

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 1, 2024

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Jennifer Jennings

Jennifer.Jennings2@illinois.gov

Governor JB Pritzker Proclaims October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month

Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology offers resources to stay cyber safe

SPRINGFIELD – Governor JB Pritzker issued a proclamation declaring October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month, and the Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology (DoIT) is reminding residents of available resources to stay safe online.

“Here in Illinois, we take cybersecurity very seriously and are committed to confronting new and emerging cyber threats head-on,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “To further protect our state, I am proud to designate October as Cybersecurity Awareness Month. From evolving threats to everyday online safety, this month is about equipping Illinoisans with the knowledge and tools they need to safeguard themselves as they navigate the digital world.”

Recognizing the critical importance of cybersecurity, state officials are committed to providing the necessary tools and information to help residents protect themselves. This initiative aims to empower individuals with the knowledge and resources needed to navigate the digital landscape securely.

“Cyber threats are constantly evolving, and it is crucial that individuals and organizations maintain awareness and the most effective cybersecurity practices,” **said Illinois Department of Innovation & Technology Statewide Chief Information Security Officer Jason Bowen**. “Through education and proactive measures, we can drastically minimize risks and safeguard sensitive information from potential breaches.”

To further assist residents in understanding and implementing cybersecurity measures, DoIT has compiled a list of practical tips and guidelines. These resources are designed to help individuals safeguard their personal information and reduce the risk of cyber threats.

How can I keep my data safe?

- Password protection is the single most important thing you can do to keep your data safe.
- Use a unique password for each account.
- Do not include your name, your kids’ names, or pets’ names in any password.
- Avoid using known information about you in your passwords.
- Use a combination of upper and lowercase characters.
- Enable two-factor authentication whenever possible.
- Keep your Internet browser and operating system up to date with the latest versions.
- Be cautious about any online offers.
- Monitor your online bank and credit accounts for unauthorized or suspicious spending.
- Talk with your family about the importance of cybersecurity.

What is phishing?

Phishing is a technique used to get your personal information by email, websites, or phone. Phishing is an attempt to dishonestly gather personal information from you or to install malicious software on your device.

To avoid becoming a victim of phishing:

- If it sounds too good to be true, it usually is.
- Delete emails asking for personal information and block the sender.
- Do not visit websites that may attempt to install malicious software.
- Never give personal information to anyone over the phone or online.

For more cybersecurity tips, visit www.ready.gov/cybersecurity.

Governor JB Pritzker's Proclamation is attached and more information can also be found at doit.illinois.gov.

###