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Thank you for celebrating the fifth annual Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month with the MassCyberCenter

Dear Valued Partners:

Thank you for joining us during Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month.

Since the start of Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month five years ago, the number of cybersecurity training and awareness events across the state has multiplied. This heightened awareness, further safeguards Massachusetts residents, schools, municipalities and more.

This year's Cybersecurity Month encompassed events where public and private sectors collaborated on cybersecurity topics, trends and information, including the latest cybersecurity threats, how to protect yourself and your organization from cyberattacks, and new cybersecurity technologies.

One example of collaboration is the Verizon Data Breach Investigations Report (DBIR) Briefing, presented by the MassCyberCenter with the Commonwealth Fusion Center and Verizon. This report provides valuable information about cyber threats, attack trends and ways to protect your organization. The DBIR Briefing provides cross-sector perspectives of cybersecurity, help individuals and organizations protect themselves against attacks and how to best respond and recover.

At the MassCyberCenter, our team continues to work closely with the cybersecurity ecosystem and grow cybersecurity programs that create cyber resiliency, enhance cyber training and workforce development, and answer needs of organizations across the state. More information about Cybersecurity Month events and announcements can be found below.

On Behalf of the **MassCyberCenter**,



John Petrozzelli
Director

ACE Grant Program - Applications Now Available

Apply now for the MassCyberCenter's Alternative Cyber Career Education (ACE) Grant Program. The ACE program, launched during Cybersecurity Month, will support cybersecurity training initiatives across Massachusetts that serve as alternatives to traditional degree programs.



Grants will support program operating costs with the goal of expanding pathways leading to cyber employment statewide. Programs must contain experiential and/or on-the-job training components that provide learners with the opportunity to gain experience required to obtain cybersecurity employment.

Massachusetts-based organizations that have existing programs that train young adults or retrain existing professionals in cybersecurity are eligible to apply for the ACE program.

Eligible applicants include:

- Non-profit training entities
- For-profit training entities
- MassHire Workforce Boards and/or Career Centers
- Municipalities or state government agencies operating a workforce training program
- High schools and vocational high schools
- Other workforce development organizations

A total of **\$150,000** is available under this program. MassCyberCenter anticipates awarding up to three grants.

Applications are due on **Tuesday, December 31 at 3 p.m.**

[Webinar Recording](#)

[Learn More and Apply](#)



Secure Our Data. Secure Our Future.

Massachusetts
Cybersecurity Month
October 2024



2024 marked the fifth year of [Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month](#). This October, stakeholders, such as top cyber firms, universities, R&D centers and more, across the ecosystem hosted several events and programs highlighting the importance of cybersecurity to inform and engage public sector leaders.

This year's theme "**Secure Our Data. Secure Our Future.**" underscored the critical connection between safeguarding personal information and ensuring long-term security and prosperity.

2024 Massachusetts Cybersecurity Forum



On October 22, the MassCyberCenter team hosted the eighth annual Massachusetts Cybersecurity Forum in Needham, MA where stakeholders from the private and public sectors across the state to showcase the vibrant cybersecurity ecosystem and highlight Massachusetts as a national cybersecurity leader. The event included keynote remarks from Executive Office of Economic Development Secretary Yvonne Hao, panel discussions, and an interactive tabletop exercise.

Secretary Hao announced MassCyberCenter's new [Alternative Cyber Career Education \(ACE\) Grant Program](#) and highlighted the ways the MassCyberCenter is continuing to support the state's cybersecurity ecosystem and workforce development initiatives for young adults and existing professionals, helping them gain the skills needed for rewarding careers in cybersecurity.

The first panel session focused on the importance of alternative pathways into cybersecurity careers, especially workforce training programs that are not part of an academic degree. Participants and students from Apprenti, Cengage Group, CyberWarrior, and Per Scholas Greater Boston emphasized the challenges of finding cybersecurity training programs and jobs in Massachusetts using traditional pathways. Also students from nontraditional backgrounds illustrated how these nonconventional pathways created successful opportunities.

The second panel discussed the significant cybersecurity threats confronting small businesses in Massachusetts today: social engineering, insider threats, identity attacks, system intrusions and web application attacks, and ways defense-in-depth solutions can limit risk.

Meghan Martinez from CyberTrust Massachusetts facilitated an interactive tabletop exercise that utilized an immersive cyber range platform. The exercise gave attendees the opportunity to see what it is like to respond to a cybersecurity incident while also teaching them the importance of good cyber practices, password policies, and using unique, strong passwords. Participants chose the direction of the exercise based on group discussion and voting on the actions through the platform via their personal smartphones. Facilitators for the exercise included students from Bay Path University, Elms College, Franklin Cummings Tech, Per Scholas Greater Boston, and Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical High School.

