Small Business First-Week Security Checklist

Sentinel Safeguard LLC - Kansas City, Missouri - Free to print and share. No email required, ever.

Passwords - days 1 and 2

- [ ] List the accounts the business cannot run without: email, banking, bookkeeping, point of sale, and the admin account for each.
- [ ] Change every shared and default password on that list; every person gets their own sign-in.
- [ ] Put the passwords in a password manager - one vault beats a notebook, a spreadsheet, and memory.

Multi-factor authentication - days 2 and 3

- [ ] Turn on MFA for every account on the list, email and banking first.
- [ ] Prefer an authenticator app or number matching over text codes where the service offers the choice.
- [ ] Adopt the house rule: never approve a sign-in prompt you did not just start.

Backups - days 3 and 4

- [ ] Name the files the business would miss most, and confirm they are actually inside the backup - not beside it.
- [ ] Keep at least one copy separate from the machine it protects.
- [ ] Restore one real file to a separate folder and open it. A backup is done when a restore has been seen to work.

Updates - day 5

- [ ] Update the operating system and browser on every work computer, and turn on automatic updates.
- [ ] Update the router firmware, and change its admin password if it is still the factory one.
- [ ] Remove software nobody uses - what is not installed cannot be exploited.

Keep it alive

- [ ] Put a restore test and a password review on the calendar a few times a year; security set once and never revisited quietly expires.