# Online Security Tips from The Department of Labor

Retirement Plan Participants can proactively reduce the risk of fraud and loss to a retirement account by following these basic rules:

- REGISTER, SET UP AND ROUTINELY MONITOR YOUR ONLINE ACCOUNT
  - Maintaining online access to your retirement account allows you to protect and manage your investment.
  - Regularly checking your retirement account reduces the risk of fraudulent account access.
  - Failing to register for an online account may enable cybercriminals to assume your online identify.

- USE STRONG AND UNIQUE PASSWORDS
  - Don't use dictionary words.
  - Use letters (both upper and lower case), numbers, and special characters.
  - Don't use letters and numbers in sequence (no "abc", "567", etc.).
  - Use 14 or more characters.
  - Don't write passwords down.
  - Consider using a secure password manager to help create and track passwords.
  - Change passwords every 120 days, or if there's a security breach.
  - Don't share, reuse, or repeat passwords.

- USE MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION
  - Multi-Factor Authentication (also called two-factor authentication) requires a second credential to verify your identity (for example, entering a code sent in real-time by text message or email).

- KEEP PERSONAL CONTACT INFORMATION CURRENT
  - Update your contact information when it changes, so you can be reached if there's a problem.
  - Select multiple communication options.

- CLOSE OR DELETE UNUSED ACCOUNTS
  - The smaller your on-line presence, the more secure your information. Close unused accounts to minimize your vulnerability.
  - Sign up for account activity notifications.

- BE WARY OF FREE WI-FI
  - Free Wi-Fi networks, such as the public Wi-Fi available at airports, hotels, or coffee shops pose security risks that may give criminals access to your personal information.
  - A better option is to use your cellphone or home network.

- BEWARE OF PHISHING ATTACKS
  - Phishing attacks aim to trick you into sharing your passwords, account numbers, and sensitive information, and gain access to your accounts. A phishing message may look like it comes from a trusted organization, to lure you to click on a dangerous link or pass along confidential information.
  - Common warning signs of phishing attacks include:
    - A text message or email that you didn't expect or that comes from a person or service you don't know or use.
    - Spelling errors or poor grammar.
    - Mismatched links (a seemingly legitimate link sends you to an unexpected address). Often, but not always, you can spot this by hovering your mouse over the link without clicking on it, so that your browser displays the actual destination.
    - Shortened or odd links or addresses.
    - An email request for your account number or personal information (legitimate providers should never send you emails or texts asking for your password, account number, personal information, or answers to security questions).
    - Offers or messages that seem too good to be true, express great urgency, or are aggressive and scary.
    - Strange or mismatched sender addresses.
    - Anything else that makes you feel uneasy.

- USE ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE AND KEEP APPS AND SOFTWARE CURRENT
  - Make sure that you have trustworthy antivirus software installed and updated to protect your computers and mobile devices from viruses and malware. Keep all your software up to date with the latest patches and upgrades. Many vendors offer automatic updates.

- KNOW HOW TO REPORT IDENTITY THEFT AND CYBERSECURITY INCIDENTS
  - The FBI and the Department of Homeland Security have set up valuable sites for reporting cybersecurity incidents:
    - https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/cyber-incident-reporting-united-message-final.pdf/view
    - https://www.cisa.gov/reporting-cyber-incidents

Source: https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ebsa/key-topics/retirement-benefits/cybersecurity/online-security-tips.pdf

IMPORTANT DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

MCF Advisors, LLC ("MCF") is an SEC-registered investment adviser. Please remember that past performance may not be indicative of future results. Different types of investments involve varying degrees of risk, and there can be no assurance that the future performance of any specific investment, investment strategy, or product (including the investments and/or investment strategies recommended or undertaken by MCF), or any non-investment related content, made reference to directly or indirectly in this presentation will be profitable, equal any corresponding indicated historical performance level(s), be suitable for your portfolio or individual situation, or prove successful. Due to various factors, including changing market conditions and/or applicable laws, the content may no longer be reflective of current opinions or positions. Moreover, you should not assume that any discussion or information contained in this presentation serves as the receipt of, or as a substitute for, personalized investment advice from MCF. To the extent that a reader has any questions regarding the applicability of any specific issue discussed herein to his/her/its individual situation, he/she/it is encouraged to consult with the professional advisor of his/her/its choosing. MCF is neither a law firm nor a certified public accounting firm and no portion of the newsletter content should be construed as legal or accounting advice. A copy of MCF's current written disclosure statement discussing our advisory services and fees is available upon request. If you are an MCF client, please remember to contact MCF in writing, if there are any changes in your personal/financial situation or investment objectives for the purpose of reviewing / evaluating / revising our previous recommendations and/or services. Please click here to review our full disclosure.