Secure Florida's Recommended
Best Practices for Internet Security

- **Have a strong password and keep it safe.**
  Create a password that is at least 15 characters long, and a combination of letters, numbers, and punctuation. Keep your passwords private; never share them with others.

- **Use antivirus software and keep it updated.**
  Set up your antivirus software to monitor your system in "real time." Keep it updated to protect you from the latest malicious software (malware).

- **Make sure your firewall is turned on.**
  Firewalls protect your computer from hackers and other unwanted traffic. Current operating systems (for Mac and PC) come with a firewall already installed; keep it turned on.

- **Apply your software security patches and updates.**
  Carefully review and install software patches as soon as they become available, especially for your operating system. This reduces the amount of time that you are vulnerable to an attack.

- **Carefully review your privacy settings on all social networking sites.**
  If you aren't careful on sites like Facebook and Twitter, you can accidentally share information with everyone, not just your friends. Check the settings frequently to ensure your information stays protected.

- **Research any file before you download it.**
  Malware and spyware often hide within downloads, especially the free ones. Before you download anything verify that the source is legitimate. Scan email attachments with your antivirus program before you open them.

- **Beware of websites and emails that ask for personal information.**
  Identity thieves are creative in finding ways to get your personal information. Before you fill out any form in a website, or respond to any email, make sure you know where that information is going. If necessary, make a phone call to double check.

- **Watch out for frauds and scams.**
  Fraudsters and scam artists have become very sophisticated. Watch out for deals that are too good to be true, especially on auction sites or online classified ads. Do some research on any person or company before you do business with them.

- **Secure your home wireless network.**
  Keep broadband thieves and hackers out of your wireless network at home. Create a good strong network password, and share it only with people you trust.

- **Remember that mobile devices are also computers; secure them with the same degree of protection.**
  Smartphones, tablets, and laptops are full of personal and confidential information. Be sure to protect them with passwords, and consider full-disk encryption for your laptop.

For more information, visit www.secureflorida.org