

**Office of the Chancellor  
Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education  
Procedures and Standards for University Operations**

**Procedure/Standard Number 2022-47**

**State System Information Technology (IT) Security Programs and Assessments**

**Approved by:**  \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** 08/26/2022

Chancellor

**History:** Originally approved 08/02/2020      **Revised:** 08/2/2021; 08/26/2022

**Related Policies, Procedures or Standards:** N/A

**Key Words/Categories:** Cybersecurity, Assessment, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act, CIS Controls, Information Technology Security, IT Risk Management

**Additional References:** OOC and University Information Technology Acceptable Use Policies, OOC Policy Number 2011-608 *Policy on Data Classification*

**I. Introduction**

This Procedure and Standard provides guidance on the development and adherence to University Information Security Programs and a common system-wide methodology for annual information technology security self-assessments. The methodology will ensure acceptable self-assessments are conducted in a meaningful and recurring timeframe and covers the requirements set forth in applicable federal and state regulations. Compliance with this Procedure and Standard will ensure consistent protocols and IT risk management practices are in place for data and IT Resources.

This document describes the elements pursuant to which the State System intends to:

1. Ensure proper internal procedures are in place for the security, confidentiality, integrity, and availability of IT Resources
2. Proactively protect against any anticipated threats or hazards to IT Resources or the unauthorized access to or use of IT Resources
3. Identify opportunities to strengthen the cybersecurity posture of the State System through collaboration and strategic investments

This Procedure and Standard is to be used in conjunction with any institutional policies and procedures that may be required pursuant to federal and state laws and regulations, including, without limitation, Gramm-Leach-Bailey Act (GLBA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and Payment Card Industry (PCI).

## II. Definitions

1. **CIS Controls:** Security actions used to assess and improve an organization's information security architecture.
2. **Defense-in-Depth Security Architecture:** A set of security controls and best practices that provides a multi-layered security posture for Information Technology Resources such that if one layer fails, additional layers are in place to mitigate threats.
3. **Implementation Group:** Self-assessed categories for organizations based on relevant cybersecurity attributes and is used for prioritizing CIS Control utilization.
4. **Information System:** discrete set of electronic information resources organized for the collection, processing, maintenance, use, sharing, dissemination or disposition of electronic information containing customer information or connected to a system containing customer information, as well as any specialized system such as industrial/process controls systems, telephone switching and private branch exchange systems, and environmental controls systems that contains customer information or that is connected to a system that contains customer information.
5. **Information Technology Security:** Activities used to prevent, detect, and mitigate risks to Information Technology Resources.
6. **Information Technology Security Assessment:** A systematic process of reviewing and documenting an institution's information security risks in order to determine compliance, identify opportunities of improvement, detect areas of risk, and establish safeguards, related to information security.
7. **Information Technology (IT) Resources:** Assets including, but not limited to, State System/University owned or operated hardware, software, telecommunications, and other technology assets issued by the State System or a University.
8. **IT Risk Management:** A process of identifying risk to an organization's IT Resources and taking the appropriate steps to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
9. **Safeguard:** A set of activities or actions to prevent or mitigate a risk to IT Resources.
10. **Qualified Individual:** A person who has the education, training, and/or experience to perform essential cybersecurity activities to support an Information Technology Security Program.

## III. Scope

This Procedure and Standard applies to all State System Universities, IT Shared Service Center, and the Office of the Chancellor.

#### IV. Procedure/Standard

##### 1. University Information Technology Security Program

A recognized Information Technology (IT) Security Program should be designed and approved by a formal university governance committee for each university. To ensure the objectives of the IT Security Program is aligned with university and the State System's information technology security strategy, the IT Security Program should be reviewed on an annual basis by the university governance committee.

The IT Security Program should prioritize the development, management, and continuous improvement of information technology security processes and procedures that focus on the protections of student data and IT Resources managing the student data.

Each university IT Security Program is to be documented and governed through a formal information technology security university policy which should contain, at a minimum, guidance for the following:

- Description of the university's Information Security Program including scope and objectives
- Security Roles & Responsibilities
- Annual Security Awareness Training
- Annual Cyber Risk Assessments
- Data Classification and Protections
- Access Control
- Change Management for Information Systems

Universities are to develop or update a position description that identifies a coordinator of the university IT Security Program that will be responsible for fulfilling the requirements set in this Procedure and Standard and to coordinate and assist the university's IT Security Program. The position description can be for a new position or as an amendment to an existing position.

Following the guidance detailed in this section and utilizing the recommendations detailed in Appendix A *Recommended State System Information Technology (IT) Security Program Foundational Controls* and Appendix B *Recommended State System Information Technology (IT) Security Program Position Duties [Template]* provides elements to be included an IT Security Program framework for universities.

