USMO Password Policy

A password policy is a set of rules designed to enhance computer security by encouraging users to employ strong passwords and use them properly. This policy applies to all passwords for any University System of Maryland Office business-related resources.

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Articles in this document

Password Creation

It is suggested that users do not use the same password for USMO associated accounts as for other non-USMO access (for example personal email, banking, Netflix accounts and so on).

Password Standards

All passwords will meet or exceed the following guidelines:

- **Must** be a minimum of 8 alphanumeric characters.
- Contain both upper and lower case letters.
- Contain at least one number (for example, 0-9).
- Contain at least one special character (Allowed characters include: ~!@$%^&*_-+=`|\(){}[]:;"'<>,.?/)

All passwords will **NOT** contain the following criteria:

- May not contain your first or last name.
- May not contain your username.

It is highly suggested that your passwords meet the following guidelines:

- Contain multiple words, this is also referred to as a passphrase.

Please review USMO's Password Security Best Practices article to assist you in building and maintaining strong passwords.

Password Change

- Passwords must be changed annually.
- Users will not use the last 10 previously used passwords.

Password Protection

You are solely responsible for the security of your USMD credentials.

- You must never share any USMD credentials (name/password) with other people.
- Passwords must **not** be inserted into email messages or any other forms of electronic communication.
- It is suggested to **not** use the "Remember Password" feature of applications (for example, web browsers) for any sites that may contain PII or financial information and on any public/shared machines.
- Any user suspecting that their password may have been compromised must immediately report the incident to the USM IT department. All passwords must be changed upon discovery of possible compromise.

Multifactor Authentication

- Employees are not required, at this time, to have MFA enabled on applicable accounts.
- Some secured USMO resources will require Multi-Factor Authentication.

If you have any further questions, concerns or need assistance with the USMO Password Policy, please contact the USM-IT Dept. at geeks@usmd.edu

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