

Password Policy

1. Overview

Passwords are an important aspect of computer security. A poorly chosen password may result in unauthorized access and/or exploitation of the Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin's entire network. All users, including Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin's employees (including contractors and vendors with access to the Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin's systems) are responsible for taking the appropriate steps, as outlined below, to select and secure their passwords.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a standard for the creation of strong passwords, the protection of those passwords, and the frequency of change.

3. Scope

The scope of this policy includes all personnel who have or are responsible for an account (or any form of access that supports or requires a password) on any system that resides at any Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin facility or has access to the Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin network.

4. Policy

4.1 PASSWORD CREATION

All user-level and system-level passwords must meet or exceed the strong password standard articulated by the following **Password Construction Guidelines**.

Password Construction Guidelines:

Strong passwords have the following characteristics:

- Contains at least 8 alphanumeric characters.
- Contains both upper and lower case letters.
- Contains at least one number (for example, 0-9).
- Contains at least one special character (for example ,!@\$%^*()_+{}[]:~';<?/,)
- Cannot contain your first name, last name, email, or user ID.
- Cannot be one of your last 5 passwords.

Poor, or weak, passwords have the following characteristics:

- Contain fewer than 8 characters
- Can be found in a dictionary, including foreign language, or exist in a language slang, dialect, or jargon.
- Contain personal information such as birthdates, addresses, phone numbers, or names of family members, pets, friends, season, months, years, sports teams, and fantasy characters.

- Contain work-related information such as building names, system commands, sites, companies, hardware, or software.
- Contain number patterns such as aaabbb, qwerty, zyxwvuts, or 123321.
- Contain common words spelled backward, or preceded or followed by a number (for example, terces, secret1 or 1secret).
- Are some version of “Welcome123” “Password123” “Changeme123”

Never write down a password. Instead, try to create passwords that you can remember easily. One way to do this is create a password based on a song title, affirmation, other phrase, or a random collection of words that only you can remember.

Users must not use the same password for Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin accounts as for other personal accounts (for example, personal account, bank account, merchant account, and so on).

User accounts that have system-level administrative privileges must have a unique password from all other accounts held by that user.

4.2 PASSWORD CHANGE

All system-level passwords (for example, root, enable, admin, application administration accounts, and so on) must be changed on at least a quarterly basis.

All user-level passwords (for example, email, web, desktop computer, and so on) must be changed at least annually. The recommended change interval is every 90 days.

4.3 PASSWORD PROTECTION

Passwords must not be shared with anyone. All passwords are to be treated as sensitive, confidential Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin information.

Passwords must not be inserted into email messages or other forms of electronic communication.

Passwords must not be revealed over the phone to anyone

Do not reveal a password on questionnaires or security forms.

Do not hint at the format of a password (for example, “my family name”).

Do not share Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin passwords with anyone, including administrative assistants, secretaries, managers, co-workers while on vacation, and family members.

Do not write passwords down and store them anywhere in your office. Do not store passwords in a file on a computer or mobile devices (phone, tablet) without encryption.

Do not use the “Remember Password” feature of applications (for example, web browsers).

Any user suspecting that his/her password may have been compromised must report the incident and change all passwords.

5. Policy Compliance

COMPLIANCE MEASUREMENT

The Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin will verify and promote compliance to this policy through various methods, including but not limited to, reports, internal and external audits, and feedback to individuals and various departments.

EXCEPTIONS

The Town of Carman/RM of Dufferin must approve any exception to the policy in advance.

NON-COMPLIANCE

An employee found to have violated this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.