Beware of Ransomware

Ransomware is malicious software that can lock you out of your files or devices and demand payment to restore access. Taking a few simple precautions can help protect your personal information and financial accounts.

How to protect yourself

1. Think before you click
Most ransomware infections start with phishing emails, texts, or fake websites. Be cautious of unexpected links, attachments, or requests for personal information.

2. Keep devices updated
Regular software and operating system updates help protect against known security vulnerabilities.

3. Use security software
Antivirus and anti-malware tools with real-time protection can help detect and block threats before they cause harm.

4. Back up important data
Regular backups can help you recover important files without paying a ransom.

5. Use strong passwords and multifactor authentication (MFA)
Strong, unique passwords and MFA provide an added layer of protection for your online accounts.

Stay alert

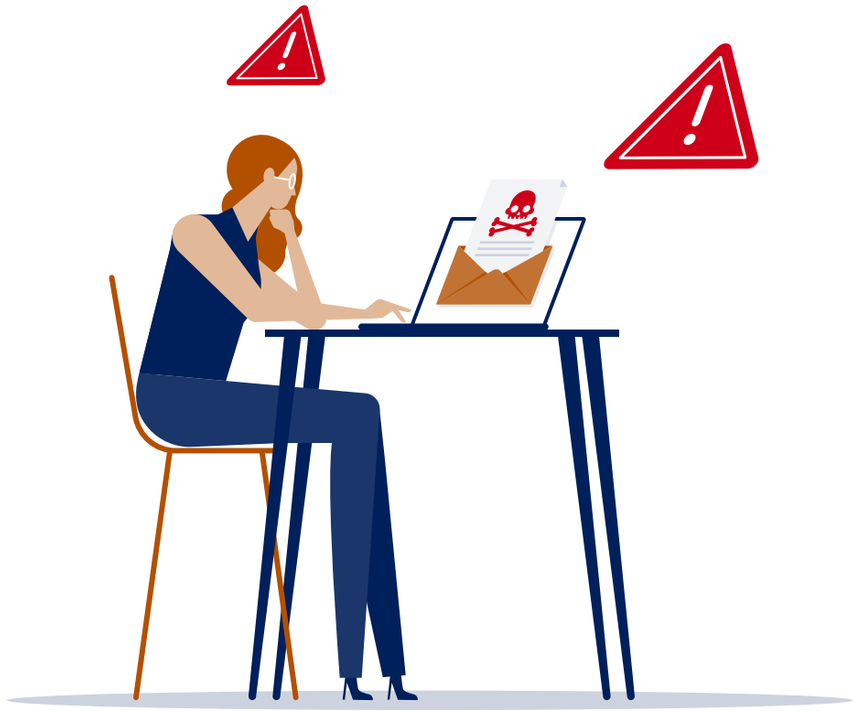
Many "ransomware" warnings are actually fake browser pop-ups designed to scare you into calling a fraudulent support number.

If you see a suspicious pop-up:

- **Do not call** the number.
- **Close** your browser if possible.
- **Disconnect** from the internet if needed.
- **Contact** a trusted technical support resource.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Cybercriminals rely on fear and urgency. Taking a moment to verify suspicious messages, keeping your devices updated, and enabling MFA can go a long way in protecting your personal information and financial well-being.



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