

Password Rules & Guidelines

Your County user account gives you access to email, Dakota County Works, online files and folders, secure printing, and many other systems. The password for your County user account isn't an inconvenience. It helps keep our information safe and secure.

Password rules

- Must be a minimum of 15 characters.
- Must include at least three of these criteria:
 - One number
 - One special character
 - One capital letter
 - One lowercase letter
- Must be changed at least every 90 days.
- Must be different from the previous 24 passwords used.
- Cannot be changed more often than once every 24 hours.
- Cannot contain words or phrases that are commonly used, obvious or vulnerable to hacking.

Password tips & tricks

- **Use memorable pass *phrases* instead of convoluted passwords.** Choose a mix of specific words that form a vivid picture or a sentence. Some examples include:
 - 1990 Caribbean grad party
 - Rudy's Christmas tree
 - 3,000 Rocky Mountains
 - Greg went to St. Paul
 - Vader is Luke's dad
 - I love snow storms!
 - Who lives at 423 Main?
- **Use spaces.** A space—created using the space bar on your keyboard—counts as a character and helps separate words in a sentence or phrase.
- **Choose words that are less common to everyone else and more unique to *you*.** For example, "Kaitlyn PowerPuff", "black&decker at Menards", and "1985 Chevy Cavalier" are harder to guess than "computer monitor" or "christmas 2018."
- **NEVER use your name or your Dakota County user account as part of your password.**
- **NEVER write your password down.**
- **NEVER share your password with someone else, even if it's another County employee.**

If you run into any problems please contact the I.T. Help Desk via email (helpdesk@co.dakota.mn.us) or by phone at (651) 438-4346.