



Protecting the board: a cyber checklist for keeping board members safe

Insight

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When it comes to cybersecurity, the boardroom has officially become ground zero. At this year's NACD Summit 2025, acceligence and the National Association of Corporate Directors (NACD) unveiled the Corporate Director Cyber Health Check – a concise but powerful guide outlining the top actions every board member should take to stay secure in an increasingly targeted digital world.

Let's be blunt: *if you sit on a board, you're a target*. Attackers know that directors often have unparalleled access to sensitive strategy, deal flow, and financial data – and they're betting that personal cybersecurity discipline won't match the organization's enterprise protections.

This checklist changes that.

Cybersecurity is a board-level responsibility

It has become the rally cry of every CISO and cybersecurity organization: *"Cybersecurity is a board-level issue,"* but it is also a personal responsibility of every board member that they take the appropriate steps to secure their lives, and the lives of their loved ones, if they carry the immense responsibility of sitting on a board. Every board member's digital habits directly impact organizational resilience. The NACD and acceligence document aims to close that personal gap with 13 actionable, easy-to-implement practices designed to protect directors, their families, and the companies they oversee.

But here's the thing: you don't have to be a board member to benefit. These are the same habits that protect executives, families, and anyone who wants to strengthen their digital safety and security. Whether you lead a company, a team, or just want to keep your identity off the dark web, these steps apply to you.

13 steps to securing your personal life

Here's a look at the checklist's key highlights — practical, high-impact steps that make an immediate difference:

1. **Ditch the passwords.** Use biometric authentication and passkeys — no more relying on fragile, reused passwords that can be phished or stolen.
2. **Turn on multi-factor authentication (MFA) everywhere.** This one step stops most breaches cold.
3. **Lock down personal devices.** Encrypt storage, enable remote wipe, and keep antivirus protection current.
4. **Be suspicious of the unexpected.** Phishing remains the easiest way in — if it feels urgent or off, it probably is.
5. **Harden your email.** Review forwarding rules, enable login alerts, and use strong recovery options.
6. **Keep everything updated.** Software updates aren't annoyances; they're your best defense against known exploits.
7. **Think before you post.** Oversharing personal details online helps attackers build social-engineering traps.
8. **Avoid public Wi-Fi.** Use encrypted networks, VPNs, or mobile hotspots for safer browsing.
9. **Separate personal, professional, and board communications.** Keep board business off personal email.
10. **Back up everything.** Encrypted cloud backups mean recovery is quick if a device is lost or compromised.
11. **Freeze and monitor your credit.** Reduce your exposure to identity theft and financial fraud.
12. **Protect your family's devices and awareness.** Cybersecurity is a team sport.
13. **Have an incident response plan.** Know who to call, what to do, and how to recover fast if something goes wrong

Why this matters

Cyber attackers aren't just going after companies – they're going after the humans who run them. Personal devices, home networks, and even family members are now attack vectors. The goal isn't fear – it's readiness. The Corporate Director Cyber Health Check helps leaders build digital resilience not just as professionals, but as individuals entrusted with the security of their organizations.

As NACD notes in its Personal Cybersecurity Protection Guide for Corporate Directors: *“Board directors occupy a position of exceptional access and influence, placing them at high risk of becoming a target of malicious cyber threat actors.”*

Translation: *you're on the radar — act accordingly.*

Protecting yourselves and your loved ones

If you haven't already, download the Corporate Director Cyber Health Check below and review it with your board or audit committee. For deeper insight, explore NACD's cybersecurity and technology resources at nacdonline.org/security and feel free reach out to us or send us feedback using the form below.

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