



## **PUBLIC SAFETY BULLETIN**

### **Working Remotely**

Pre-covid-19, 43% of workers in the United States (U.S.) worked from home or a remote location at least some of the time. Presently, the percentage is much higher. Take a few extra steps to protect the important information on your smartphone and laptop.

- Public wi-fi networks are risky and vulnerable to being hacked. Use a VPN, which is essentially a secure tunnel to the internet, or connect your laptop to the internet through your smartphone. Remember, hackers set up wi-fi networks with names similar to legitimate networks.
- Don't get "juice jacked"! Bring a spare battery pack to recharge your device instead of using public charging outlets provided by airports, conference centers and hotels, which can be hacked. Only recharge the battery packs in your home or hotel room.
- One-third of us have lost a smartphone that wasn't password-protected, so all a crook has to do to steal valuable information is power up the stolen device to access your important information. Set your laptop and smartphone to require a password after a few minutes of inactivity.
- If you are working in a public place (particularly an airplane), use a privacy screen on your laptop so prying eyes can't see what you are working on. These polarized plastic sheets stick to the screen and are inexpensive and easy to install.
- Turn off wi-fi and Bluetooth when you're not using them. You'll reduce the chances of being hacked and extend your battery's charge. Even with that precaution, switch on the "Find My device" setting to increase the odds of recovering a lost device.
- A laptop is stolen every 53 seconds at U.S. airports. Keep tabs on your electronics at all times, particularly when you're finished going through airport security, waiting at the gate and about to leave a hotel or conference room.
- Best to store and access important data on the cloud rather than keep it on your laptop. Don't even carry an external hard drive or a flash drive with data from work because those devices are easy to lose or steal.
- All the other best practices for using computers still apply when you're away from the office. Use long passwords. Keep the operating system, web browser and apps up to date on your laptop and smartphone.

***Call police by dialing 911***

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