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Stronger Together:
Embracing a Whole-of-State Cybersecurity Approach

Jen VanDemmeltraadt | Deputy Chief Information Security Officer

Cybersecurity attacks in Minnesota

Local governments face increased cybersecurity threats and attacks

- A few of the cyber-attacks across Minnesota:
  - **2025:** A ransomware attack impacted a Minnesota municipality resulting in the shutdown of municipality services and police department.
  - **2024:** A massive nationwide data breach at PowerSchool, an educational software provider, affected thousands of Minnesota students, from the metro area to Greater Minnesota.
  - **2023:** A ransomware attack impacted 15 counties in west and northwest Minnesota, which all shared a system called CaseWorks.
- **Communities that experienced incidents were not using Minnesota's cybersecurity tools**

MNIT’s cybersecurity tools protect local entities

- **How you prepare and defend your data and networks makes a difference**
  - MNIT can help protect your technology, data, and systems to keep them running securely.
  - We work to make sure local entities, tribal government, education, public health, critical infrastructure, and peacekeepers have the cybersecurity tools and resources they need.

400

Malware attempts prevented each month with MNIT’s MDR tools

$2.83M

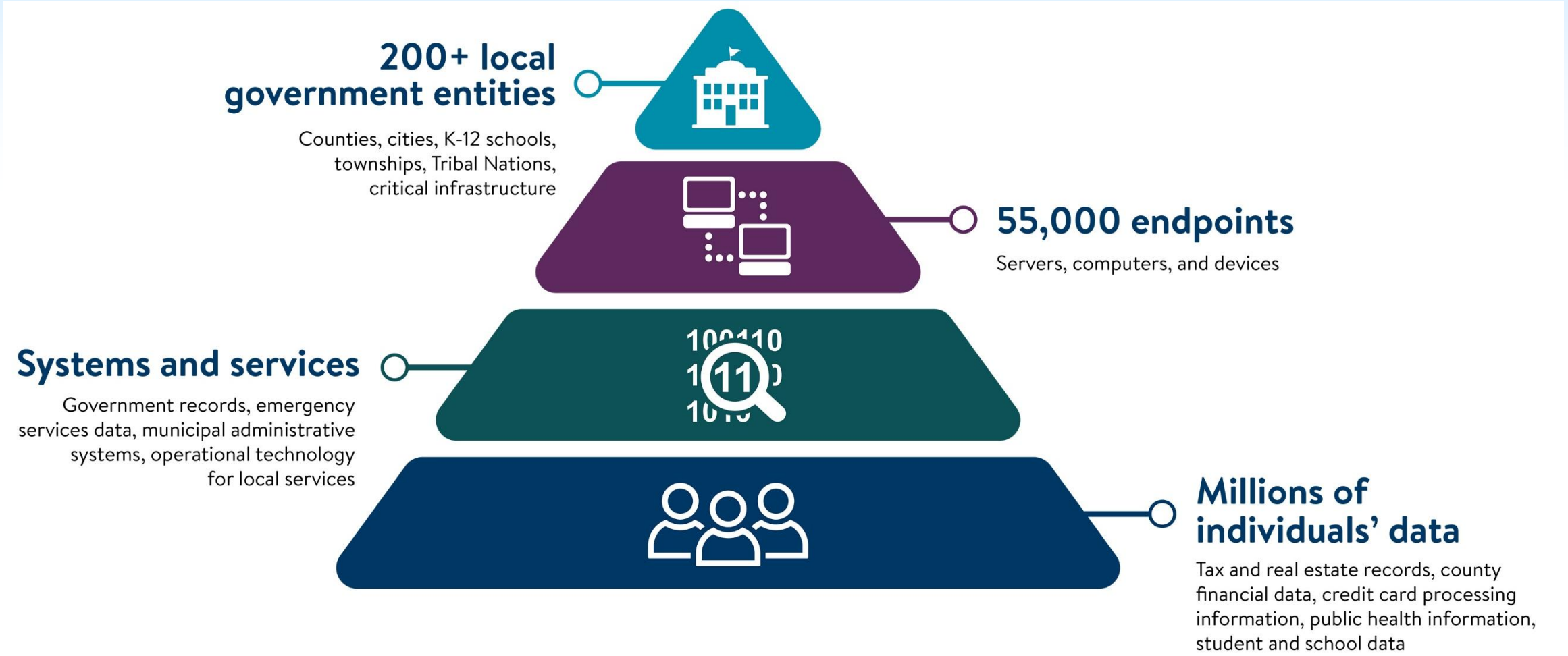
Average cost of recovery from a successful malware attack

