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CYBER QUESTION OF THE MONTH: CYBER RISK AND A REMOTE WORKFORCE?

Question: How do we handle cyber risk with a newly created remote workforce?

Answer: Given the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, organizations have needed to quickly convert many of their on-site staff to a remote workforce. Business continuity has required that companies adapt quickly and grant access to employees from unprotected locations. While such a move is prudent and necessary to ensure that business operations continue, organizations should ensure that cybersecurity and cyber risk are put back into focus.

While many organizations have access to sensitive resources well in hand when employees are on-site and in a controlled environment, not all resources are properly configured for safe and secure remote access.

Here are some questions that will help your organization minimize the level of risk during this event:

- Do users only have access to the resources they need?

  If less restrictive access was granted in order to support remote work, these access privileges should be re-evaluated.

- Are my users connected securely to my network?

  Depending on the types of data users are handling, access methods and encryption usage should be reviewed.

- Are my employees using personal devices to access company data?

  If users are connecting their personal devices to the company network, their devices should conform to the same cybersecurity standards as corporate-owned devices.

- Do my cybersecurity policies account for remote work?

  Your organization's cybersecurity policies and procedures should consider the unique nature of an all-remote workforce. While updating documentation may not be top of mind, having a standard set of policies and procedures will help to reduce risk and promote communications.

- Does my cybersecurity insurance cover my remote workforce?

   Work with your policy provider to determine if change in status of key personnel and resources will affect how your policy is applied.