

Where's Your Data?

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Editor's Note - We are often surprised when we ask clients new to The Computing Center where their data is stored. Many times, they don't know. This article from the FTC focuses on the basics of data storage, especially since your data may have been scattered during the pandemic with many employees working from home.

As many companies shift to an in-person workplace, you and your employees face the opportunities and challenges of the *new new normal*. Today is the first in a five-part **Back to Business** blog series to help ease the transition back to the office, including steps you can take to reduce the risk that COVID scammers, data thieves, and financial fraudsters will follow you there. One consideration for companies: assuring you're in control of sensitive information. Here are some tips on maintaining appropriate data security standards as your employees return to the workplace.

Update your data inventory. Important business records need to be on your system and not on the personal laptops, tablets, or phones of staff members. Work with your employees to make sure need-to-keep documents are where they need to be and that confidential information that shouldn't be in employees' personal possession is securely removed.

Don't forget paperwork and print-outs. Have your employees printed confidential business documents while they were working from home?

Where is that paperwork now – disposed of securely or displayed on the fridge on the reverse

of a shopping list or crayon drawing? Make sure your security discussions include sensitive documents that were created at home.

Conduct a security double-check on new platforms and software. To keep the business up and running during the COVID crisis, many companies had to move quickly to adopt new platforms and software, many of which have become indispensable productivity tools. If you continue to use them, now is a good time to make sure you've configured them to comply with your security standards.

Consider an in-house security refresher. Some people on your staff have spent more than a year without locking desk drawers or securing their computers at the end of the work day. Plan supplemental training to reinforce security basics. The FTC has [resources for small businesses](#), so you don't have to start from scratch.

Evaluate and adjust your practices in light of your company's COVID experience. The past 15 months have given you a new perspective into your company's information practices. While those lessons are fresh in your mind, reassess your security procedures and revise your policies. While you're at it, take advantage of your company's most valuable resource by asking employees at every level and in every department for their advice about what the past year has taught them about best security practices. Resilient companies understand the need to expect the unexpected and build contingencies for the next weather emergency, power outage, or other operational threat.