$1.12B

Total number of prevented ransomware events

Minnesota’s Managed Detection and Response program

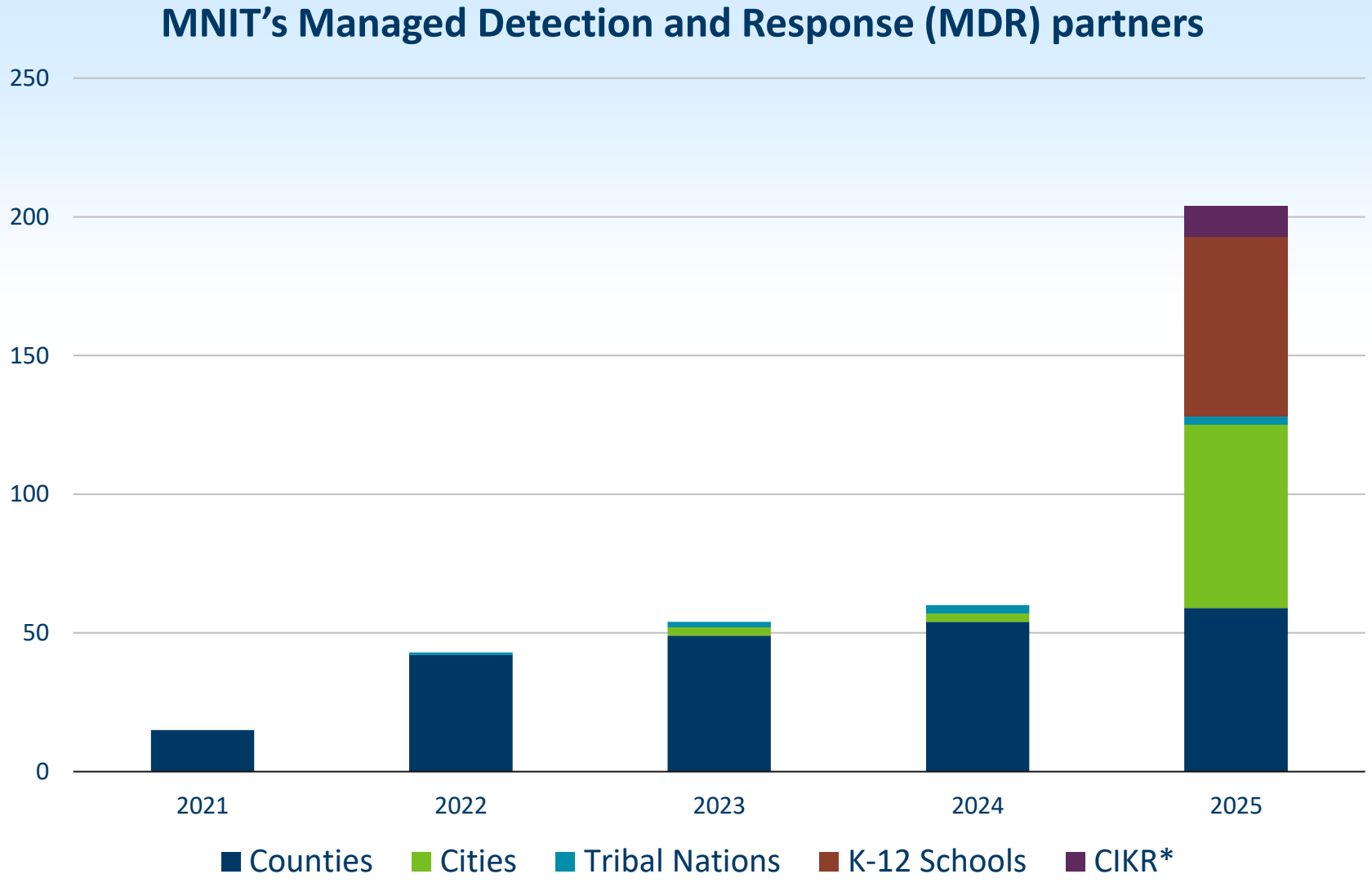
MDR protects Minnesota communities and private data



Number of MNIT's MDR partners increases

Growth factors:

- Federal and state funds lower price for local entities
- Launch of Whole-of-State Cybersecurity Plan in 2023
- MNIT Cyber Navigators' outreach



Minnesota IT Services (MNIT)

MNIT is the central IT organization for the State and partners with:

- **Executive branch:** agencies, boards, councils, and commissions in the state. (Provides all IT services.)

- **Non-executive branch:** cities, counties, school districts, higher education, public libraries, legislative branch, judicial branch, constitutional offices, and other government organizations in the state. (Provides network services, security services, statewide leadership.)

MNIT

Mission

We partner to deliver secure, reliable technology solutions to improve the lives of all Minnesotans.

Vision

An innovative digital government that works for all.

Customers/Partners

- Cities
- Counties
- Townships
- School districts
- Public libraries
- Higher education
- Judicial branch
- Legislative branch
- Constitutional offices
- Cabinet-level state agencies
- Non-cabinet boards, councils and commissions

MNIT has more than 2,800 staff members who:

Support over **41,000** end users for over **70** agencies/boards

Secure and manage over **2,700** agency applications and a statewide network connecting **3,000+** locations

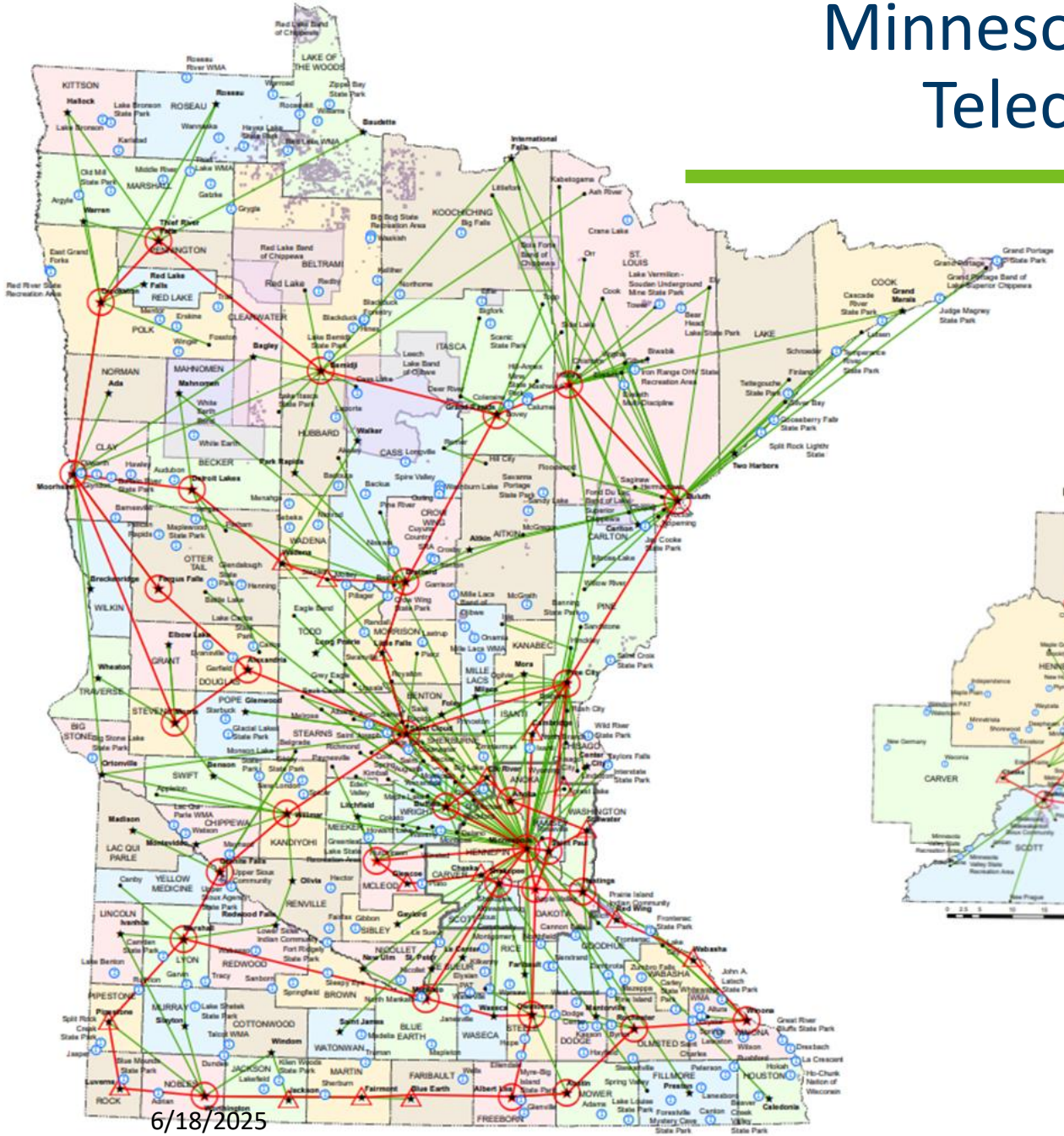
Oversee and deliver over **490** projects with major IT components

