

Office of the Chief Information Officer
Enterprise Applications Services

eAuthentication Frequently Asked Questions

July 2012





Thank you for using the USDA eAuthentication system. Please click on the page number corresponding to the question that applies to your issue. NOTE: For keyword searches, press **CTRL** and **F** to use the Find function.

Table of Contents

1.	Ques	Questions relating to USDA Employee/Contractor Account Creation4				
	Empl	oyee and Contractor FAQs4				
	1.1	Which employees and/or contractors should apply for a USDA eAuthentication Account with Level 2 Access?				
	1.2	How do I register for my Employee/Contractor account?4				
	1.3	How can I reduce the risk of an unsuccessful online registration?4				
	1.4	What happens when the information displayed is not correct during online registration?4				
	1.5	Why am I being prompted to answer questions after logging in?5				
	1.6	If I move from one agency to another, do I have to get a new User ID?5				
	1.7	I have not received a Registration email or have deleted it. How do I obtain one?5				
	Agen	Agency Registration Lead FAQs6				
	1.8	What are the responsibilities of the Agency Registration Lead?6				
	1.9	What role do Human Resource staff and Contracting Officers play in the Employee/Contractor Registration process?				
	1.10	What are the benefits of the Employee/Contractor Registration process?6				
2.	Ques	tions relating to Customer Account Creation7				
	2.1	Who can use eAuthentication?7				
	2.2	Do I have to apply for a Level 1 account and then obtain another one for Level 2 access?7				
	2.3	The Customer Profile won't accept the User ID I have created. Why?7				
	2.4	I signed up for an eAuthentication account with Level 1 or 2 access. What is my next required step?7				
	2.5	I don't see a confirmation email from the USDA				
	2.6	I never found my first confirmation email, so I turned off my anti-spam and filters and created another account. It's been a day and still no confirmation email. What now?8				
	2.7	I can't get the link in the confirmation email to work. What now?8				
	2.8	I signed up for an account with Level 1 access and confirmed my email address. What now?8				
	2.9	I signed up for an account with Level 2 access and confirmed my email address. What now?8				
	2.10	I logged into my Level 2 account and was prompted to answer questions. Why did this happen?9				
	2.11	How do I locate my nearest USDA Service Center?9				
	2.12	I am a USDA employee or contractor, do I need to register for a Customer eAuthentication account?				





	2.13	How do I register for a Customer account?	9		
3.	Questions relating to your password or User ID				
	3.1	How do I keep my eAuthentication account active?	10		
	3.2	How do I change my password?	10		
	3.3	I've forgotten my password. How do I obtain a password reset?	10		
	3.4	I cannot remember my User ID. How may I recover it?	11		
	3.5	What are the "Reset My Forgotten Password" feature and the "Retrieve My Forgotten User ID" feature?	11		
	3.6	Why does the eAuthentication system require such complicated passwords?	11		
	3.7	Why is the complexity of my password important to protecting privacy at USDA?	12		
	3.8	What are the criteria and rules governing passwords within the eAuthentication system?	12		
4.	Ques	tions relating to web browsers and eAuthentication website security	13		
	4.1	What kind of browser do you recommend using?	13		
	4.2	I keep getting re-directed back to the login screen after I click the "Login" button.	13		
	4.3	What is the security level of the registration website?	13		
	4.4	I use WebTV and am having trouble. What should I do?	13		
	4.5	Can I access USDA applications using a wireless device, and what kinds of devices are supported?	? 14		
	4.6	I get a JavaScript error message when trying to login to an application protected by eAuthentication using a BlackBerry wireless device. What can be done?	14		
5.	Questions relating to My Profile Information				
	5.1	Why is it important to keep my contact information current?	.14 .15		
	5.2	How do I change my profile information?	15		
	5.3	How do I change the answers to my security questions?	15		
6.	Questions relating to "Login with my USDA LincPass"				
	6.1	What is a LincPass?	17		
	6.2	I've never used my LincPass to log into my USDA computer. How do I use my LincPass with my USDA computer?	17		
	6.3	How do I log into eAuthentication-protected websites with my LincPass?	17		

