



PRESS RELEASE

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COOK COUNTY DEPT. OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY MGMT. ROLLS OUT CYBERSECURITY TRAINING TO PROTECT RESIDENTS' INFORMATION

Training initiative coincides with National Cybersecurity Month

In recognition of National Cybersecurity Awareness Month, the Cook County Board of Commissioners passed a cybersecurity resolution, to train and educate county employees to safeguard against cyber threats. The Cook County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and the Cook County Bureau of Technology are collaborating with SANS Institute and the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) to provide federally-funded training to the county's workforce.

The SANS Institute is one of the largest sources for information security training and security certification in the country. The mission of the MS-ISAC is to improve the overall cybersecurity of state and local governments.

"A great deal of county business is conducted electronically," said Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle. "It is our job to ensure that their information is protected."

The county decided to conduct the cybersecurity training following a steep rise in cybercrime in the U.S. A study conducted by the Center for Strategic and International Studies* estimates that the annual cost of cybercrime to U.S. companies could reach \$100 billion dollars in 2013. According to the 2012 Norton Cybercrime Report**, 565 million people worldwide were victims of cybercrime last year – that's 18 victims per second in the U.S.

"The threat from cyber attacks is one of the greatest dangers our county faces," said Michael Masters, executive director of the Cook County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management. "This risk has the capability to cause financial harm and cut us off from vital resources like electricity and telecommunications."

"It is important to safeguard the data we are storing electronically," said Lydia Murray, the county's chief information officer. "This training will give county employees the tools they need to be effective guardians of our information."

The online training consists of a variety of modules that are individually tailored. They include: browsing, data security, email and instant messaging, personal identification information, criminal justice and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Residents who want more information about safeguarding their computers and mobile devices against a cyber attack may visit <http://www.cookcountyhomelandsecurity.org/cybersecurity-tips-advice/>.

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The Cook County Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management integrates first responders, their departments and resources from 134 Cook County municipalities, and serves as the central agency in Cook County for coordinating efforts to prevent, protect against, mitigate the effects of, respond to, and recover from all incidents, whether man-made or natural. For more information, visit our website at www.cookcountyhomelandsecurity.org.

*Center for Strategic and International Studies, [The Economic Impact of Cybercrime and Cyber Espionage](#), July 2013

**[2012 Norton Cybercrime Report](#), Norton by Symantec