Manage over **$470M** IT budget for project/program delivery

Resolve 38,000+ service desk tickets a month with a **4.7** (1-5 scale) satisfaction rating

Detect and resolve over **5,200** security incidents a year

Minnesota's Network for Enterprise Telecommunications (MNET)



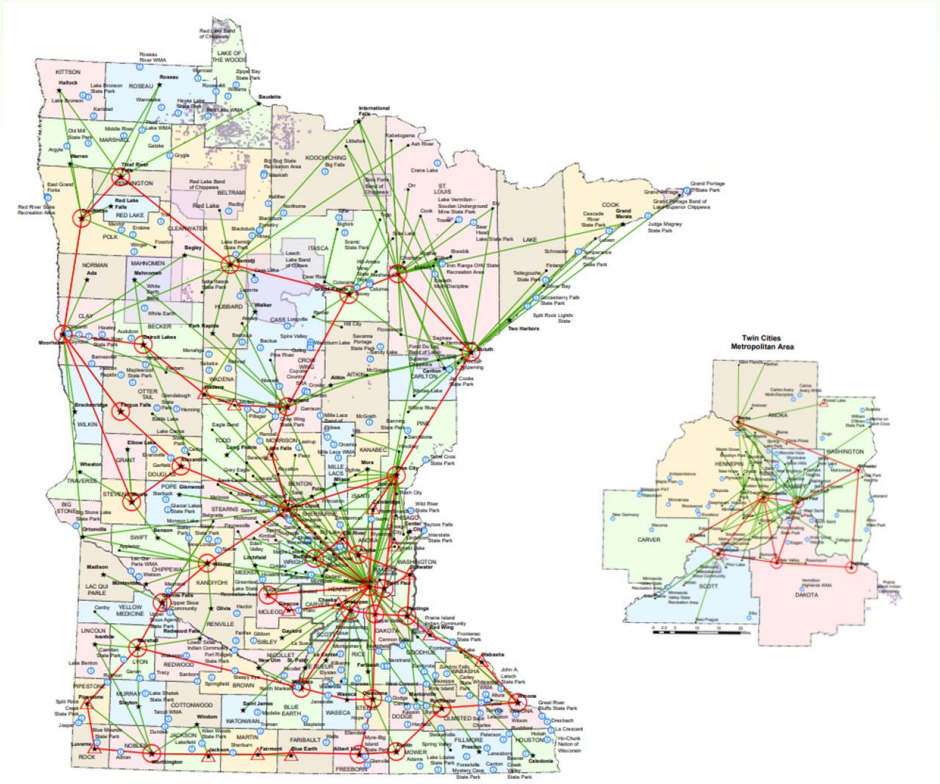
MNIT's wide area network (WAN) service that connects sites to the state network

- Connects all 87 counties, 300 cities, and 200 public higher education campuses.
- Backbone speeds are up to 100Gbps, with up to 1Gbps wire speed to the desktop in most locations.
- MNIT and its predecessor agencies have been serving local governments with network services since the early 2000s.

What it means to be on MNET

Enables secure, reliable connectivity and support for data communications between agency sites, MNIT Enterprise data centers, external party sites, and to the internet.

- Baseline cybersecurity capabilities, including:
  - Incident response
  - DDoS & Radware
  - Cyber threat intelligence
- 24/7 service desk
- 24/7 network monitoring
- Network hardware lifecycle management



Minnesota cybersecurity investments

- **Security infrastructure**
  - Modernize Security Operation Center
  - Expand implementation of web application firewalls
  - Implement autonomous threat prevention
- **Balancing security, fraud protection, and user experience**
  - LoginMN enterprise-wide identity service
  - Mature governance, risk, and compliance program
  - Advance vendor risk management program
- **Whole-of-state approach**
  - New grant-subsidized services for local governments
  - Mandatory cybersecurity incident reporting
  - Partner with local and federal entities to deliver services

