

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

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NJSBA Providing Information, Resources to Members



Lawyers and law firm staff are constantly inundated by a stream of spearfishing, ransomware and hacking emails that can siphon data and valuable sensitive information.

The threats and scams are everywhere. Recently, the FBI took the unprecedented step of partnering with the American Bar Association to broadcast an urgent warning to U.S. law firms, citing elevated threats and hacking activity directed their way.

These threats and other cybersecurity risks pose grave concerns to our practices. At the same time, we are charged with the responsibility to safeguard our clients' files and sensitive information. We deal every day in the most private information our clients have to offer about their personal lives or their business dealings. That is no small task, and it is our professional and ethical obligation. Yet, few in our community, never mind our profession, are adequately prepared to meet that challenge. That is why law firms are often targets of such attacks.

The NJSBA is here to help. We believe it is critical to provide assistance and educate attorneys and law firm staff about cybersecurity and data privacy so they are able to protect their businesses and their clients, as well as adhere to the Rules of Professional Conduct.

This fall, the NJSBA's educational arm, New Jersey Institute for Continuing Education, held a Cybersecurity and Privacy Conference at the New Jersey Law Center. The daylong event was an opportunity for attorneys to learn more about the

legal landscape of cybersecurity and data privacy, common vulnerabilities, and techniques to protect themselves and their clients from data breaches.

And, with this edition of *New Jersey Lawyer*, we seek to keep you apprised of the many facets of this issue, including protecting trade secrets, the products and services available

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to attorneys to protect their information, and best practices that can be put into practice today.

The association is here to provide guidance and insight on the questions that keep many of us up at night. For example: Are you doing all you can to meet your ethical obligations and protect your clients' confidences and privileged information? If a staff person at your firm accidentally triggered an intrusion, do you know how to effectively respond? What damages could you be held responsible for if sensitive client information got out? What trainings are available for you and your staff? Are you keeping too much information?

We are in this together to improve the lives of our colleagues in the profession and to provide the best service possible to the people who trust us with their lives and livelihoods. ☺