



Effective Date: March 31, 2009

Retired:

Revised: October 1, 2013

Approved by: A. Cherrie Epps, Ph.D.  
President and Chief Executive Officer

Subject: Office of Information and Technology - Password Policy

**SCOPE:**

The Vice President of Information Technology (VP) is designated as the institutional officer responsible for identifying standards for access and acceptable use of information technology resources.

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

All computers that are attached to the Meharry network must be protected against unauthorized usage. This policy spells out these requirements.

**Applicability:** This policy is applicable to all Meharry Medical College students, faculty and staff and to bona fide associates granted use of Meharry Medical College information resources.

**PURPOSE:**

To protect computers being used by Meharry faculty, staff, students, and contractors or consultants from unauthorized usage which might result in alteration, destruction, misappropriation, or other damage to Meharry-owned equipment or information.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Authorized Use:** authorized use of Meharry Medical College owned, leased, operated, or contracted computing and network resources is consistent with the education, research, and administrative mission of the College and is consistent with this policy.

**Authorized Users:** authorized users are current students, faculty and staff of the College or others who have been authorized to use a particular resource by the campus unit responsible for operating that resource.

**CO:** Compliance Officer, the enforcing unit for the Computer and Network Usage Policies at Meharry Medical College.

**MMC:** Meharry Medical College (alias the College) for which the policy manual applies.

**IT:** Information Technology, the source for establishing the Computer and Network Policies at Meharry Medical College.

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**Unauthorized Usage:**

Computer usage by persons not authorized by Information Technology or Human Resources, with or without malicious intent.

**POLICY:**

All Meharry computer systems must be protected from unauthorized usage by various security methods, including secure passwords. It is the responsibility of each authorized computer user to ensure that passwords are not disclosed to unauthorized users. Allowing such disclosure may jeopardize the integrity of information stored on the computer used by each user, and ultimately of information stored elsewhere within Meharry's network.

**PROCEDURE:**

The following are the minimum requirements for user passwords on the Meharry domain:

- (1) All passwords must be at least eight characters long. These characters may be upper or lower case letters, numbers, or some special characters. Spaces are not allowed in passwords.
- (2) The system will require you to change your password every 180 days, but you can change it more frequently if you wish.
- (3) You must use three unique passwords before a password may be reused.

It's important to safeguard your password. By following the guidelines below, you will help secure the Meharry network and protect the college's sensitive data.

- (1) Do not write your password on a sticky note and place on your monitor or under your keyboard, or anyplace else where it's easy to find.
- (2) Do not share your password with anyone else.
- (3) Make your password hard to guess. Use an unusual combination of words; replace letters with similar numbers (0 for O, 1 for I, 3 for E, etc.); deliberately misspell words; insert capital letters or special characters in odd places.
- (4) If you think someone else knows your password, change it.

**SANCTIONS:**

Deliberate failure to maintain the security of a password, resulting in compromise to Meharry information or systems, may result in disciplinary action.

**EXHIBITS:**



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