guilty plea.

11. Certification

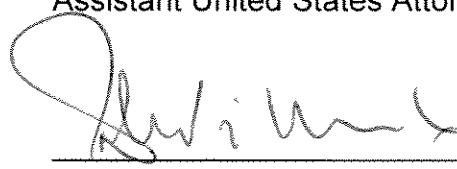
The defendant and defendant's counsel certify that this plea agreement has been read in its entirety by (or has been read to) the defendant and that defendant fully understands its terms.

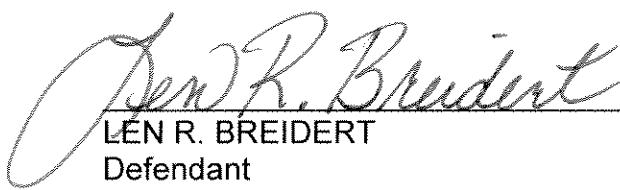
DATED this 18<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2009.

A. BRIAN ALBRITTON  
United States Attorney

By:

  
CHERIE L. KRIGSMAN  
Assistant United States Attorney

  
ROBERT T. MONK  
Assistant United States Attorney  
Deputy Chief, Economic Crimes Section

  
LEN R. BREIDERT  
Defendant

  
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