 TABLE 1: Document Revision & Version Information

VERSION NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION	AUTHOR/APPROVAL
2.2	May 3, 2012	eAuth Modernization Update/Revisions	E. Yu
2.3	July 12, 2012	508 Compliance, branding	C. Carrick

USDA_eAuth__FAQ





Questions relating to USDA Employee/Contractor Account Creation

Employee and Contractor FAQs

1.1 Which employees and/or contractors should apply for a USDA eAuthentication Account with Level 2 Access?

eAuthentication accounts should be obtained by all USDA employees and contractors in a timely manner so that they have access to agency applications required for specific job functions or who need access to USDA-specific sites such as AgLearn, retirement calculators, or Human Resources information.

If you are unsure whether you need to register for an account, please contact your Agency Registration Lead.

1.2 How do I register for my Employee/Contractor account?

For step-by-step instructions of the eAuthentication account registration process, please view the **Internal Registration Job-Guide**.

1.3 How can I reduce the risk of an unsuccessful online registration?

- a. Carefully read all of the instructions provided by your Agency Registration Lead and the eAuthentication registration web pages.
- b. Ensure that you launch the registration process by clicking on the link contained within the registration email you have received from the eAuthentication system. Do not use a bookmarked link. Also, do not use the eAuthentication website to register for an external user (i.e., Customer) account.

1.4 What happens when the information displayed is not correct during online registration?

In Step 2 of the internal registration process, the system will display your employee/contractor information from your HR record. Please check to ensure this information is correct.

Agency/Employee Type:- From your Human Resources Records

First Name:- From your Human Resources Records

Last Name:- From your Human Resources Records

If you find that your information is incorrect, please contact your Human Resources representative (if you are an employee) or supervisor (if you are a contractor). They are able to assist you in updating your information. Once the update is complete this information should be available to eAuthentication.





1.5 Why am I being prompted to answer questions after logging in?

We use these questions to verify your identity during our self-service password recovery process. This set of questions and your answers are helping us accomplish some important goals, including:

- a. Increasing the security of your account. The answers to these questions are not easy to research.
- b. Making it easier for you to retrieve your forgotten password. It is our hope that the security questions and answers will be more memorable for all account owners.

1.6 If I move from one agency to another, do I have to get a new User ID?

There is no need to register for a new User ID. Personnel information is periodically updated within the eAuthentication system and your account will reflect the new agency.

1.7 I have not received a Registration email or have deleted it. How do I obtain one?

To register for an eAuthentication internal account with Level 2 access, you will need to receive a Registration email. If you have not received this email, or no longer have this email, please do the following:

- a. Contact an Agency Registration Lead for your agency.
 - Click on the link below to display a list of ARLs.
 - **Agency Registration Leads page**
- b. Provide the ARL with an email address.
 - The ARL will confirm your email address, or if none exists, you will need to provide them a valid personal or government-issued email address.
- c. Wait up to 24 hours for the registration email to arrive.

If you do not receive the Registration email within 24 hours of the ARL update, please try the following:

- Check your "junk" folder, as some email applications may incorrectly place this email there.
- Look in folders other than your "Inbox" such as "SPAM," "Junk Mail," "Bulk" or "Suspected SPAM."
- Some Internet Service Providers include a service that captures suspected SPAM and maintains these files outside of your individual email account.
- Turn off your email provider's filters.
- Turn off your personal email filter settings.

If you have questions regarding any of the above, please contact the ITS Service Desk at **eAuthHelpdesk@ftc.usda.gov** or 800-457-3642.





Agency Registration Lead FAQs

1.8 What are the responsibilities of the Agency Registration Lead?

You will support and execute USDA eAuthentication registration activities and initiatives, maintain intra-departmental communication efforts in regard to employee/contractor credentialing, and coordinate with application owners who plan to use the new credentials to protect their applications. Specifically, you will:

- a. Assist employees and contractors in locating their HR Representative/Contracting Officer.
- b. Assist employees and contractors in updating their email address which will initiate the automated registration process.
- c. Customize instruction templates / Job Aids and communicate them to agency employees and contractors in accordance with your agency initiatives.

