

Date of Report: 20 February 2026

Reported by: John Albert J. Santos

Description of the Incident:

On February 19, 2026, Ms. Glaiza and Mr. Rey spoke to us and said that the new PC in the cubicle that is being used by Kenneth for taking employees' photos needed to be moved inside so that the HR Records Team could use it. However, the said new PC contains all the data related to attendance, employee photos, signatures, and other important files, which first need to be transferred to the old PC. So that before the new PC is handed over to the Records Team, it will already be ready for use. That is why we removed the hard drive from the old PC and installed it into the new PC to begin transferring the data. The transfer to the hard drive was successful, and we were able to double check and confirm that the data had indeed been moved.

However, after the files were transferred and the new PC handed over to the Records Team, a problem occurred. The data that had been transferred to the hard drive suddenly disappeared when it was reconnected to the old PC.

Action Taken:

We began troubleshooting to determine the cause of the file loss. Initially, we thought we might have selected the wrong drive during the transfer. We also considered the possibility that the data had been deleted, as it could not be found even among hidden files. Consequently, we borrowed the new PC to confirm if the data had been copied to an incorrect location. However, once the PC was booted, we discovered it contained none of the missing files.

At that stage, we explored recovery methods, including CMD commands to unhide files and folders. By 5:00 PM, we concluded for the day to research more advanced recovery tools.

The following day, we installed **EaseUS Data Recovery** and scanned Drive E, where the data was originally stored; however, no data was found. We then scanned Drive D the transfer destination and discovered that the files had not been deleted but were hidden within existing directories. Further investigation revealed a virus that converts folders into **protected operating system files**. This explains why standard CMD unhide commands were ineffective. We proceeded with the recovery process, which took some time but was ultimately successful. All lost data was fully restored, and we have since created backups on both the new and old PCs.

Recommendation:

To minimize PC virus infection, it is important to install and regularly update a trusted antivirus program and keep the operating system up to date. Users should avoid downloading files from untrusted websites, opening suspicious email attachments, and using cracked or pirated software. Enabling the firewall, using a secure browser with ad-blocking extensions, and creating regular backups of important files also help protect against malware and ransomware attacks. Practicing safe browsing habits and being cautious online are essential in maintaining computer security.

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