The City *of*
SAN DIEGO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, Feb. 23, 2023

City of San Diego Hosts Cybersecurity Awareness Training for Small Businesses
REPORT SAYS 86% OF SMALL BUSINESSES UNABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST A CYBER ATTACK

SAN DIEGO – In light of the growing threat posed by cyber criminals, The City of San Diego is taking steps to support local businesses in boosting their cybersecurity measures. The City is inviting small businesses to participate in a Cybersecurity Awareness Program, hosted in collaboration with the Cyber Center of Excellence (CCOE).

Cybercrime has soared in recent years with an estimated $7 trillion in damages in 2022, according to industry expert Cybersecurity Ventures. There have also been several recent attacks on San Diego's local agencies and institutions, including Scripps Health, the Port of San Diego, the City of San Marcos and UC San Diego Health.

According to [Accenture's Cost of Cybercrime Study](#), 43% of cyber attacks are aimed at small businesses, but only 14% are prepared to defend themselves.

Local small business owners are encouraged to join the City for a virtual information session and FBI briefing on Thursday, March 2, at 10 a.m. to learn more about the Cybersecurity Awareness Program and current threat landscape. The program is free to participating small businesses made possible by a grant from the City of San Diego's [Economic Development Department](#).

"This program will give our local small businesses the tools to fight against cybercrimes," said Christina Bibler, Director of the City's Economic Development Department. "Our small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and we want to make sure they are in the best position to thrive and educate their employees and staff about cyber vulnerabilities."

To participate in the Cybersecurity Awareness Program, businesses must have fewer than 100 employees and operate within City of San Diego's geographical limits or be a supplier to San Diego businesses. Interested businesses are encouraged to [RSVP](#) for the webinar and [register](#) online. The Cybersecurity Awareness Program includes:
- Detailed cybersecurity risk assessment from MasterCard's RiskRecon.
- Cybersecurity awareness training for up to 100 employees.

- Tools to develop and exercise your cyber incident response plan with CyberCatch's simulator.
- Threat landscape briefing from the FBI.
- Connectivity to the region's cybersecurity industry including additional customizable resources.

Questions about the program can be directed to info@sdccoe.org. While members of the media are welcome to attend the webinar, the FBI briefing is off the record.

As part of an ongoing effort to fight cybercrime, the City of San Diego recently launched the San Diego Regional Cyber Lab aimed at helping local agencies prevent and combat cyberattacks.

The [Cyber Lab](#) serves as a regional resource for small businesses, public agencies and educational institutions to use for specialized training with safe environments to simulate and defend against cyberattacks. The lab's mission is to provide coordinated cybersecurity awareness for the greater San Diego region through collaborative access to the latest technology, intelligence and training tools.

###