INFORMATION, NEWS, AND SUPPORT
Information Security Shared Services

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Cyber Security Bulletin

Why Encrypt?

Within the VCCS, there have been three major security incidents related to unencrypted emails so far this year. Encryption is the process of transforming information in such a way that an unauthorized third party cannot read it. Confidential and sensitive data must be encrypted if it is being transmitted via email. Here are some tips:

If sending email w/o an attachment:

- Contact the Help Desk for encryption practices, i.e. [encrypt].

If there is an attachment with an email, encrypt based upon size and required length of retention:

- If small, send encrypted with a password.
- If large, and retention is lengthy, consider posting in a secure library, i.e. SharePoint site.
- If the file is large and retention is short, use a secure site. Contact the Help Desk for assistance.

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Four questions to ask before transmitting confidential information

1) **Is it required that you send the data?** Always verify that the request for information is legitimate. Check with a supervisor to confirm the request is valid.

2) **If required, is all data that is asked for necessary?** Often, in a moment of haste, someone might quickly send a request for information. Call or email them to confirm that all the information requested is truly needed. Less is best when transmitting information electronically.

3) **Can some of it be redacted?** Once you receive confirmation that the request for information is from a reliable source, redact as much confidential, sensitive or personally identifiable information as possible before transmitting.

4) **Can you call and give the data over the phone?** If time allows, provide the requested data via a telephone call.