1.9 What role do Human Resource staff and Contracting Officers play in the Employee/Contractor Registration process?

A Human Resources representative creates an Employee HR record as per their standard procedure, and this information flows to the eAuthentication system. (Likewise, Contracting Officers or their designee(s) enter contractor information into NEIS/NFC Person Model). If the record is complete and also includes the employee's email address, the employee will receive an automatic invitation to register for an eAuthentication account.

1.10 What are the benefits of the Employee/Contractor Registration process?

The registration process is designed to improve the time it takes to register for an eAuthentication internal account. The benefits are:

- An employee or contractor will be able to register within 2 or 3 days of being hired, depending upon the timing of the HR feeds to the eAuthentication system.
- Increased productivity for new employees and contractors needing immediate access to eAuthentication-protected applications.
- Employees will no longer need their Personnel or Earnings and Leave Statement.
- Quicker access to AgLearn for mandatory trainings.





2. Questions relating to Customer Account Creation

2.1 Who can use eAuthentication?

Any public customer who would like to conduct business with the USDA can establish an eAuthentication account on this website. However, an account with Level 2 access is required to conduct official business transactions with the USDA via the Internet.

USDA Employees and Contractors may register for a Public Customer eAuthentication Account ONLY when they would like to conduct PERSONAL business with the USDA. Do NOT register for a Customer Account if you need an internal account! Only internal accounts should be used for job-related functions at USDA websites. If you are a USDA Federal Employee or Contractor, you should use the USDA eAuthentication Internal Create an Account process.

2.2 Do I have to apply for a Level 1 account and then obtain another one for Level 2 access?

No. You only need a single account to do business with the USDA at any eAuthentication-protected website. However, an account with Level 2 access is required to conduct official electronic business transactions with the USDA via the Internet. Once you have a Level 1 account, you can upgrade to Level 2 access by proceeding with our identity-proofing process.

2.3 The Customer Profile won't accept the User ID I have created. Why?

The User ID is already in use by someone else. Since User IDs are required to be unique, you cannot use the same one.

2.4 I signed up for an eAuthentication account with Level 1 or 2 access. What is my next required step?

ALL levels of eAuthentication access require you to follow the directions in the Confirmation email you received at the email address provided in your profile. If you misplaced or did not receive the Confirmation email, please contact the ITS Service Desk at 800-457-3642 or eAuthHelpdesk@ftc.usda.gov.

2.5 I don't see a confirmation email from the USDA.

It is common that anti-spam software in your email application or at your email servers can interfere with the USDA's confirmation email message to you.

Please try the following:

- a. Check your "junk" folder, as some email applications may incorrectly place this email there
- b. Look in folders other than your "Inbox" such as "SPAM," "Bulk," or "Suspected SPAM."
- c. In addition, some Internet Service Providers include a service that captures suspected SPAM and maintains these files outside of your individual email account.





If you do not receive the confirmation email after 24 hours:

- a. Turn off your email provider's filters.
- b. Turn off your personal email filter settings.
- c. Please check that you have disabled any forwarding or anti-spam measures.

If it has been more than one day since the account was created, and you have tried all the above steps, please create a new account and be ready to respond to the confirmation email. Please note that you will not be able to use the same User ID.

2.6 I never found my first confirmation email, so I turned off my anti-spam and filters and created another account. It's been a day and still no confirmation email. What now?

Please contact the ITS Service Desk at 800-457-3642 or <u>eAuthHelpdesk@ftc.usda.gov</u> and explain the situation in detail. Provide your first and last names and the User ID for any accounts you created. Since you now have multiple accounts, please identify the single account that you wish to use and authorize the helpdesk to disable the others.

2.7 I can't get the link in the confirmation email to work. What now?

At the bottom of the confirmation email is a long string of alphabetic and numeric characters. Copy and paste the entire string of characters into the address window of your browser, and press the **Enter** key.

Note: If it still does not work, please forward the entire confirmation email you received to the ITS Service Desk for troubleshooting at eAuthHelpdesk@ftc.usda.gov. Please include your User ID and the date you attempted to confirm your email.

2.8 I signed up for an account with Level 1 access and confirmed my email address. What now?

Your account is ready to use! You can access any USDA application that permits an account with Level 1 access.

