



City and County of San Francisco
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San Francisco Department of Public Health Office of Compliance and Privacy Affairs

**DPH Business Ethics and Best Practices
All Staff Memo
November 30, 2016**

Effectively immediately, access to Facebook and LinkedIn has been restricted at SFDPH worksites.



The recent ransomware hijacking of the SFMTA network is just one event in an alarming trend of malware attacks on public institutions. Healthcare organizations are increasingly targeted by ransomware due to the urgency of healthcare operations and value of protected health information. To help protect our patients, our services, and our network, SFDPH has decided to restrict access to social media sites identified as security risks.

Effective immediately, access to Facebook and LinkedIn has been restricted at all SFDPH worksites.

Facebook and LinkedIn are both vulnerable to infecting computers via modified image files. One example making headlines recently is called “Locky Malware.” Simply clicking on an image or downloading an image could encrypt and corrupt our entire network. Until DPH IT Security is satisfied with these particular websites efforts to suppress the spread of malware, access will be restricted. IT Security will continue to actively monitor network traffic to identify and contain any threats. If in the future other social media sites are identified as risks to network security, they may be restricted, as well...and possibly without notice.

We understand that there may be situations where there is a legitimate SFDPH business case for the use of social media, and we hope to restore access as soon as we can declare these sites to be safe for use. If you need immediate access to restricted website in order to perform your job duties, please contact the DPH Service Desk at (415) 759-3577 or dph.helpdesk@sfdph.org and provide the following information: 1. Your contact information; 2. Name of sites you need access to; and 3. Reason access is needed. We will process your request as quickly as possible and follow up if more information is needed to reach a decision. Requests will be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Tips to reduce risk of malware infections, PHI breaches, and increase network security:

1. Do not click on, download, or open any suspicious emails or attachments you do not recognize.
2. Do not access websites from DPH computers unless it is for the purpose of DPH business.
3. Use strong passwords and change them regularly.
4. Lock your computer every time you leave your desk.
5. If you suspect you may have opened an email, attachment, or file that may cause an issue, **report it to the DPH Service Desk immediately.**

Please see Frequently Asked Questions on the Next Page

Effectively immediately, access to Facebook and LinkedIn has been restricted at SFDPH worksites.

Use of Social Media at DPH Worksites Frequently Asked Questions

#	Question	Answer
1	What is Social Media?	Websites or applications used to engage with others. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn are all popular social media networks.
2	Why are we limiting access?	Social media sites are increasingly popular venues for malware attacks. We are restricting use to protect our network, our services, and most of all, our patients.
3	Why Facebook and LinkedIn?	DPH IT Security has identified Facebook and LinkedIn as posing great risks for introducing malware into our system. Until these companies build protections into their systems, access will not be allowed at DPH sites.
4	Can I access these sites on my personal device (cell phone, tablet)?	Accessing these sites via personal devices does not put our network at risk, but may not be appropriate use of work time.
5	How will I know if I've clicked on malware or ransomware?	It's possible your computer locks up, but it's very likely you may not notice anything. Malware can live on networks long periods of time, siphoning off valuable data, before being detected. Always contact the DPH Service Desk as soon as possible if you have any suspicions of malware or viruses.
6	I need to access LinkedIn in order to perform my job duties. Can an exception be made for me? How about for Facebook?	Contact the DPH Service Desk at (415) 759-3577 or dph.helpdesk@sfdph.org and provide the following information: 1. Your contact information; 2. Name of sites you need access to; and 3. Reason access is needed. We will process your request as quickly as possible and follow up if more information is needed.

If you have further questions, please feel free to contact the DPH IT Help Desk at 415-759-3577.