



MLDS CENTER

Maryland Longitudinal Data System

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MEMORANDUM

TO: MLDS Governing Board
FROM: Ross Goldstein
DATE: May 28, 2021
SUBJECT: 2021 Security Assessment

Purpose

The MLDS Center is required to have a security audit each year. This year, the Center partnered with the Department of Information Technology (DoIT) to complete a new security assessment that DoIT plans to implement for all state agencies.

Background

The assessment analyzed the following aspects of the Center's system and operations:

1. Organizational Security Maturity Assessment - This component of the assessment focused on organizational compliance with security controls described in the Maryland IT Security Manual (The Maryland IT Security Manual is modeled on the National Institute of Standards and Technology Cybersecurity Framework (NIST CSF).
2. Data Management Maturity Assessments - Understanding the data lifecycle is an important part of managing security because we cannot protect what we do not know we have. The primary goal of this activity was to analyze MLDS data management lifecycle practices and provide actionable recommendations to improve data management practices.
3. Web Application Scans and Penetration Tests - The final component of the assessment includes the evaluation of publicly accessible web applications, including both the website and web applications. A remote organizational penetration test was conducted to identify potential weaknesses in MLDS organizational boundaries.

Center staff spent more than 60 hours meeting with staff from the Office of Security Management at DoIT to respond to the assessment questionnaire. In addition, Center staff also provided all of the required documentation to evidence the existence of the required procedures. DoIT's contractor, Cyber Defence Technologies (CDT) performed Penetration Testing against the Center's website and web applications.

The full assessment findings have not yet been provided to the Center. That information should be available and will be presented to the MLDS Governing Board Cybersecurity Subcommittee at its next meeting.

Action

Information purposes only.