

Can you spot the phish?



More than 3.4 billion phishing emails are sent out each day worldwide. But one factor can make life much harder for scammers: **You**. As the first line of defense, it is important that you are able to recognize and report a suspected phishing email.

What is phishing?

Phishing scams are emails that look real, but they are designed to steal important information. A phishing email with malicious software can allow cybercriminals to take control of your computer and put protected health information (PHI) and personally identifiable information (PII), as well as your organization's confidential and proprietary information, at risk.

Beware of ransomware

In addition to stealing information, phishing scams can lead to ransomware attacks. Ransomware is a form of malware designed to encrypt files on a device, rendering them unusable until a ransom is paid. It may be a phishing email if it:

- Promises something of value (e.g., "Win a free gift card!").
- Asks for money or donations.
- Comes from a sender or company you don't recognize.
- Links to a site that is different than the company the sender claims to be from.

- Asks you for personal information, such as your username and password/passphrase.
- Includes misspelled words in the site's URL address or subject line.
- Has a sense of urgency for you to act now.

What you should do

If you receive a suspicious email:

- Do not click any links in the email.
- Do not provide your username and password; you should never share your username or password, even if you recognize the source. Phishing scams frequently mimic well-known companies, such as banks or retailers like Target or Amazon.
- Do not reply/respond to the email or forward it to anyone else within your organization.
- Familiarize yourself with your organization's process for reporting suspicious emails. If you suspect an email is a phishing attempt, report it immediately.
- Your organization's information security department may have additional information and guidance on how to protect yourself from phishing scams.