LoginMN

Minnesota's Whole-of-State Cybersecurity Approach

Peter Alsis | MNIT Cyber Navigator Supervisor
Foua Xiong | MNIT Cyber Navigator

Minnesota Cybersecurity Task Force

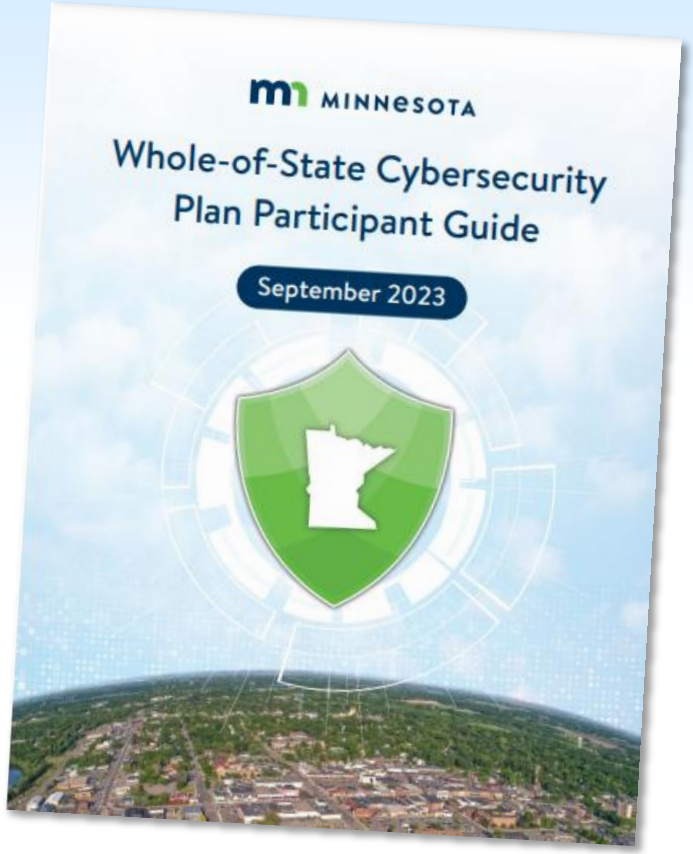
Advisory body that contributes to the development and implementation of a statewide cybersecurity plan to advance cybersecurity protections for Minnesota.

- 15 members represent counties, cities, K-12 schools, tribal government, and private sector.
- Task force meets every other month; meetings are public.

  Next meeting is July
- Cybersecurity Task Force has three subcommittees:
  - Baseline Cybersecurity Capabilities
  - Advanced Cybersecurity Tools and Capabilities
  - Critical Infrastructure

Whole-of-State Cybersecurity Plan

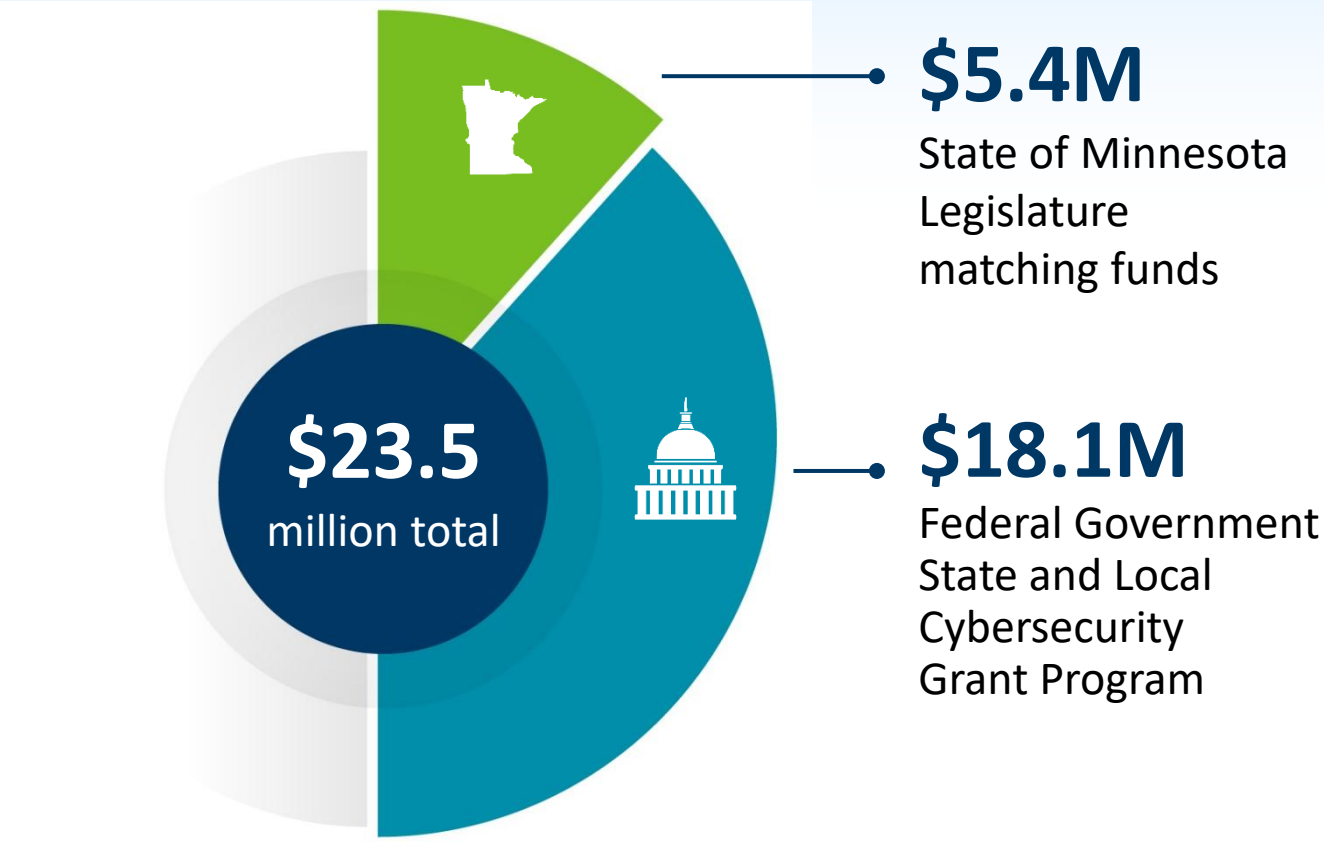
- **MNIT partnered with the Cybersecurity Task Force to develop the Whole-of-State Cybersecurity Plan**
- Uses an all-of-state approach to address critical cybersecurity needs for Minnesota local governments, K-12 schools, critical infrastructure, and Tribal Nations.
- Leaders at every level of government work together, and share resources and information to create a united front against cyber threats



Federal, state funding subsidize cybersecurity services

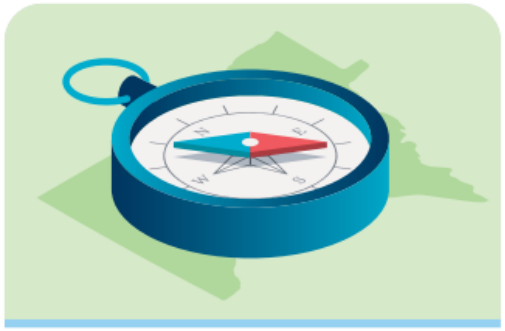
- MNIT provides subsidized cybersecurity services to local governments – meeting them at their level.
- **Goal:** Place little to no burden on entities that might not have staff or resources to invest in advanced security tools.