2.9 I signed up for an account with Level 2 access and confirmed my email address. What now?

You must visit a local USDA Service Center in person for identity proofing. (<u>Find an LRA</u>) Take your government-issued photo ID to the nearest USDA Service Center most convenient to you for identity-proofing.

The government-issued photo IDs that are accepted for eAuthentication Level 2 account activation are:

- State- or Province-issued Driver's License or Photo Identification card from the United States or Canada.
- US Military or US Federal Government employment PIV/CAC (Smart) identification card (DoD, DoS, DHS, etc.).





 Valid passport from one of the following countries: Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bermuda, Brunei, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guam, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mariana Islands, the Marshall Islands, Mexico, Micronesia, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Korea (Republic of Korea), Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom or the United States of America.

Note: Your first and last names and date of birth must appear exactly as they appear on your government-issued photo ID that you present at the Service Center. If they do not match, you will need to create another account that has matching information and use a different User ID.

2.10 I logged into my Level 2 account and was prompted to answer questions. Why did this happen?

USDA eAuthentication is trying to make it easier for all customers to retrieve their forgotten password and increase account security. The security questions and answers are a way to make your information more personal (memorable) and more difficult to research. You will be asked to answer these questions if you forget your password in the future.

2.11 How do I locate my nearest USDA Service Center?

Please browse to <u>find an LRA</u>. This site will help you to identify a USDA Service Center with an LRA, and will provide you with contact information and map directions to help you find it.

2.12 I am a USDA employee or contractor, do I need to register for a Customer eAuthentication account?

Most USDA federal employees and contractors should obtain an eAuthentication account; however, do NOT create a public customer account unless you wish to conduct **personal** business with the USDA. A public account should not be used for job functionality on USDA websites. To create an internal account, refer to the instructions on the **Create an Internal Account** page.

2.13 How do I register for a Customer account?

For step-by-step instructions of the Customer account registration process please review the <u>Customer Registration Job Guide</u>.





Questions relating to your password or User

3.1 How do I keep my eAuthentication account active?

The eAuthentication system does go through a periodic cleanup of any accounts that have not been accessed in over 400 days. If you would like to keep your account active, please log into your account at least once per calendar year.

If your account has been retired because of inactivity, please create a new account to conduct business with the USDA.

3.2 How do I change my password?

There are two methods to changing your eAuthentication password.

If you are able to log into your eAuthentication account, log into your account first.

- Go to the **Home page**.
- Click on "Update your account" in the Quick Links box.
- Click the "I agree" button on the Warning page.
- Log in using either your LincPass or your User ID and Password.

Once you have logged into your account, you will need to do the following:

- Go to the Home tab and select "Change my eAuthentication Password"
- Please review Question 3.7 for information about our password guidelines.
- Once you have selected a valid password and confirmed it, please click on the "Submit" button.

If you are a USDA customer, you can also click on the "Change My Password" option below the Password field.

- Press "Continue" under the option for USDA Customers
- Enter your existing User ID and Password
- Please review Question 3.7 for information about our password guidelines.
- Once you have selected a valid password and confirmed it, please click on the "Submit" button.

If you have forgotten your password, please see Question 3.2.

3.3 I've forgotten my password. How do I obtain a password reset?

Please follow the steps below to reset your forgotten password:

- a. Go to the **Home page.**
- b. Click on "Update your account" in the Quick Links box.





- c. Click the "I agree" button on the Warning page.
- d. Below the "Password" field, click on the "Forgot your Password?" link.
- e. Follow the steps to reset your forgotten password.
- f. An email will be sent to your email address on record.

For more information, please review one of the following guides:

- Forgotten Password Training Guide for Internal Accounts
- Forgotten Password Training Guide for External Accounts

Please contact the ITS Service Desk at <u>eAuthHelpdesk@ftc.usda.gov</u> or call 800-457-3642 for further assistance. Please include your User ID, First Name, Last Name and email address.

3.4 I cannot remember my User ID. How may I recover it?

Please follow the steps below to recover your User ID:

- a. Go to the **Home page**.
- b. Click on "Update your account" in the Quick Links box.
- c. Click the "I agree" button on the Warning page.
- d. Below the "User ID" field, click on the "Forgot your User ID?" link.
- e. Follow the steps to reset your forgotten User ID.
- f. An email will be sent to your email address on record.

