

West Virginia Executive Branch Privacy Tip of the Week

Periodically, the Privacy Office may issue tips for the purpose of assisting you in making informed decisions in your “away from work” life. The following tip is for that purpose (most of us know that we cannot visit social networking sites for personal use while on the job and with State equipment!).

But the post said it was free, and it came from my friend.....

If you're a Facebook user, no doubt you've seen the posts about “free” stuff: airline tickets, iPads, Starbucks gift certificates (I fell for that one), etc. It's very tempting – the link appears to come from one of our “friends” - and who doesn't like free stuff?!!!!

Well, if it looks too good to be true, it probably is! The scammers persuade Facebook users to share the false offer on their walls. This, of course, makes the offer seem legit, since we all trust our “friends”. If you click on the link, you might be asked to provide some personal information, under the guise of knowing how to send your “free gift” to you.

If you provide the personal info, you may be bombarded with e-mail offers, phone calls, and possibly worse. There might be malware installed on your computer, enabling scammers to steal your passwords, contact info, and possibly posing a threat of identity theft.

Don't do it! When you get a post such as this, don't even think about clicking on the link!