

**Date:** August 3, 2009

**To:** Agency Payroll, HR and Accounting Staff

**From:** Mary Muellner, Director, Statewide Payroll Services  
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**Subject:** New Password Requirements effective 7/13/2009 for Employee Self Service Users and SEMA4 Users (Vendors) who access the General Profile Information page in SEMA4 to change their password

In an ongoing effort to ensure and increase security for SEMA4 and Employee Self Service, password requirements were strengthened effective Monday, July 13, 2009. The use of “strong passwords” – ones that are not easily discovered or guessed – has always been encouraged. The system now enforces the use of a strong password.

Effective 7/13/2009, passwords:

- **Must** be a minimum of 8 characters – but it can be more
- **Must** include at least one number
- **Must** include at least one of the following special characters  
! @ # \$ % ^ & \* ( ) - \_ = + \ | ] } [ { ; : / ? . > < , `
- **Continue to be** case sensitive
- **Cannot be reused** for at least 6 password cycles. The system keeps track of your previous six passwords and prevents you from reusing them.
- **Expire** after **60** days (effective 8/3/2009)

Additionally, we recommend the following characteristics for strong passwords:

- It **should not** be your name, spouse's name, child's name, pet's name, parent's name, etc.
- It **should not** be a real dictionary word
- It **should** be significantly different from previously used passwords (not just incrementing a counter, for example)
- It **should** contain characters from each of these 4 groups:
  - Upper case letters (A, B, C, ...)
  - Lower case letters (a, b, c, ...)
  - Numbers (1, 2, 3, ...)
  - Special characters ! @ # \$ % ^ & \* ( ) - \_ = + \ | ] } [ { ; : / ? . > < , `

Effective **August 3, 2009**, passwords will now expire after 60 days. This means that:

- passwords that are 60 days old or less will still be valid, but will expire after 60 days
- passwords that are more than 60 days old will be expired

August 3, 2009

Page 2

Users with expired passwords will be prompted to change their password, and are provided with a link to the page where the change can be made. An expired password can be changed as long as the user remembers the expired password.

Employee Self Service users can click  [My Profile](#) on the home page to display the General Profile Information page. From this page users can:

- Click [Change password](#) to change their password AT ANY TIME.
- Click [Change or set up forgotten password hint password](#) to review or modify their validation question information.

Users receive a warning message prior to the expiration of their password that reminds them, “Your password will expire in X days. Do you want to change your password now?” Beginning **August 3, 2009** this warning message will display beginning 10 days before a password expires.

Self Service users that experience difficulty with their passwords can obtain a new password by clicking the “[If you’ve forgotten your password, click here](#)” link on the Employee Self Service sign-in page. When the user correctly answers the validation question, a system assigned temporary password will allow the user access. System generated passwords should always be changed as soon as access has been established. Self Service users who forget both their password and their password hint (the answer to the validation question) will need to contact MMB at [selfservice.mmb@state.mn.us](mailto:selfservice.mmb@state.mn.us) to have their security reset. (This email box is not monitored on weekends, holidays or evenings.)

We anticipate that the implementation of these changes will be straightforward. Many agencies already have similar employee password requirements for local networks and servers, which should enable users to easily understand and meet the new requirements. We appreciate everyone’s efforts in implementing these changes.

Please distribute this information to all employees in your agency. The information will also be posted for employees on the Announcements page of the Employee Self Service website. Feel free to use that notification as a template. User documentation is being updated. Until updates are complete, please keep a copy of this memo for reference.

Agency payroll, HR and accounting staff should contact Joy Stoerker in Statewide Payroll Services at 651-201-8065 or [joy.stoerker@state.mn.us](mailto:joy.stoerker@state.mn.us) if there are questions.

**PLEASE SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH APPROPRIATE AGENCY STAFF**