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Major Data Breach Threatens Thousands in South-East Queensland

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A shocking data breach in south-east Queensland has potentially compromised the personal details of thousands, with sensitive documents stolen from mortgage brokers and tax offices. The incident, involving alleged criminal activity by a single perpetrator, has sparked outrage over lax security measures, prompting urgent calls for stronger protections to safeguard citizens' private information.

Between July 14 and 16, 2025, Joseph Kelly, a 30-something Gold Coast resident, allegedly broke into multiple offices of Mortgage

Choice and an Income Tax Professionals (ITP) tax office across the Gold Coast, Logan, and Ipswich. Court documents reveal Kelly targeted three Mortgage Choice branches and one ITP location, stealing computers and filing cabinets containing sensitive client data, including drivers' licenses, passports, payslips, and mortgage applications (9News, July 19, 2025). Police allege he transferred this information onto an encrypted device, raising fears of identity theft and fraud. "This is a wake-up call for businesses handling personal data," said cybersecurity expert Mark Thompson. "Basic physical security failures like these are inexcusable" (Courier-Mail, July 18, 2025).

The breach has exposed vulnerabilities in how private businesses store sensitive information. ITP Queensland has contacted 64 affected clients, while Mortgage Choice is still assessing the scope of the damage (9News, July 19, 2025). The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) confirmed its systems remain secure, but the stolen data could still fuel fraudulent schemes. Kelly faces charges of burglary, possessing dangerous drugs, and attempting to enter another office in Robina. He remains in custody, with his case due back in Southport Magistrates Court on July 28, 2025. Police warn that separate fraud charges may follow for each affected client.

This incident underscores a broader issue: inadequate safeguards for personal data in an era of rising cybercrime. With Queensland's Liberal National Party (LNP) government pushing for tougher child safety laws, there's growing pressure to extend such rigor to data protection. Citizens deserve assurance that their private information is secure, not left vulnerable to opportunistic thieves. As investigations continue, affected individuals are urged to monitor their accounts, freeze their credit, and demand accountability from businesses entrusted with their data.