

DEFENSE AGAINST CYBER ATTACKS

Please be aware and vigilant to protect yourself, your agency, and the statewide LEADS network from the threat of cyber attack. Any computer connected to the internet or receiving email from outside of the network has the potential of becoming infected. Cyber attacks can result in the theft of personal identity and finances, access and compromise of sensitive or classified information, the destruction of mission critical information and many more devastating outcomes.

Cyber terrorists and hackers are expert in taking advantage of unsuspecting individuals who are unaware of the threat, or have a moment of carelessness while using the computer. Often attacks are presented in the form of an email, and will encourage you to click on a maliciously infected link. Malware or viruses can also be introduced through ads on a website, and through digital video clips or images.

Your first defense against cyber terrorism is to be aware that a threat exists, and to be very careful about what you click on and where you go on the internet. Here are some tips to protect your information, your identity, your finances, and, in-turn, protect the LEADS' network and your agency:

1. Be careful about where you browse on the internet and what you click on. Avoid clicking on adware, and stay away from high-risk sites such as those that display pornography or facilitate online gambling.
2. Before opening an email or clicking on any link enclosed in an email, be sure you know the sender. Also, be sure the email is a topic relevant to the business you normally conduct with that person. When in doubt do not open the email until you have confirmed the validity of the email with the sender.
3. Never provide your password to anyone, and never provide your personal information to someone who contacts you cold.
4. Make sure your PC has the latest Windows security updates.
5. Make sure you are running a reputable anti-virus/anti-malware software, and keep the virus signatures up-to-date.
6. Make sure your data is backed up regularly and stored on media that is kept separate from your computer. If you do get attacked, this will ensure your data can be restored with minimal loss of data.
7. If you believe you have been attacked, immediately unplug your computer from the network, and call your agency's technical help desk or technician.

There is no way to totally protect against a cyber attack, but you can mitigate your risk of an attack by being aware of the threat, taking reasonable precautions, and by backing up your data.