Minnesota's Whole-of-State funding for cybersecurity services



Minnesota Whole-of-State cybersecurity goals

Minnesota Cybersecurity Task Force approved four goals to build a solid foundation for a long-term, sustainable cybersecurity system.



1. Mature cyber capabilities throughout the state

2. Increase participation in programs and services known to work

3. Collaborate and share information throughout the state

4. Strengthen the cyber-resiliency of critical infrastructure

Cyber Navigator program

- Three cyber navigators and a supervisor supporting cities, townships, critical infrastructure cybersecurity.
- Assists local governments in risk assessments, policy development, and response planning.
- Helps districts implement security best practices and access resources.
- Connects local government with CISA's cyber hygiene services.
- Contact Cyber Navigator Team at CN.MNIT@state.mn.us

Cyber Threat Intelligence

- **Cyber Navigators**
  - Connect local governments with resources and tools to bolster their cyber defenses
  - Collaborate with federal, state, and local government partners to identify the threat landscape in Minnesota
- Centralize feeds
- Dedicated resource
- Proactive intelligence gathering
- Processing event data (IOCs, TTPs, reporting)
- Collaboration & representation

Risk Assessments

Metro State University

- Center for Internet Security's Critical Security Controls
- Implementation Group 1 Essential Cyber Hygiene
- Risk Assessment Methodology Continued collaboration
- https://www.metrostate.edu/mncyber/clinic

Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency

- Cybersecurity Advisors
- Cybersecurity Performance Goals
- Ransomware Readiness Assessment
- Onsite

Managed Detection and Response (MDR) Program

Grant-subsidized cybersecurity service available to local governments

- Fully managed, anti-virus tool to detect security risks and malicious activity
- 24/7/365 monitoring
- Rapid detection and containment
- Average response time ~ 7 minutes
- MNIT's Security Operations Center support and visibility
- MNIT and law enforcement collaboration
- Full remediation support, incident warranty

MDR works 24/7 to protect sensitive data

MNIT's MDR program safeguards the integrity of Minnesota's data

- Local government records
- K-12 schools' systems, student data
- Critical infrastructure (water and wastewater facilities) resources

Value of MNIT's MDR Program

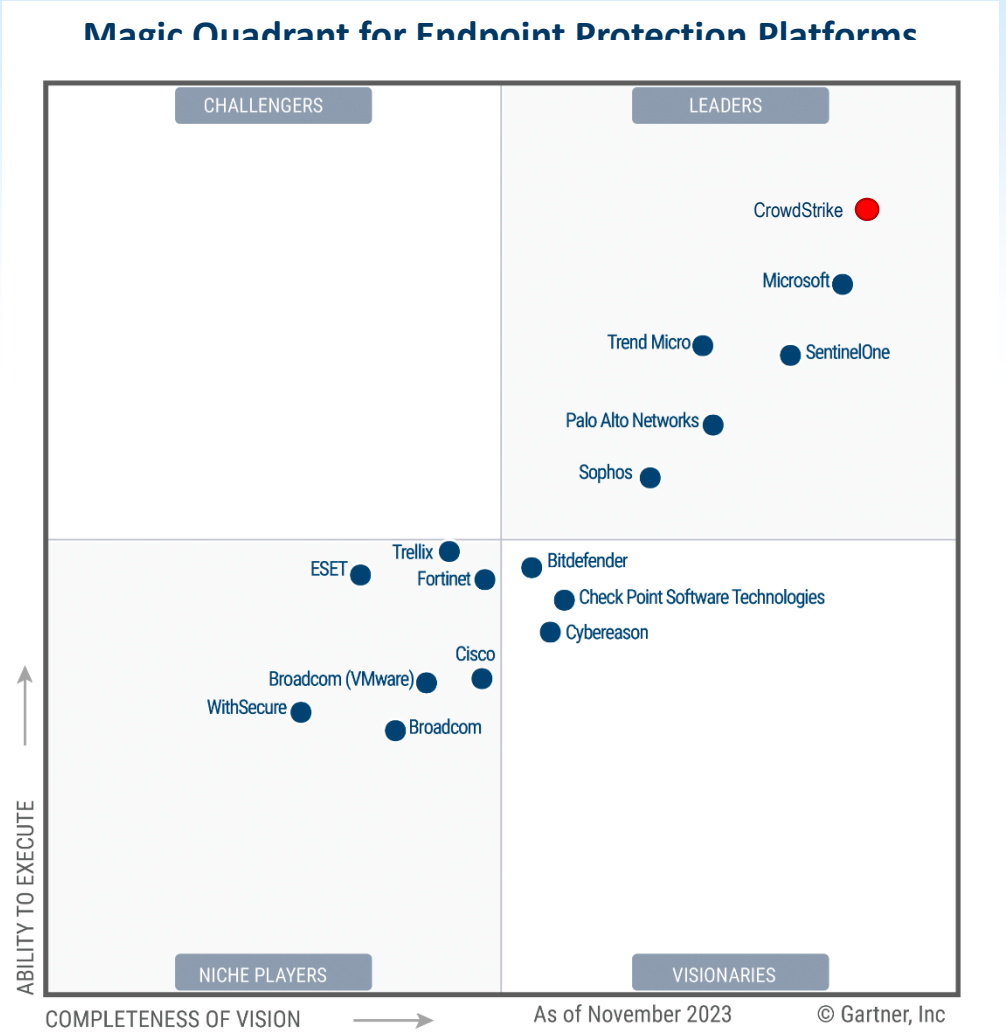
MDR looks for and blocks the types of attacks that could lead to data breaches, ransomware

