

# Washington state agency says data of hundreds of thousands of professionals may have been breached



The Washington State Department of Licensing (DOL) announced Friday that it had detected irregular activity on one of its online systems last month and that the personal data of professional licensees may have been breached.

Those licensees include more than 250,000 professionals, according to [The Seattle Times](#).

The DOL [said](#) that it detected suspicious activity involving professional and occupational license information the week of January 24 and that it had shut

down its Professional Online Licensing and Regulatory Information System (POLARIS).

The data in the system “may include Social Security numbers, birth dates, driver’s license numbers and other personally identifying information” from license holders and applicants, the agency said.

DOL spokesperson Christine Anthony said in a statement that the agency is unsure of whether the breach resulted in stolen data or of the number of professionals who might be affected by the suspicious activity, according to the newspaper.

The DOL offers licensing to 40 or more categories of professionals, per the Times. The agency has about 257,000 active licenses in its POLARIS system, according to Anthony.

- [These people have been subpoenaed by the Jan. 6 panel](#)
- [US warns Russian invasion of Ukraine could have devastating impact:...](#)

The agency said it is working with the Washington Office of Cybersecurity, the state Attorney General’s Office along with "nationally recognized cybersecurity experts" to investigate the incident.

The POLARIS shutdown is complicating licensing procedures for those looking to apply for or modify licensing, according to the Times.

“There are likely more records that may be identified while conducting our investigation,” Anthony said.