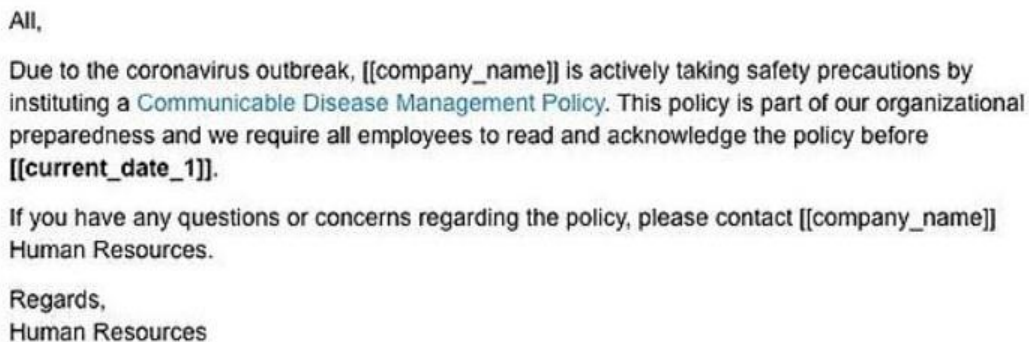# Cyber Safety Strategies

How do I spot a coronavirus phishing email?

Coronavirus-themed phishing emails can take different forms that you have to be cautious of. Cybercriminals send phishing emails designed to look like they are from an authority or official organization.

Here is an example:

> All,
>
> Due to the coronavirus outbreak, [[company_name]] is actively taking safety precautions by instituting a Communicable Disease Management Policy. This policy is part of our organizational preparedness and we require all employees to read and acknowledge the policy before [[current_date_1]].
>
> If you have any questions or concerns regarding the policy, please contact [[company_name]] Human Resources.
>
> Regards,
> Human Resources

How do I avoid scams?

Scams will be posted ads that claim to offer treatment or cures for the coronavirus.

Ads will often try to create a sense of urgency and emergency — for instance, "Buy now. Because supplies are limited and requires immediate purchase, please order now."

If you respond to an ad, two things could happen:

1. You click on an ad and download malware onto your device
2. You buy the product and receive something useless, or nothing at all. Meanwhile, you may have shared personal information such as your name, address, and credit card number.

Keep a level head and keep things in perspective. Many scammers are looking to make fast money off of a situation that people are vulnerable in. Don't fall for it!

Tips for avoiding phishing emails

Email messages will attempt to lure you by asking you to click on a link or by asking you to provide your personal information that can be used against you - fraud or identity theft. Avoid being tricked:

Beware of requests for personal information.

For example, a coronavirus-themed or credit card-themed email will seek personal information such as your Social Security number or login information. This is a phishing scam! Legitimate government agencies and legal entities won't ask for that information. Never respond to the email with your personal data.

Verify the email address or link.

Here is a trick: Inspect a link by hovering your mouse button over the URL to see where it leads. Sometimes, it's obvious the web address is not legitimate. But keep in mind phishers can create links that closely resemble legitimate addresses. Delete the email immediately.

Watch for spelling and grammatical mistakes.

If an email includes spelling, punctuation, and grammatical errors, it is a direct sign that you are in receipt of a phishing email. Delete the email immediately.

Look for generic and generalized greetings.

Phishing emails are unlikely to use your name. Greetings like "Dear sir or madam" signal an email is not legitimate.

Avoid emails that persuade with urgency and demand your attention to act quickly.

Phishing emails will try to create immediate urgency or demand your immediate response. Their goal is to get you to click on a link and provide personal information right away. Instead, delete the message immediately.

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Where can I find legitimate information on coronavirus or medical information?

Always go directly to the source. This includes government offices and health care agencies.

Reliable sources that can best answer your questions about the coronavirus, school, and state-related information:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC website includes the most current information about the coronavirus. Here's a partial list of topics covered.

- How the coronavirus spreads
- Symptoms
- Prevention and treatment
- Cases in the U.S.
- Global locations with COVID-19
- Information for communities, schools, and businesses
- Travel

World Health Organization. WHO provides a range of information, including how to protect yourself, travel advice, and answers to common questions.

National Institutes of Health. NIH provides updated information and guidance about the coronavirus. It includes information from other government organizations.

The State of Connecticut: https://portal.ct.gov/

Connecticut State Department of Education: https://portal.ct.gov/SDE

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