##### 2. **State System Defense-in-Depth Security Architecture Principles**

A Defense-in-Depth Security Architecture establishes five tenets that each IT Security Program can use as guiding principles for their program.

- i. Offense informs defense - Use of shared knowledge to learn and adapt.
- ii. Prioritization - Focus on controls that mitigate immediate risks.
- iii. Measurements and Metrics – Established standardized performance metrics for reporting across the State System.

- iv. Continuous diagnostics and mitigation – Established processes and procedures for continued monitoring and improvement of the security architecture.
- v. Automation – Automate reliable and scalable security metrics and data for real-time information.

**3. Information Technology Security Framework and Assessment**

The Center for Internet Security (CIS) provides security standards and best practices through the utilization of CIS Controls and Benchmarks that are used to measure gaps and capabilities of information technology security programs.

The State System will utilize the CIS Controls as the baseline information security standard for protecting IT Resources. Information technology security assessments, to be performed on an annual basis, and are to be conducted utilizing the CIS tool 'CIS-CSAT'. Annual assessment timeframes will be communicated by the Office of the Chancellor to the universities. Refer to Appendix C *Recommended Timeline* for general timeline information.

The State System is to follow CIS assessment guidelines that focus on ensuring the CIS Controls are properly in place to mitigate information technology security threats and strengthen the State System's Defense-in-Depth Security Architecture through each university's IT Security Program.

Universities may conduct additional information technology security assessments that supplement the self-assessment or are required due to regulations, audit findings, or other requirements.

The State System universities are encouraged to leverage resources provided through the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) and universities are recommended to have an active membership to the Research and Education Networking Information Sharing and Analysis Center (REN-ISAC) to access additional information security resources.

**4. Foundational Controls and Implementation Group Baseline**

CIS Controls are categorized through Implementation Groups (IG) developed by CIS. Each University is to evaluate the three IGs and based on the University's resources, are recommended to develop a security plan to meet the appropriate IG that is achievable with available resources within their IT Security Program.

University IT Security Programs are recommended to prioritize several State System Information Technology Security Program Foundational Controls. Refer to the Appendix A *Recommended State System Information Technology (IT) Security Program Foundational Controls* for further guidance.

Concurrently to working towards and maintaining the State System Information Technology Security Program Foundational Controls, if proper resources are available, university IT Security Programs are recommended to prioritize achieving the Implementation Group ("IG2") maturity as the baseline and to focus Defense-in-Depth Security Architecture programs towards developing and managing all CIS Controls and Safeguards within the IG2.

## 5. **Information Technology Risk Management Strategy**

State System universities, in collaboration with their IT Security Program, are recommended to develop a comprehensive information technology (IT) risk management strategy with a focus on 1) framing risks; 2) assessing risks; 3) responding to risks; and 4) monitoring risks that are identified in information security assessments and ongoing Defense-in-Depth Security Architecture programs.

Universities are recommended to use the following risk control strategies to guide and reduce identified risks.

- **Avoidance:** To eliminate the conditions that allow the risk to be present at all, most frequently by dropping the project or the task.
- **Acceptance:** To acknowledge the risk's existence, but to take no preemptive action to resolve it, except for the possible development of contingency plans should the risk event come to pass.
- **Mitigation:** To minimize the probability of a risk's occurrence or the impact of the risk should it occur.
- **Deflection:** To transfer the risk (in whole or part) to another organization, individual, or entity.

## 6. **Risk Reporting and Governance**

It is recommended each State System university, in collaboration with their IT Security Program, maintain an internal IT risk management governance review process which defines roles and responsibilities, including accountability for each risk identified and procedures for determining the appropriate risk mitigation strategy in subsection 5 (Information Technology Risk Management Strategy) or safeguard. It is recommended that stakeholders from diverse program areas (IT, legal, academics, administration, etc.) be represented in the governance review process.

A communications plan should be adopted as part of the governance review process that will ensure all appropriate stakeholders are notified of risks and the risk control strategies that may impact their program area.

## **V. Roles and Responsibilities**

To ensure consistent management of the annual information technology security assessments, consideration should be given to identify a single point of contact at each State System university to facilitate the assessment procedures. The following roles and responsibilities are provided as recommended best practices; each university may substitute the following based on business requirements, capabilities, and other factors.

