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CYBER ALERT: Malicious Email Campaign Targeting Attorneys which Spoofs Emails from Statewide Legal Organizations

The HSBA has received credible information from Mainland bar associations and local government IT security managers regarding a malicious email campaign targeting attorneys, which spoofs emails from statewide legal organizations, such as the Bar Association, the Board of Bar Examiners and Bar Disciplinary entities. The subject and body of the emails include claims that “a complaint was filed against your law practice” or that “records indicate your membership dues are past due.” Recipients are asked to respond to the claims by clicking a link which leads to a malicious download, potentially ransomware.

The emails are well written and appear to originate from the appropriate authority, such as a Bar Association President or Executive Director. Reporting from various states indicates a likelihood that this campaign is personalized to individuals practicing in a particular state and may be progressing on a state-by-state basis. The following states have been referenced in public reporting: Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, and Nevada. This targeting may also include attorneys working for state or local governments.

Recommendations:

- Train legal staff in identifying spear phishing emails, which may include spoofed email addresses, unusual requests, and questionable and/or masked links. This particular series of emails includes what appears to be a link to the state bar association, but when the user hovers over the link it shows that the link is really to a different website. **Do NOT open the link.**
- Perform regular backups of office systems to limit the impact of data loss from ransomware infections. Backups should be stored offline.
- Report any suspicious emails to your network administrator and the HSBA Executive Director patms@hsba.org 792-7342



CONTACT US



Alakea Corporate Tower
1100 Alakea Street, Suite 1000
Honolulu, HI 96813



(808) 537-1868

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