

[Date]

[Recipient Name]

[Title]

[Organization Name]

[Address]

Re: Notice of Ethical Obligations and Risks Regarding Ransomware Extortion

Dear [Recipient Name],

This letter serves to formally outline the ethical considerations and legal risks associated with the recent ransomware incident involving [Organization Name]. As we evaluate our response to the extortion demands, it is imperative to address our obligations to stakeholders and the broader implications of payment.

**Ethical Considerations:**

The decision to pay a ransom involves significant moral dilemmas. While there is a primary obligation to protect data and restore services, providing funds to criminal entities may inadvertently facilitate further illicit activities, including future cyberattacks against other organizations. We must balance the immediate need for data recovery against the long-term ethical impact on the digital ecosystem.

**Regulatory and Legal Risks:**

Federal authorities, including the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC), have issued advisories stating that facilitating ransom payments to sanctioned entities may result in severe civil penalties. Engaging in such transactions poses a high risk of non-compliance with anti-money laundering (AML) and counter-terrorist financing (CTF) regulations.

**Risk of Non-Performance:**

There is no guarantee that the payment of a ransom will result in the return of data or the receipt of a functional decryption key. Furthermore, payment does not ensure that the threat actor has deleted stolen information, leaving the organization vulnerable to secondary extortion attempts.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that [Organization Name] continues to prioritize the restoration of systems through secure backups and maintains full cooperation with law enforcement agencies. Any decision regarding extortion payment must be reviewed by legal counsel and documented with a comprehensive risk assessment.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Department/Organization]