

SAFETY AND SECURITY

# Cybersection



## ••• Protect Yourself Against Ransomware



On May 7, computer systems for the city of Baltimore were hacked and seized as part of a ransomware attack. In mid-June, Key-Biscayne, Florida, became the third town in Florida within a month to be the victim of ransomware.

During a ransomware attack, critical files are encrypted by a remote party until a ransom is paid. In the case of Baltimore, to return all systems to normal functioning the price would be 13 Bitcoins, or at the time about \$75,000.

If the ransom is not paid, as in the majority of state and local government attacks, it can take months for technology operations to return to normal. This means that voice mail, email, database, and online systems are inoperable, causing havoc to business operations and customer service.

Ransom attacks have been on the rise because of online payment methods, such as bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies, that are outside the established regulatory system. In Florida, the three attacks started with an employee clicking on a attachment in an email.

To mitigate the risk of a ransomware event, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security recommends the following precautions:

- Update software and operating systems with the latest patches.
- Never click on links or open attachments in unsolicited emails.
- Backup data regularly on a separate, off-line device.
- Follow safe practices when browsing the Internet.

Go here to read more about [safe practices from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security](#).

If you have questions or concerns, call us at [1.800.PA.BANKS](tel:1.800.PA.BANKS).

### References

Chokshi, Niraj. (May 22, 2019). Hackers are holding Baltimore Hostoage: How they struck and What's Next. *The New York Times*. [\(Article\)](#)

Gallagher, Sean. (June 28, 2019). Florida LAN: Someone clicks link, again, giving Key Biscayne ransomware. *Ars Technica*. [\(Article\)](#)

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### Social Media Feedback

We are assessing our current social media strategy and would love to hear from you. Your voice will help us deliver content on the subjects that matter most to you.

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