### 1. **University Chief Information Technology Officers (CITOs) / IT Shared Services Director or designee**

- Establish and maintain an IT Security Program
- Facilitate the annual information technology security self-assessment
- Document and ensure appropriate change management processes are applied to information systems
- Ensure corrective action plans and safeguards are established to address information security gaps identified in annual assessment
- Report assessment findings to appropriate stakeholders

## 2. State System Chief Information Officer (CIO) or designee

- Establish an annual cycle for completion of the information security self-assessments for universities, IT Shared Service Center, and the OOC
- Ensure immediate corrective action plans and safeguards are established to address information technology security gaps identified in annual assessment
- Report assessment findings to appropriate stakeholders
- Compile the State System annual information technology security self-assessments to identify common approaches and strategies for future information security collaboration and shared investments

## VI. Resources

1. Code of Federal Regulations, Standards For Safeguarding Customer Information: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-16/part-314>
2. Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act: <https://www.consumerfinance.gov/policy-compliance/guidance/gramm-leach-bliley-act/>
3. Center for Internet Security <https://www.cisecurity.org/>
4. CIS Controls/NIST Cybersecurity Framework Mapping <https://www.cisecurity.org/white-papers/cis-controls-v8-mapping-to-nist-csf/>
5. Multi-State Information Sharing & Analysis Center (MS-ISAC): <https://www.cisecurity.org/ms-isac/>
6. Research & Education Networks Information Sharing & Analysis Center (REN-ISAC): <https://www.ren-isac.net/>
7. Federal Student Aid Cybersecurity: <https://ifap.ed.gov/fsa-cybersecurity-compliance>

## VII. Implementation

This Procedure and Standard is effective immediately.

## Appendix A

### Recommended State System Information Technology (IT) Security Program Foundational Controls

Integrating these foundational controls will provide a basic Defense-in-Depth Security Architecture, enabling the State System to proactively protect State System IT Resources. Each university is encouraged to evaluate their security architecture and IT Security Program for areas of improvement with a focus on integrating and enhancing the following controls.

<b>CIS Control v7.1</b>	<b>Control Name</b>	<b>CIS Control v8</b>	<b>Control Name</b>
CIS Control 1	Inventory and Control of Hardware Assets	CIS Control 1	Inventory and Control of Enterprise Assets
CIS Control 2	Inventory and Control of Software Assets	CIS Control 2	Inventory and Control of Software Assets*
CIS Control 3	Continuous Vulnerability Management	CIS Control 7	Continuous Vulnerability Management
CIS Control 4	Controlled Use of Administrative Privileges	CIS Control 5	Account Management*
		CIS Control 6	Access Control Management*
CIS Control 5	Secure Configuration for Hardware and Software on Mobile Devices, Laptops, Workstations and Servers	CIS Control 4	Secure Configuration of Enterprise Assets and Software
CIS Control 8	Malware Defenses	CIS Control 10	Malware Defenses
CIS Control 10	Data Recovery Capabilities	CIS Control 11	Data Recovery*
CIS Control 13	Data Protection	CIS Control 3	Data Protection*
CIS Control 17	Implement a Security Awareness and Training Program	CIS Control 14	Security Awareness and Skills Training

\*FTC Safeguard Rule-related Control

## Appendix B

### Recommended State System Information Technology (IT) Security Program Position Duties [Template]

It is recommended State System universities to have an established Information Technology (IT) Security Program and appropriate human resources to complete the requirements and responsibilities set in this Procedure and Standard. The Office of the Chancellor provides the following Position Duties as guidance for university Human Resources department. Each university should evaluate these recommendations and make the appropriate determination when developing internal position descriptions in consultation with university and OOC stakeholders.

- Personnel should meet the definition of a “Qualified Individual” (refer to Definitions section)
- Responsible for creating, defining, and managing the Information Technology (IT) Security Program based upon industry established best practices at their respective University
- Establish and manage a formal IT Risk Management Program based upon the CIS Framework
- Responsible for monitoring and complying with the Information Technology Security program area portion of compliance and regulations that are applicable to the University such as PCI, FERPA, GLBA, HIPAA, GDPR, and other that may any others that may apply
- Responsible for managing a Security Awareness Training Program to educate end-users of common threats
- Review and approve security policies, controls, and cyber incident response planning and communicate all to University personnel
- Schedule periodic security audits
- Familiarize with guidance set forth in the Pennsylvania Breach of Personal Information Notification Act
- Review investigations after breaches or incidents, including impact analysis and recommendations for avoiding similar vulnerabilities
- Brief the Chief Information Technology Officer (CITO) and executive team on status and risks, including taking the role of champion for the overall strategy and necessary budget
- Creating and implementing a strategy for the deployment of information security technologies
- Coordinate with the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC) for cybersecurity exercises, training, education/awareness, and other operational functions related to cybersecurity

## Appendix C

### Annual Timeline

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>
Assessment & Remediation Planning Process	January – March	Universities / IT Shared Services
Systemwide Summary & Recommendations	March – April	OOO
Discuss Priorities for Next Cycle	April – May	Universities / IT Shared Services
Annual Assessment & Remediation Checkpoints	June	Universities / IT Shared Services
Complete Self-Assessment & Remediation	June – November	Universities / IT Shared Services
Assessment & Remediation Reports Complete	December	Universities / IT Shared Services