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**CyberSecureDeck in action at the first
Massachusetts Public Sector Cybersecurity
Summit**



The MassCyberCenter was proud to help facilitate a playthrough of the CyberSecureDeck: Defend the Network Card Game at the [2024 Massachusetts Public Sector Cybersecurity Summit](#), hosted by Government Technology in Needham, MA on October 30. Thank you to Government Technology, the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security, and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security for the opportunity to engage with attendees and showcase the value of the CyberSecureDeck.

The CyberSecure Deck: Defend the Network Game, created by the [Cyber Resilient Massachusetts Working Group](#), is a collaborative way to promote a cyber-aware culture and learn how to identify, protect, respond and recover from attacks and create cyber resiliency.

[Download the Card Game Here](#)

2024 Verizon Data Breach Investigation Report (DBIR) Briefing

46:15



On October 8, Darrin Kimes of the Verizon's Threat Research Advisory Center provided an overview of the 2024 Data Breach Investigation Report (DBIR) to the Cyber Resilient Massachusetts Working Group and other cybersecurity stakeholders from across Massachusetts. The webinar also featured Detective Lt. Brian Gavioli who presented on the mission and services offered by the Commonwealth Fusion Center.

For over 17 years, Verizon has gathered data and analyzed security incidents to produce an annual DBIR with the goal of providing, "a place for security practitioners to look for data-driven, real-world views on what commonly befalls companies with regard to cybercrime."

This Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month event was presented by Verizon in partnership with the Commonwealth Fusion Center and the MassCyberCenter.

[Download 2024 DBIR Report](#)

"Cybersecurity 101" Webinar

"Cybersecurity 101"

Presented By:



On October 10, the MassCyberCenter was proud to partner with Undersecretary Layla D'Emilia and the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation to present the "Cybersecurity 101" webinar.

The webinar had over 40 participants and provided information introducing consumers to the basics of best cybersecurity practices, including how to improve safety online and avoid scams. Some of these practices include information and guidance on passwords, multi-factor authentication, backups, software updates, safe on-line browsing, how to identify if one of your accounts has been found in a data breach, and how to create a personal incident response plan.

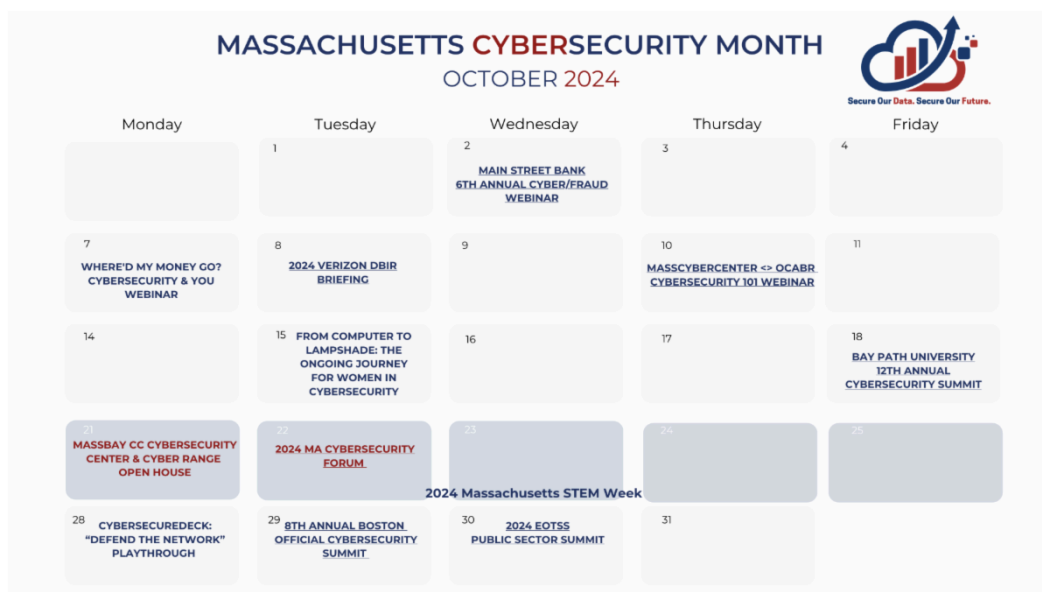
This Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month event was presented by the Office of Consumer Affairs and Business Regulation, and the MassCyberCenter.

[Watch the Recording](#)

Interactive Map of 2024 Cyber Month Events

Thank you to all of the organizations that made Massachusetts Cybersecurity Month 2024 a success.

Click the image below to find an interactive map that highlights additional event recaps, resources and media coverage from the month.



If you have any questions, please contact the MassCyberCenter at MassCyberCenter@masstech.org.



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