

Code Red: RansomBreak Simulates Hospital Ransomware Crisis in January CEH Compete Challenge

TAMPA, FL, UNITED STATES, February 24, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [EC-Council](#), inventor of the world-renowned [Certified Ethical Hacker \(CEH\)](#) certification, held the January 2026 CEH Compete challenge under the theme Code Red: RansomBreak. The scenario simulated a ransomware attack on a metropolitan hospital, requiring participants to respond to one of the most critical and time-sensitive cybersecurity incidents affecting the healthcare sector.



EC-Council's Code Red: RansomBreak immerses CEH competitors in a live hospital ransomware crisis simulation this January.

The mission began with hospital systems locked by ransomware encryption, with files displaying ransom demands and access to essential patient records blocked. In addition to the executable, competitors received network capture files and logs, creating a realistic forensic environment to analyze the compromise.

The task required participants to examine the ransomware, identify the encryption methods, and devise a strategy to recover access to the data without making a ransom payment. The challenge tested expertise in malware analysis, reverse engineering, and forensic investigation while underscoring the importance of recovery planning under crisis conditions.

EC-Council extends sincere congratulations to its Accredited Training Centers: Hacker School in India , Nearby Limited in Macau in MACAO, DAGMA Szkolenia IT in POLAND, Layer 8 Security in PERU and IT-Schulungen.com in GERMANY. These centers have delivered exceptional CEH training, guiding their students to excel and secure positions within the top ten ranks on the esteemed [C|EH Compete Global Challenge Leaderboard](#).

Healthcare was selected for the January challenge to highlight the real-world stakes of ransomware. Disruptions in hospitals go beyond operational setbacks, directly impacting patient safety. By placing ethical hackers in this simulated environment, the exercise emphasized the

vital need for proactive security, resilient backups, and highly skilled responders who can minimize downtime in life-critical operations. Participants who successfully advanced through the stages of the challenge reconstructed the attacker's method of entry, reversed the encryption logic, and restored access to locked files. The exercise demonstrated how structured forensic analysis and technical adaptability can provide recovery pathways even in severe incidents.

The January challenge reinforced several important lessons for global defenders. Ransomware remains one of the most common and damaging cyberattacks worldwide. Effective response requires not only preventive defenses but also continuous training of professionals capable of handling incidents under pressure.

By simulating a ransomware outbreak in the healthcare sector, Code Red: RansomBreak added urgency and realism to CEH Compete's mission of equipping professionals with practical, job-ready skills. The competition prepared participants for one of the most persistent threats facing enterprises and governments, ensuring readiness for incidents where rapid recovery can mean the difference between disruption and disaster.

For more information about CEH Compete and future opportunities, visit <https://www.eccouncil.org/train-certify/certified-ethical-hacker-ceh-compete/>

About EC-Council:

EC-Council is the creator of the Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH) program and a leader in cybersecurity education. Founded in 2001, EC-Council's mission is to provide high-quality training and certifications for cybersecurity professionals to keep organizations safe from cyber threats. EC-Council offers over 200 certifications and degrees in various cybersecurity domains, including forensics, security analysis, threat intelligence, and information security. □□

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An ISO/IEC 17024 accredited organization, EC-Council has certified over 350,000 professionals worldwide, with clients ranging from government agencies to Fortune 100 companies. EC-

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Council is the gold standard in cybersecurity certification, trusted by the U.S. Department of Defense, the Army, Navy, Air Force, and leading global corporations.□□□

For more information, visit: www.eccouncil.org

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