- Reduces operational disruption
- Low-cost, high-value solution
- Cost-sharing model

MDR cost structure per device

2025	$22
2026	$32
2027	$38
Post-SLCGP	TBD

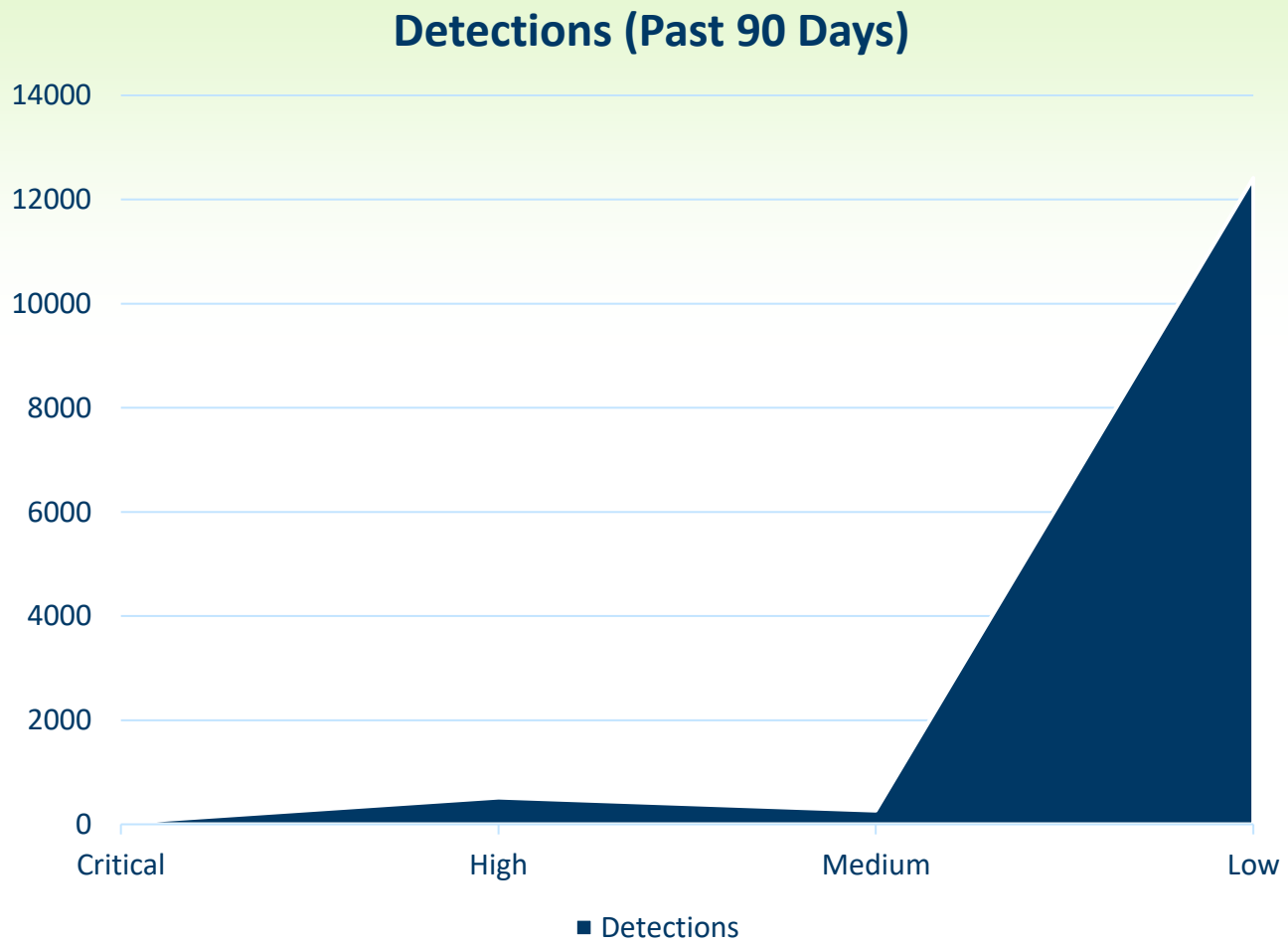
**per device annually; current rates*



MDR Cybersecurity Detections

MNIT's MDR prevented threats (past 90 days)

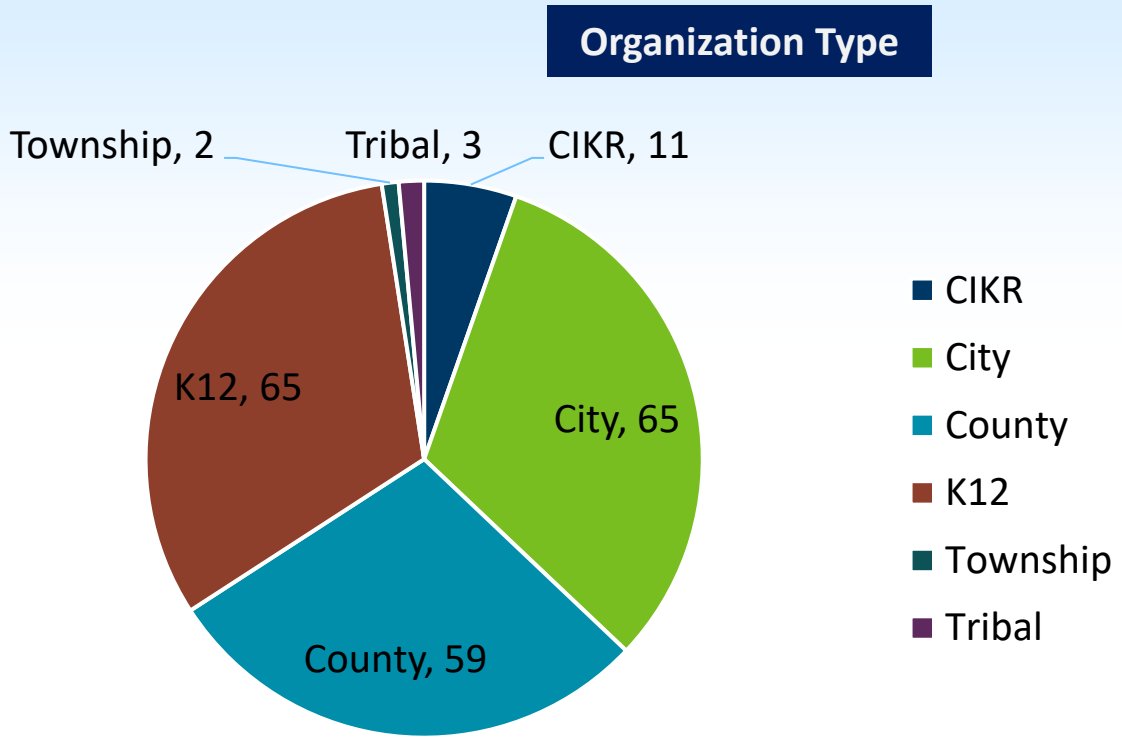
- Critical: 31
- High: 512
- Medium: 265
- Low: 12,415



