

Security Standard: Password/Passphrase

SCOPE

This standard applies to all account passwords/passphrases used to access RIT information resources.

REQUIREMENTS

Passwords for the accounts of users and administrators on RIT computing and networked resources are required *to meet the requirements below to the maximum allowable* by the device or application:

1. Password Complexity

1.1. Passwords should be at least 12 characters. A longer passphrase is preferred. (A passphrase is a sequence of words or other text.)

1.2. Passwords should meet guidelines for strong passwords, see <<https://www.rit.edu/security/content/creating-strong-passwords>> for guidance on creation of strong passwords.

2. Password Protection

2.1. The user or administrator is the sole custodian of the password and should protect the password at all times.

2.2. Passwords should not be shared, unless used for a documented and approved shared account.

2.3. Passwords used for RIT accounts shall not be used with non-RIT accounts.

2.4. Passwords should be physically secured if written down and should be encrypted if stored or transmitted digitally.

3. Password Changes

3.1. Passwords should be changed immediately when:

- The password is a default or temporary password created by someone other than the user. This includes generic, vendor-supplied, and help/service desk default passwords.
- The password, or a system, service or application storing, processing or transmitting the password, is suspected to have been shared or compromised.
- For shared accounts, when the roles or responsibilities of any of the users are changed

3.2 Passwords should not be reused for the next 6 password changes.

4. Additional Authentication Controls

4.1. Passwords should be utilized together with additional authentication controls, such as multi-factor authentication, when available.

4.2 We encourage use of robust alternative authentication methods, such as certificate-based authentication. Alternative authentication messages require a security review.

5. Resources

Effective Date June 1, 2021