GUIDELINES

The guidelines are to address: critical software, secure software development lifecycle, security measures for the federal government, and requirements for testing software. They are to include:

- criteria to evaluate software security,
- criteria to evaluate the security practices of the developers and suppliers themselves, and
- innovative tools or methods to demonstrate conformance with secure practices.

After consulting with multiple agencies:

- By June 26, 2021, NIST is to define “critical software.”
- By July 11, 2021, NIST is to publish guidance outlining security measures for critical software as well as guidelines recommending minimum standards for vendors’ testing of their software source code.
- By November 8, 2021, NIST is to publish preliminary guidelines, based on stakeholder input and existing documents for enhancing software supply chain security.

- By February 6, 2022, NIST will issue guidance that identifies practices that enhance software supply chain security, including standards, procedures, and criteria.
- By May 8, 2022, NIST will publish additional guidelines, including procedures for periodically reviewing and updating guidelines.

WORKSHOPS AND POSITION PAPERS

To ensure robust stakeholder participation in developing standards and guidelines to be produced, NIST has held multiple workshops to share details about its plans to develop software-related standards and guidelines called for by the EO and to receive and discuss information and ideas about the approach and content that NIST should consider. Agendas have been based in part on position papers and comments submitted to NIST by organizations and individuals. NIST has published those papers and lists of resources to improve software security.
The EO also directs NIST to initiate two cybersecurity labeling initiatives related to:

- the Internet of Things (IoT) and
- consumer software.

These efforts are aimed at informing consumers about the security of their products. NIST will work closely with other government agencies and private and public sector organizations and individuals in carrying out these initiatives. That includes several workshops, solicited position papers, and comments on draft criteria for IoT devices and software labeling.

NIST is identifying key elements of labeling programs in terms of minimum requirements and desirable attributes – rather than establishing its own programs; NIST will specify desired outcomes, allowing providers and customers to choose best solutions for their devices and environments. One size may not fit all, and multiple solutions might be offered by label providers.

More information about this work is available on a dedicated website.

Information about NIST’s broader portfolio of work in cybersecurity and privacy can be found here.

Questions should be directed to: swsupplychain-eo@list.nist.gov