MDR Partners

# of Organizations	# of Endpoints
205	59,535

Interested**
23



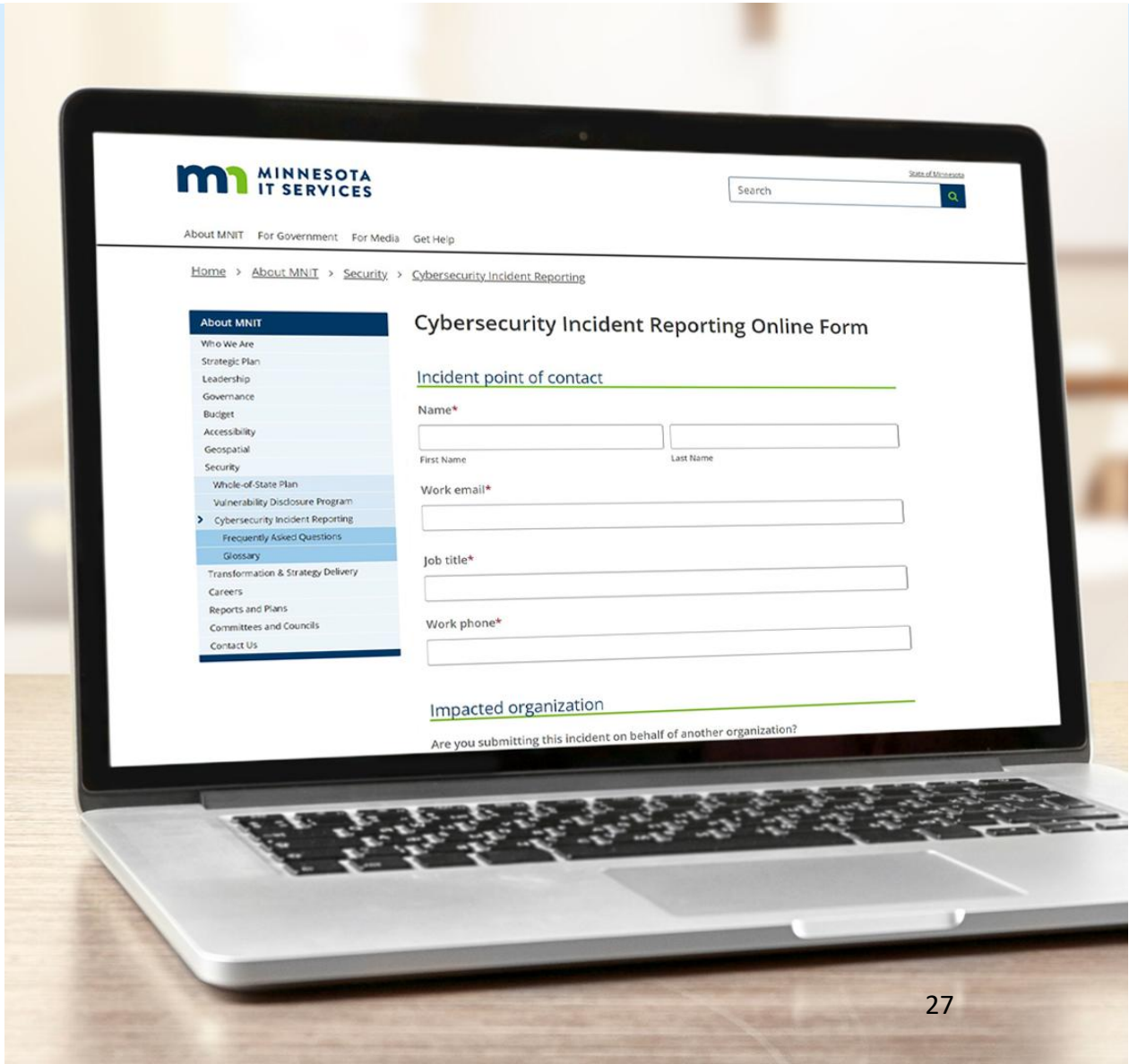
*MDR totals include entities who are onboarding but not yet active; currently eight (8) total