For more information, please review the <u>Forgotten User ID Customer Training Guide</u> or <u>Forgotten User ID Internal Training Guide</u>.

Please contact the ITS Service Desk at <u>eAuthHelpdesk@ftc.usda.gov</u> or call 800 457-3642 for further assistance.

3.5 What are the "Reset My Forgotten Password" feature and the "Retrieve My Forgotten User ID" feature?

Please review the following User Guides for more information on these features:

- Forgotten Password Training Guide for Internal Accounts
- Forgotten Password Training Guide for External Accounts
- Forgotten User ID Internal Training Guide
- Forgotten User ID Customer Training Guide

3.6 Why does the eAuthentication system require such complicated passwords?

eAuthentication protects websites that involve submitting personal and private information, as well as financial transactions, via the Internet. eAuthentication security standards are





consistent with USDA policies as well as those established by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), which determines the security standards for the Federal Government.

3.7 Why is the complexity of my password important to protecting privacy at USDA?

The USDA eAuthentication Service enables USDA customers to confidently share data and conduct official business transactions with the USDA via the Internet.

To learn more about Protecting Privacy at the USDA, read the <u>Privacy Presentation for End Users.</u>

3.8 What are the criteria and rules governing passwords within the eAuthentication system?

Please create a password that you will remember. Your password is case sensitive.

Passwords must follow these guidelines:

- Contain 12-24 characters, including at least one of each of the following:
 - uppercase letter
 - lowercase letter
 - a number
 - > optional: one or more of the following special characters

Restricted Information (Do Not Use)

- Do not use any spaces or special characters not listed above
- Dictionary words may not be used in passwords
- The previous 24 passwords may not be reused
- Profile Information: Mother's Maiden Name, Date of Birth, PIN, Your Name, Address, Phone Number, Email, etc.

Note: Your password will expire after every 60 days.

Please review the <u>Tips on Creating a Strong Password</u> guide to learn more about creating a strong password for your eAuthentication account.





4. Questions relating to web browsers and eAuthentication website security

4.1 What kind of browser do you recommend using?

It is recommended that you use Internet Explorer 5.5 or higher. We now support Internet Explorer 8 as our official browser.

It is recommended that your browser support 128-bit encryption, accepts cookies, and is JavaScript enabled.

For more information about Internet Explorer, please access the following site:

http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/internet-explorer/downloads/ie

4.2 I keep getting re-directed back to the login screen after I click the "Login" button.

Enabling "Compatibility View" in Internet Explorer may resolve this issue. To set Compatibility View in IE 9:

Note: if Compatibility View Settings is not an available option, you may need to contact your network administrator for assistance.

- a. Press Alt + T to open the Tools menu in IE
- b. Look for the "Compatibility View" menu option and click on it
- c. This will turn on Compatibility View

Microsoft also provides a tutorial video on Compatibility View usage:

http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows7/How-to-use-Compatibility-View-in-Internet-Explorer-9

If setting Compatibility View does not resolve your issue, please contact the ITS Service Desk at **eAuthHelpdesk@ftc.usda.gov** or 800-457-3642.

4.3 What is the security level of the registration website?

All eAuthentication web pages are encrypted with Secure Socket Layer (SSL) encryption.

The encrypted connection indicates the website is secure and can be verified by seeing the SSL symbol (a padlock in Internet Explorer) in the browser. A mouse-over on the symbol shows that SSL encryption is being applied to the connection.

4.4 I use WebTV and am having trouble. What should I do?

If you are using WebTV, please note that this is not compatible with many USDA sites. Thus, we do not provide support when it is used. Please use an alternate program (e.g. Internet Explorer).





4.5 Can I access USDA applications using a wireless device, and what kinds of devices are supported?

It is possible to access some USDA applications that are protected by the eAuthentication system using wireless devices. This type of access is not formally supported by the eAuthentication system. However, it is possible to log into the system using wireless devices that have an Internet browser with JavaScript support. For example, some BlackBerry devices using the BlackBerry web browser or Internet browser can log into the system when JavaScript support is enabled for the browser.

