Community Counts
Milnbank
Housing Association
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PASSWORD PROTECTION POLICY

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1. AIM OF THE POLICY

The aim of the Password Protection Policy is to establish a standard for the creation of strong passwords, the protection of those passwords and the frequency of change.

This Policy has been compiled to comply with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

2. INTRODUCTION

Passwords are an important aspect of computer security. They are the front line of protection for user accounts. A poorly chosen password may result in a compromise of Milnbank Housing Association's network.

All employees and management committee members with access to Milnbank Housing Association's system are responsible for taking appropriate steps, as outlined in this policy, to select and secure their password.

3. STAFF RESPONSIBLE

This Policy is aimed at all personnel who have or are responsible for an account (or any form of access that supports or requires a password) on any system of Milnbank Housing Association including PC's, mobile phones and tablets.

4. PASSWORD HISTORY

Once a password has been set up and used there will not be an option to use this same password in the future.

5. MINIMUM PASSWORD AGE

There will be a minimum password age of 1 day with regards to changing passwords. Staff will be permitted to change passwords after 1 day has elapsed since last change.

6. MINIMUM PASSWORD LENGTH AND PASSWORD COMPLEXITY

All passwords must have a minimum of 8 characters and must adhere to the following:

- Must not contain significant portions of the user's account name or full name

- Contain characters from all of the following 4 categories:

  - English uppercase character (A through Z)
  - English lowercase characters (A through Z)

- Number digit(s) (0 through 9)
- Non-alphabetic characters (eg. !$#%*)

8. USER ACCOUNT DELETION OR SUSPENSION

All User Accounts that are no longer needed must be deleted or suspended immediately. This includes, but is not limited, to the following:

- When a user retires, leaves, released, dismissed etc

When a User Account is no longer needed HR should notify the IT Co-ordinator to delete or suspend the user's account.

9. PASSWORD PROTECTION STANDARDS

All passwords should be treated as sensitive and confidential Milnbank Housing Association information.

Staff should be made are that their system password should be kept private unless evidently reasonable circumstances exist for it to be communicated to other parties. Either a formal statement to this effect is included in the staff induction procedure and/or an informal notification of this is made by email when the policy is implemented.

- Do not reveal a password over the phone to anyone
- Do no reveal a password in an email
- Do not reveal a password to any colleagues
- Do not hint at the format of a password (eg. family name)
- Do not reveal a password on questionnaires or security forms
- Do not share a password with family members
- Do not reveal a password to a co-worker whilst you are on leave
- Do not write passwords down and store them anywhere in your office
- Do not store passwords in a file on any computer system unencrypted

If a password is suspected to have been compromised the incident should be reported to the IT Co-ordinator and the password changed immediately.

10. REMOTE ACCESS

Access to the Milnbank Housing Association networks via remote access is to be controlled by using Remote Desktop Protocol.

The Association limits who has access to the system via Remote Access.

Employees who are absent from work through sickness should not access Association IT equipment remotely unless authorised by a member of the Management Team.

11. LIST OF USER NAMES AND PASSWORDS

No one should keep a list of users and passwords, even in a secure location. The IT Co-ordinator can reset any password and the existence of a list undermines the group policy control of the password procedure. In addition the frequency of change normally dictates that any list is frequently out of date which would contravene the policy procedures.

12. BREACH OF POLICY

Any employee found to have breached this policy will be subject to investigation in accordance with Milnbank Housing Association's disciplinary procedures that may ultimately result in action up to and including dismissal without notice.

13. REVIEW AND MONITORING

The Password Policy will be monitored on an on-going basis. The policy is reviewed annually or as otherwise deemed necessary.