



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection

Tips for Organizations and Individuals to Protect Against Cyber Attacks

Cyber-related attacks are occurring around the world and here in the US. Now, more than ever, there are several simple steps that all of us should take, at work and home, to ensure our devices remain secured:

- ✓ **Use a different password for each important account** – financial, medical, etc. It will help to protect your critical information in the event that anyone hacks any of the other accounts.
- ✓ **Every time you add a new device, change your password:** Default passwords are a common way that criminals gain access to your systems.
- ✓ **Patch devices regularly:** Make sure all of the computers, mobile device apps, and anything else connected to the internet, is running the most up-to-date software/firmware security patches.
- ✓ **Use updated antivirus software:** Installing antivirus software on devices is not enough. Ensure that the software regularly scans the devices and receives periodic updates for ongoing protection.
- ✓ **Backup important data:** Cyberattacks like ransomware can infect even up-to-date systems, that's why we also urge you to back up data regularly into a separate device (or to the cloud) so that you always have uninterrupted access to your more important data.
- ✓ **Be careful when clicking on a link or launching a document from e-mail – even when it appears to be from someone who you know:** The most common method for malware dissemination is 'phishing'. Bad actors email others with the intent of stealing their online account credentials or other sensitive information by tricking the recipient to open an infected attachment or click on a link to a malicious website. *If you have any suspicions at all* – contact the sender to verify that he or she sent it to you. *When in doubt, delete!*
- ✓ **Visit reputable cybersecurity websites**, such as www.us-cert.com or the YouTube Channel (perfect for cyber novices!) to stay on top of trends and alerts.¹
- ✓ **Report suspicious activity:** If you observe *any* abnormal computer behavior,² if ransomware infects the device that you are using, or you receive an offer from anyone offering to provide unsolicited technical assistance, *call your police department or state police troop*, using the non-emergency number, ready to provide as many details as possible about it.

¹ See (perfect for cyber novices) is the SANS Security Awareness Channel on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCS9bnBE8KUcTUDqUZ7PKMgw>; US Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT): <https://www.us-cert.gov/home-and-business>; and Center for Internet Security Newsletter:

² Examples of abnormal computer behavior are random pop-up windows displaying inappropriate content and claims of money or items won from lotteries or sweepstakes in which you did not participate.