

# Security at home: how to help avoid remote work cyberattacks

There's been a massive paradigm shift toward flexible work arrangements. More than half of workers (52%) have a hybrid schedule and over a quarter (27%) are fully remote.<sup>1</sup> While often beneficial and convenient, the remote working trend has created more security gaps for cyber criminals to penetrate—such as cloud computing networks, home routers, and outdated software.

But there are steps you can take to close these remote working security gaps and protect your sensitive data. Here are several actions you can take:

- 1 Establish strong authentication for accessing your home devices**
  - Set up multi-factor authentication (MFA) on all devices. For example, use both a password and a fingerprint to log in.
  - Practice good password techniques. Password length is more crucial than complexity—although both are important. Create complex passphrases with 12 or more characters that include numbers, symbols, and upper and lower case letters.
- 2 Take precautions when using Wi-Fi**
  - Avoid using public Wi-Fi networks. Data sent through these unprotected channels can easily be intercepted.
  - Change your router's default name and password.
- 3 Use virtual private networks (VPNs) when connecting to your office network**
- 4 Safeguard your devices**
  - Install antivirus software and ensure device software is patched and up-to-date.
  - Limit the location tracking of your mobile apps.
- 5 Guard against phishing emails, phone call phishing (vishing) and text message phishing (smishing). In all cases, don't click on attachments and links.**

At TIAA, customer data security is a top priority. Combining people, technology and processes, we protect our customers' sensitive data and accounts, and comply with both state and federal regulations, as well as industry guidelines. Read more insights on our [Security Center website](#).

<sup>1</sup> Gallup: Hybrid Work, 2024

<sup>2</sup> Beyond Identity: Securing Remote Work: Insights into Cyber Threats and Solutions, 2024

<sup>3</sup> Palo Alto: How to secure your remote workforce, 2022

**Only 51%**

of remote employees receive cybersecurity training from their employers.<sup>2</sup>



A VPN allows remote employees to become an extension of the network as if they're in the office with the same security and connectivity benefits.<sup>3</sup>



Phishing = email attacks



Vishing = phone call attacks



Smishing = text message attacks

