

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Cyber Security Update – May 2025

The quarterly Cyber Security report to the Audit and Compliance (AUD) Committee, unless noted, covers agency activities to-date since the last AUD report. The summaries below are separated into two categories: System Office and Enterprise/System-wide efforts.

ISO Team Engagement Forecast for CY2025

- Each lead ISO team member is responsible for and will continue to offer a minimum of a quarterly meeting for each college. The topics covered during these meetings are unique to each college's cyber security program and needs.
- Regional Tabletop Exercises: The ISO team have scheduled regional Tabletop Exercises (TTX) for the months of March and April across five locations. Regional TTXs were offered in 2023 with great success and provide participating colleges working exercises to validate and improve their respective Incident Response and Disaster Recovery Strategies.
 - The following community colleges hosted TTXs:

Region	Hosting College	TTX Date	Attendance / Colleges
Western	Southwestern CC	19-Mar-25	43 Regs. 4 Colleges
Western	Catawba Valley CC	20-Mar-25	46 Regs., 8 Colleges
Central	Johnston CC	8-Apr-25	83 Regs., 11 Colleges
Eastern	Carteret CC	23-Apr-25	60 Regs., 8 Colleges
Central	Central Carolina CC	24-Apr-25	91 Regs., 9 Colleges
Western	Caldwell CC & TI	5-Jun-25	New & Scheduling
Eastern	TBD	Q3/Q4 2025	Pending Scheduling

- Approximately 320 attendees representing 40 colleges for the first five events.
- The current System Office costs to deliver these tabletop exercises are estimated at \$28,000 (hours, travel, expenses). This does not include the June 5th date.

Legislation Impacting Colleges – SL2024-26 (HB971) introduced §143-805 - *Prohibit viewing of pornography on government networks and devices*. The scope of this law includes college networks and managed devices for faculty, staff and students are in scope.

- Effective Oct. 2024, all colleges should have policies the prohibit the activities outlined in § 143-805.
- § 143-805 has IT, HR and legal implications for colleges.
- System Office IT have prepared strategies to assist colleges in prohibiting access to known pornographic sources leveraging existing services provided by the System Office or associated with existing services used by colleges.
- All colleges will be required to report annually, no later than August 1st, to the SCIO's office metrics on unauthorized viewing and attempted viewing.
- Links:

- [SL 2024-26 \(HB 971\)](#)
- [G.S. 143-805](#)
- [SL 2024-26 Memo | NCDIT](#)
- Pending guidance addressing the specific reporting requirements by the State CIO.

State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP) - <https://www.ncdps.gov/SLCGP>

- The information below was reported during February AUD.
- The FY23 SLCGP Federal Award for North Carolina is projected to be approx. \$10.8 million. State match/cost share is projected to be another \$2.7 million for a total of approx. \$13.5 million (less management & administration costs) to be awarded to state, tribal and local govt. entities, including Community Colleges.
42 College submitted applications for the FY23 SLCGP. There were 121 total applications submitted statewide.
- On Oct 10th, the SLCGP Committee started communicating awards to applicants.
 - 34 Colleges were identified to receive awards of up to \$200,000.00. Some award offers were less based on college funding requests or exclusion of some elements of the application.
 - Total award potential for the colleges is approximately \$5,175,716
 - The list of colleges and the exact grant funding levels are confidential until all awards have been accepted.
 - All MOA's/grant agreements have been executed with the FY23 subrecipients which will allow FEMA to release the hold on our funds and we can begin drawing down on this funding.
- FY24 SLCGP Funds allocated to the State are approximately \$8,037,374
- The maximum amount eligible applicants may apply for has increased to \$250,000 for FY24 SLCGP.
- For FY24, there is a required 30% match that must be funded by the applicant organization. This is explained in greater detail in the Match/Cost Sharing section on the NC SLCGP webpage.
- Official application numbers have not been determined yet.

System Office Supported Microsoft Defender Training for Colleges - The system office is offering Microsoft Office365 cybersecurity training to the 58 Community Colleges in the following areas:

- Microsoft Defender for Endpoint Fundamentals
- Microsoft Defender for Identity Fundamentals
- Microsoft Data Loss Prevention
- Microsoft Entra Identity Fundamentals
- **NEW** - Microsoft Copilot Chat (ChatGPT integration) – Provided with all Office 365 subscriptions starting in January 2025. Pending finalization of scheduled.

This training opportunity affords colleges access to two seats per class, ensuring IT staff can benefit from these critical cybersecurity skills. Additionally, each course will be offered seven times, providing ample opportunities for participation.

This partnership aligns with our commitment to enhancing cybersecurity expertise and equipping our institutions with industry-leading Microsoft technologies to safeguard digital environments.

Contact(s)

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REPORT SUMMARY

ISO Regional Tabletop Exercises

The Information Security Office team have completed five (5) Cybersecurity Regional Tabletop Exercises since the previous report. Tabletop Exercises (TTX) are a scenario based, group discussion, of a hypothetical cyber-attack, where participants review their roles, responsibilities, and incident response plan in response to the simulated threat.

These five events were attended by over 320 attendees representing 40 colleges.

NCGS § 143-805. - *Prohibit viewing of pornography on government networks and devices.*

This law was briefed in the previous Cybersecurity AUD report which identified that college networks and devices were in scope. The specific reporting requirements for Aug. 1, 2025, report is still pending identification by the State CIO.

Until the reporting requirements are published, colleges will not know if they have sufficient metrics to satisfy the reporting requirements.

State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program (SLCGP)

The applications for the FY24 SLCGP are still under review and pending announcement of award. Community Colleges' participation and award levels have been previously reported to AUD. As soon as the awards are announced, AUD will be provided with updated information.

System Office Supported Microsoft Defender Training for Colleges

The System Office, leveraging the agency Microsoft Premiere Support contract, has been providing colleges with a host of training opportunities in how to leverage security tools that are part of the Office365 ecosystem. Based on the January announcement of the free inclusion of Microsoft Copilot Chat generative AI into O365 environments, the System Office has added training for both the administration and use of the Copilot Chat solution.