

COT Security Alert – Phishing Scam Awareness

Circulation of this alert to end-users will aid in security awareness and will be effective in mitigation of the threat.

Reports of phishing emails arriving in state email inboxes has been reported to the COT Security Administration Branch.

A phishing email may look and sound official, but that is **no** indication that it is. The information requested in these emails, such as user names, passwords, pin numbers, addresses, etc. is used for all kinds of illegal and malevolent activity against individuals and institutions. **If a phishing scammer obtains a username and password for a state account, they could potentially access that account and the state network.** Users should be aware that they will **never** receive a request for this kind of information from COT or their administrator under any circumstances and should **never** respond to these types of emails in any way.

Many of the most recent of these emails claim to be for “Webmail Users” and are similar to emails reported several weeks ago. Users should be aware that phishing emails change in subtle ways during the course of time they are sent in order to evade any filters put in place and continue to circulate even after steps are taken to block it. **Continual awareness is necessary to avoid becoming a victim.** There is never a time when these emails are safe to answer.

If anyone has received a phishing email and has responded with a username and password, they should **immediately** change their password and contact the Commonwealth Service Desk at (502) 564-7576.

For more information on ‘phishing’, see the November 2007 Newsletter found at <http://technology.ky.gov/security/CyberAwareness.htm> or go to <http://www.onguardonline.gov/topics/phishing.aspx> at the OnGuard Online site maintained by the Federal Trade Commission.

NOTICE: COT is providing this information so that you are aware of the latest security threats, vulnerabilities, software patches, etc. You should consult with your network administrator or other technical resources to ensure that the appropriate actions for these alerts are followed. If you are a network administrator and need additional information, please call the Help Desk at 502.564.7576.

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