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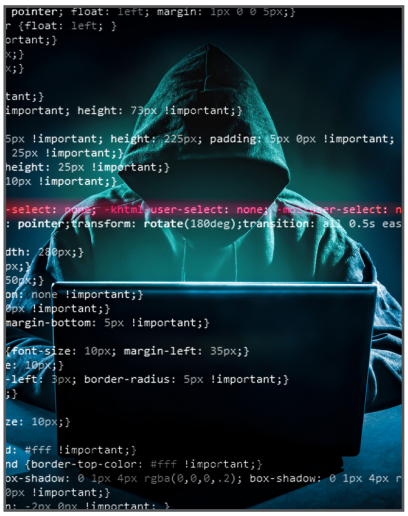
Aprio's Law Firm Cybersecurity Assessment

HOW DOES YOUR FIRM RATE AGAINST THE ABA'S TOP 10 CYBERSECURITY OBJECTIVES?



According to the American Bar Association's 2016 Legal Technology Survey Report, more than 25 percent of firms with more than 500 lawyers admitted they had experienced some form of data breach. Approximately 40 percent of those firms reported significant down time and loss of billable hours.

In November of 2017, the American Bar Association released its latest handbook. This edition includes the ABA's top 10 cybersecurity practices that every law firm should be doing. The handbook makes it clear that not engaging in due diligence to protect client information is a violation of ABA ethics and is likely grounds for malpractice.

Aprio's Law Firm Cybersecurity Assessment provides law firms with an objective, independent assessment of their current position relative to the ABA's top 10 cybersecurity objectives. This assessment provides the first step to ensure that you are protecting your firm and your clients against data breach by providing:

- **A scoring of your firm's compliance against each objective**
- **An assessment of the gaps between your current status and best practices**
- **Go-forward recommendations based on recognized security standards**

Aprio's Law Firm Cyber Assessment translates the ABA's top 10 cybersecurity objectives into measurable requirements that align to recognized security standards and best practices.

The Assessment

Aprio has designed this assessment to provide your firm's leadership with a greater understanding of your firm's information security risks. The assessment includes an online survey and follow-on interviews with key firm personnel to gain a comprehensive understanding of your firm's data environments, office locations, users, third-party vendors, sensitive data, applications and end points.

To ensure maximum knowledge transfer and understanding of your firm's security gaps, the assessment concludes with a detailed report that Aprio will present to your firm's management team. This report provides a roadmap with practical steps you can take to improve your firm's information security and compliance with the ABA top 10.

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Deciphering the ABA's Top Ten Cybersecurity Objectives

One of the challenges that legal firms face is that the ABA top 10 are written as objectives, making them difficult to act on. Aprio's Law Firm Cybersecurity Assessment translates these objectives into discrete and measurable requirements that align to recognized security standards and best practices (e.g., ISO 27001).

1. A lawyer should acquire a basic understanding of the "benefits and risks associated with relevant technology" used in his or her day-to-day practice. A lawyer who does not have such an understanding should identify and consult with someone who does.

2. Technology is a moving target. Keeping current about changes in technology is an ongoing process. A lawyer must continually reassess and evaluate security measures as new technologies develop and come into use by lawyers and their clients.

3. Be aware that the scope of the information protected under the ethics rules – ABA Model Rule 1.6 – is very broad. It includes all information relating to the representation.

4. Be mindful of the obligations to protect a former client's confidential information (under Model Rule 1.9 (c) as well.

5. When using technology to either store or transmit information, lawyers must make reasonable efforts to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of or unauthorized access to confidential client information.

6. Reasonable efforts to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of or unauthorized access to confidential client information include assessing the sensitivity of the information and the likelihood of disclosure if additional safeguards are not employed. Depending on the circumstances, encryption may be an appropriate security safeguard.

7. In an office or firm, have in place procedures by which both lawyers and nonlawyers are trained and monitored in their use of technology to ensure that client confidences are protected.

8. When disposing of portable electronic devices, take precautions to ensure that all confidential client information has been removed. If the devices are recycled, verify that the recycler follows appropriate protocols to remove the data.

9. When transmitting electronic documents to third parties, remove metadata that contains confidential client information.

10. When using cloud computing or outsourcing services, verify that the service provider has in place adequate security measures to prevent the inadvertent disclosure of or unauthorized access to confidential client information.

About Aprio

Since 1952, clients throughout the U.S. and across more than 40 countries have trusted Aprio for guidance on how to achieve what's next. As a premier, CPA-led professional services firm, Aprio delivers advisory, assurance, tax and private client services to build value, drive growth, manage risk and protect wealth. With proven expertise and genuine care, Aprio serves individuals and businesses, from promising startups to market leaders alike.

Aprio.com

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