

OD Desktop Access Policy

Policy

This policy contains good IT security practices for protecting OD IT users and resources. OD strengthened this policy because of the recent increased threats to IT security. One of OD's most valuable assets is the information stored in OD computer files on our desktop/laptop computers and on the OD network.

This policy contains two sections:

- **OD Network Password Policy**
- **OD Policy to Limit Computer Access to Authorized Users**

OD Network Password Policy

Practicing good password procedures is a key defense in protecting valuable NIH information resources. The protection of our information resources is only as strong as the weakest link in the security chain. It is the duty of all NIH individuals to follow good password procedures. <http://irm.cit.nih.gov/policy/passwords.html>
User training regarding the importance of good passwords can be found at <http://oit.od.nih.gov/security.aspx>.

Passwords are an important aspect of computer security. They are the front line of protection for user accounts. A poorly chosen password may result in the compromise of NIH's entire network. An individual who gains access to your password can:

- Compromise the machines you use;
- Log onto other machines and compromise those;
- Steal your data, or someone else's;
- Change your data, or someone else's;
- Gain access to the network and escalate their privileges;
- Send unauthorized e-mail;
- Launch attacks on other machines from yours;
- Launch viruses to bring the network down, or worse, destroy every computer system they come in contact with.

Thus, as an OD employee, you are responsible for taking the appropriate steps to select and secure your password. There is a direct relationship between the ease with which a password can be remembered and the ease with which it can be guessed. It is important that you treat your password as sensitive information and that you not share it with anyone.

Your password:

- Must be at least eight alphanumeric characters long;
- Must include at least one special character (e.g., {}[],.,<>;:~?/\`~!@#\$%^&*()_+ =);
- Must include upper and lower case letters;
- Will expire every 120 days;
- Cannot be reused within 360 days.

Note: If you forget or mistype your password more than three times, the system will lock you out for 30 minutes. *Please call TASC (4-3278).*

OD Policy to Limit Computer Access to Authorized Users

Protecting OD/NIH computers and accounts after users log on to computers/networks is a significant IT security measure. By locking your PC when you leave your desk, you will help prevent unauthorized access to information stored on your workstation or systems to which you have access through your computer. Thus, as an OD user, you are responsible for taking the appropriate steps below:

- Use a password-protected screen saver that automatically locks your computer after *30 minutes* of inactivity;
- Manually lock your computer when leaving your desk;
- Log off and turn off your computer at the end of the day.

Note: If you need access to another user's files, *please call TASC (4-3278).*

Computer Locking Instructions

How to set up the PC automatic screen saver

1. Right-click on the desktop.
2. On the pop-up menu, click Properties.
3. The Display Properties window pops up.
4. Click the Screen Saver tab.
5. Choose any screen saver.
6. Click the box labeled "Password Protected."
7. Enter "30" in box labeled "wait_minutes." (without the quotes)
8. Click OK.

How to manually lock your PC (only for Windows NT and 2000 users)

1. Press the Control-Alt-Delete keys simultaneously.
2. A pop-up window appears that has a button to activate the screen saver.
3. The default button on the window is labeled, "Lock Computer."
4. Either click on the button or hit the "Enter" key to activate this feature.

Macintosh Screen Saver

1. Start at the Apple Menu.
2. Select the Control Panel.
3. Press the Multiple Users Options button.
4. The Multiple Users window comes up.
5. Click the OPTIONS button.
6. Check the box labeled "If the user is idle for."
7. Enter "30" minutes. (without the quotes)
8. Click the choice labeled "Lock the screen."
9. Press the Save button.
10. Press OK.