4.6 I get a JavaScript error message when trying to login to an application protected by eAuthentication using a BlackBerry wireless device. What can be done?

The eAuthentication system does not formally support wireless devices. A JavaScript error may be displayed when you scroll to and click the "Login" button on the eAuthentication page. You can use the following work-around:

- a. Browse to the eAuthentication login page and type in your User ID and password in the fields provided.
- b. After you have typed in your password, do not scroll down to the Login button.
- c. If you have moved to the Login button, scroll backward to place the browser cursor on the password field.
- d. With the cursor still on the Password field, use the keypad of the device and press the **Enter** key.





5. Questions relating to My Profile Information

5.1 Why is it important to keep my contact information current?

The business email address and phone in your eAuthentication profile may be used to keep you informed about important eAuthentication matters related to your account.

For USDA employees/contractors it is also a primary means of communicating with you for upcoming, large-scale initiatives, such as HSPD-12. Please take a moment to ensure that your contact information is correct, so you don't miss these important announcements. If you would like more information regarding the HSPD-12 initiative, please click on the link: http://lincpass.usda.gov

5.2 How do I change my profile information?

You can modify your profile information by following these steps:

- Log into eAuthentication Identity Manager by going to https://www.eauth.usda.gov and selecting "Update your account" on the left.
 - If you have an Internal USDA eAuthentication account, please use your LincPass to log in.
- Click on the "Home" tab and select "Modify My Profile."
- Depending on whether you have an Internal or External account, you can view and/or modify your account information.
 - Internal account holders may need to contact their HR representative or Supervisor to modify personal profile information (such as address).
- Once you have finished modifying or viewing your information, click the Submit button in the bottom right corner of the screen.
- You can exit Identity Manager by either clicking the "Logout" link at the top or by closing your web browser.

5.3 How do I change the answers to my security questions?

Security questions assist in account protection and self-service. If you need to view or change the answers to your security questions, please follow these steps:

- Log into eAuthentication Identity Manager by going to https://www.eauth.usda.gov
 and selecting "Update your account" on the left.
 - If you have an Internal USDA eAuthentication account, please use your LincPass to log in.
- Click on the "Home" tab and select "Modify My Security Questions."





- Once you have finished modifying or viewing your questions and answers, click the
 Submit button in the bottom right corner of the screen.
- You can exit Identity Manager by either clicking the "Logout" link at the top or by closing your web browser.





6. Questions relating to "Login with my USDA LincPass"

6.1 What is a LincPass?

The LincPass is the new USDA employee and contractor identification card. This effort is part of the entire Federal government's move toward compliance with the President's Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (the common identification standard for Federal Employees and Contractors), commonly known as HSPD-12.

For more information about LincPass and HSPD-12, please go to: <u>USDA HSPD-12 Information</u>
Do you have questions about your LincPass or HSPD-12?

Send them to the HSPD-12 Help Desk at: USDAHSPD12Help@dm.usda.gov

6.2 I've never used my LincPass to log into my USDA computer. How do I use my LincPass with my USDA computer?

Several resource documents and trainings have been created to help you use your LincPass with your USDA computer.

- How to use your LincPass
- Two-Factor Authentication is Here
- AgLearn Courses:
 - Two-Factor Authentication for End Users
 - Two-Factor Authentication Briefing Documents

6.3 How do I log into eAuthentication-protected websites with my LincPass?

The instructions for LincPass eAuthentication logins are:

- a. Verify your LincPass is inserted into the card reader for your USDA computer.
- b. Click the yellow "Login with my LincPass".
- c. A pop-up box "Choose a digital certificate" may appear with two items (certificates) containing your name.
- d. Select the first or second certificate with your name and click "OK".
 - i. First time users:
 - Try your first certificate
 - If your login fails, then change your selection to your second certificate
 - ii. The certificate (first or second) that works for you will remain the same for most future logins.





e. Enter your LincPass PIN if prompted.

If you need further instructions, please review the <u>LincPass eAuthentication Login User Guide</u>.

Thank you for using the USDA eAuthentication system!