** Interested entities have expressed interested but have not yet started the onboarding process

Cybersecurity Incident Reporting

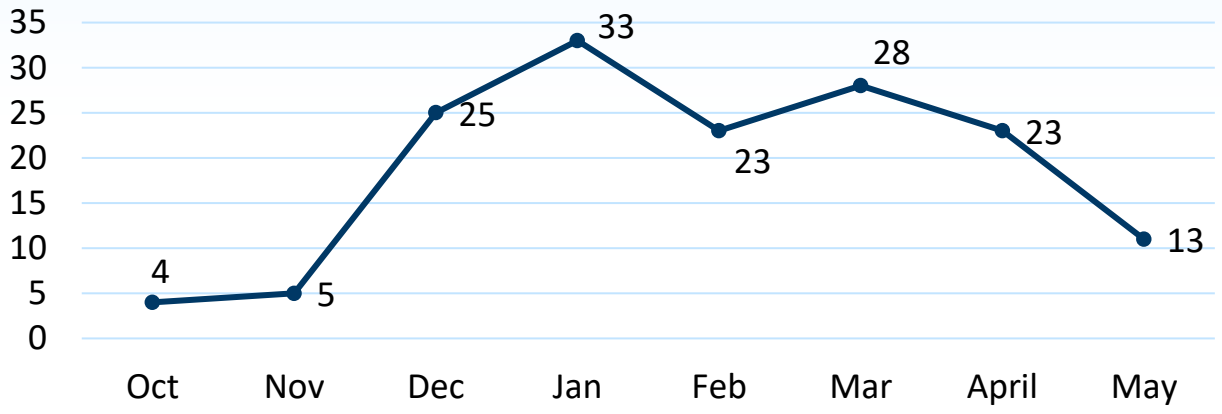
Reporting tool: mn.gov/mnit/cir

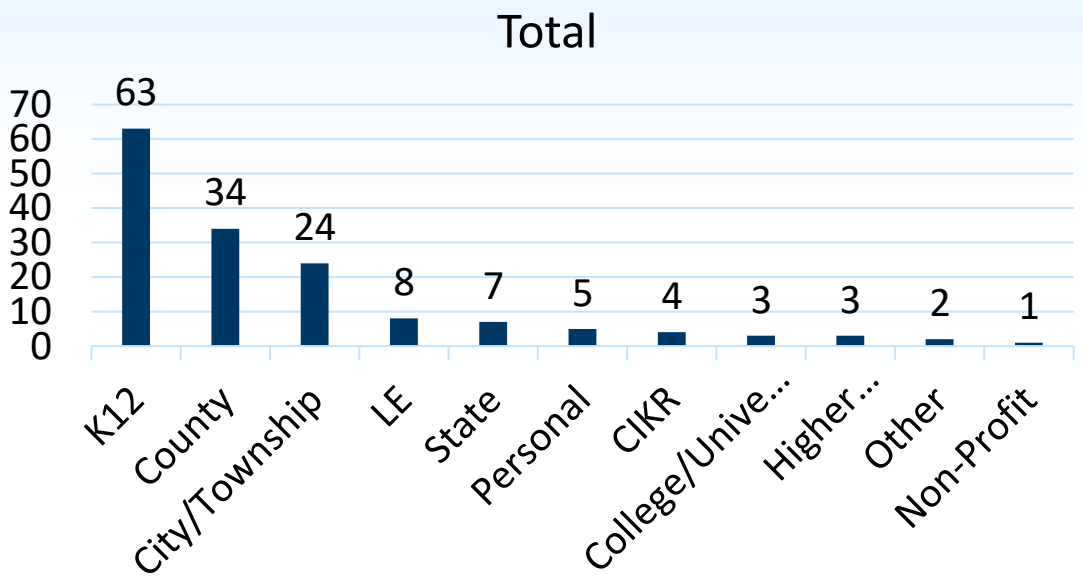
- Law took effect Dec. 1, 2024.
- Standardizes reporting protocols.
- State may collect information about cybersecurity incidents, anonymize it, and share it with appropriate organizations to strengthen cyber defenses statewide.



Non-Executive Branch Cybersecurity Incident Reports

Total YTD: **154**





(Current as of 27 May 2025)

*Includes reporting through the CIR web form only; not reporting directly to the SOC or MDR remediations

Cybersecurity Incident Reporting Requirements

Who must report

- State agencies, political subdivisions; school districts, charter schools, intermediate districts, cooperative units, and public post-secondary (higher education) institutions.
- *Government contractors or vendors* that provide goods or services to a public agency must report an incident to the public agency.

When to report

- Within 24 hours if Criminal Justice Information is impacted.
- Within 72 hours of when incident was identified or occurred.

Reporting tool: mn.gov/mnit/cir

Cybersecurity Incidents To Report

What to report:
Cybersecurity incidents that impact services, systems, or people.

Types of incidents to report:

- Compromised account/password
- Defacement
- Denial of service
- Malware
- Network attack
- OT/ICS/SCADA
- Potential data exposure
- Ransomware
- Social engineering
- Unauthorized access
- Web application attack

Protected Information

Reported cybersecurity incidents are:

- Security information pursuant to section 13.37.
- Not discoverable in a civil or criminal action absent a court order or a search warrant.
- Not subject to subpoena.

MNIT or BCA may:

- Anonymize and share cyber threat indicators and relevant defensive measures to help prevent attacks.
- Share cybersecurity incident notifications with potentially impacted parties through cybersecurity threat bulletins or relevant law enforcement authorities.

Cybersecurity Incident Reporting Benefits

Shared information can help prevent other cyber attacks from occurring or help other organizations better remediate attacks.

Minnesotans

- Gain a better understanding of the nature of and impacts from cybersecurity events.

MNIT and BCA

- Gain awareness of the scope of incidents.
- Assist organizations in defending their IT resources.
- Understand how bad actors bypass security controls.
- Track and identify trends in cybersecurity incidents.

Public entities

- May receive advisories or guidance from MNIT/BCA to help defend against cybersecurity threats.

Public leaders

- Gain improved quality of data related to cybersecurity risks.
- Able to better identify potential gaps that require resources to mitigate risk.

15TH ANNUAL LEADERSHIP EVENT

CYBER SECURITY SUMMIT

Security solutions through collaboration.™

Join Us October 21-22, 2025 at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest

New this year: Step into the **Public Sector Village on Wednesday, Oct. 22**, to explore hands-on cybersecurity tools and shared services available to Minnesota's public entities.

- Learn how local governments, schools, and utilities can leverage no-cost and discounted resources for system hardening, detection and response, and incident support.
- See demonstrations, walk-throughs, and real tools in use across the state.
- All summit attendees are welcome to tour the Village.
- Hosted by Minnesota National Guard C3 and MNIT.

Also new: Two **SLTT Cyber101 classes** will provide State, Local, Tribal & Territorial personnel and school personnel with the fundamentals of cyber security.

- There will be time before or after class to visit the Public Sector Village.

Questions?

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Cyber Navigator Team: CN.MNIT@state.mn.us

Thank you!

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