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Judge Appoints Lead Counsel in Anthem Data-Breach Case

Vanessa Blum, The Recorder

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SAN FRANCISCO — A federal judge has appointed Eve Cervantez of Altshuler Berzon and Andrew Friedman of Cohen Milstein Sellers & Toll as co-lead plaintiffs counsel for the massive data-breach litigation against health insurer Anthem Inc.

In an order Friday, U.S. District Judge Lucy Koh of the Northern District of California said Cervantez and Friedman each had performed considerable work on the case, had demonstrated experience in handling complex class actions and had worked well together as interim lead counsel.

Koh also appointed attorneys Eric Gibbs of Girard Gibbs and Michael Sobol of Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein to serve on plaintiffs steering committee.

The litigation stems from Anthem's announcement earlier this year that hackers had accessed a database containing as many as 80 million customer records, including names, birthdays and Social Security numbers. In June, more than 100 breach-related suits were transferred to Koh by the U.S. Judicial Panel on Multidistrict Litigation. Koh appointed Cervantez and Friedman to temporarily coordinate efforts for the plaintiffs and negotiate scheduling issues with Anthem's counsel at Hogan Lovells.

Seventeen separate plaintiffs groups had [petitioned for the lead counsel role](#), including Hausfeld; Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy; Robbins Geller Rudman & Dowd; and Milberg.

"The court encourages Ms. Cervantez and Mr. Friedman, as needed, to consult with the other applicants regarding devising damages theories, retaining data security experts, litigating against the defendants in this case, and identifying and communicating with potential plaintiffs," Koh wrote.

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