USDA HSPD-12

Two Factor

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Prepared for

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Office of Safety Security and Protection (OSSP)

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Revision Information

Version	Date	Revision Notes
1.0	Unknown	Initial FAQ's created
2.0	June 2020	Revised FAQ's to make current for 2020

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1   End User FAQ's

1.1   What happens if I forget my PIN?

If you make six unsuccessful attempts in a row to type your PIN, it is automatically locked and will need to be reset. If you forget your PIN, you must first block it by making six unsuccessful attempts (otherwise, the system does not recognize that the PIN needs unblocking). To get your PIN unblocked, take your LincPass/ AltLinc to the nearest HSPD-12 activation station and ask to have your PIN unlocked. Depending on the location, you may need to make an appointment first. The activator will ask you to verify your fingerprint (to ensure the card belongs to you), and to enter a new PIN. Please note the six attempts do not reset the next day/business day. If you did three the previous day, then 3 the next day, your LincPass/ AltLinc will lock.

1.2   Where can I go for help?

If you have questions, please contact your Agency's Help Desk for assistance. Alternatively, you could contact the HSPD-12 Help Desk at usdahspd12help@usda.gov.

1.3   What if I lose my LincPass/ AltLinc?

Immediately report the lost LincPass/ AltLinc to your Security Officer. The Security Officer will suspend the LincPass/ AltLinc in the USAccess System. If you are unsure who your Security Officer is, please contact the USDA HSPD-12 Help Desk at USDAHSPD12HELP@USDA.gov to report your LincPass/ AltLinc as lost. The Help Desk will then reach out to the Security Officer or the Sponsor of record for this employee/non-employee and the Sponsor mark the lost LincPass/ AltLinc as LOST and trigger a reprint terminating the lost LincPass/ AltLinc.

1.4   What if my LincPass/ AltLinc is stolen?

Immediately report the stolen LincPass/ AltLinc to your Security Officer. The Security Officer will terminate the LincPass/ AltLinc in the USAccess System, alternatively you can contact your Sponsor of record (if known) to report your LincPass/ AltLinc as stolen and the Sponsor of record will terminate the stolen card and trigger a Reprint based on this notice.

1.5   My LincPass/ AltLinc was lost/stolen/damaged. Do I have to go through the whole enrollment process again?

No, a Reprint of the LincPass/ AltLinc will be printed with a reason of the card Reprint as either lost, stolen, or damaged. Re-enrollment is only required if the employee, non-employee is up for LincPass/ AltLinc enrollment.

1.6   How is the computer logging me on when I have no network or internet connectivity?

Your computer now caches your network credentials so you can log in without being connected to a USDA network or the Internet. When your account becomes HSPD-12 enabled, your computer will cache the same type of information to allow you to use your LincPass/ AltLinc + PIN and your network credentials are active,

you'll be able to log in to your computer with your network credentials (user name and password) if you don't have your LincPass/ AltLinc physically in your possession.

1.7 What if I log in with my network credentials (user name and password) then insert my LincPass/ AltLinc after I have logged in?

Nothing will happen in terms of the login. The ActivIdentity ActivClient software will show that a card has been inserted and you can access resources that require a LincPass/ AltLinc.

1.8 What if I insert my LincPass/ AltLinc and never get the PIN prompt?

Verify that the LincPass/ AltLinc is correctly inserted in the card reader. If the chip never makes contact, the PIN prompt will not appear.

1.9 What if I get the message "The card supplied was not recognized? Please check that the card is inserted correctly and fits tightly."

Verify that the LincPass/ AltLinc is correctly inserted (right side up and facing the correct direction) in the card reader. If you are using the 10 keypad to the right of the keyboard, ensure that 'Num Lock' is active.

1.10 What if I get the message "The system could not log you on. An incorrect PIN was presented to the smart card"?

This means that you entered the wrong PIN for your LincPass/ AltLinc. The system allows you 6 attempts at your PIN before it is locked and you must go through the PIN unlock process at a USAccess credentialing station for a Card Update.

1.11 What if I get the message "The system could not log you on. The smart card is blocked"?

This means that you have locked your LincPass/ AltLinc because of six wrong attempts at your PIN. You must go through the PIN unlock process at a USAccess credentialing station for a Card Update. Currently, there is no remote actions to unlock at LincPass/ AltLinc.

1.12 What if I find someone else's LincPass/ AltLinc?

Give the LincPass/ AltLinc to your Security Officer as soon as possible.

1.13 What do I do if I still have my old LincPass/ AltLinc?

USDA employees can only have one active LincPass/ AltLinc at a time. Activation of a new LincPass/ AltLinc will permanently disable your old one, so give it to your Security Officer for proper destruction.

1.14 Are the certificates on the LincPass/ AltLinc linked to my profile?

For Enterprise Active Directory (EAD), the profile is linked to both your LincPass/ AltLinc certificates, LincPass/ AltLinc PIN used for logical access or a Username and PW if provided by local IT.

For other USDA applications or services, the answer is "it depends." If the application or service is integrated with HSPD-12, and it knows what to do with certificates, then it will probably be tied to the application or service's profile. If the application or service has not been integrated with HSPD-12, it will completely ignore the certificate, and you will log in with an ID and password or whatever other method you use now.

1.15 If I lock my workstation by removing my LincPass/ AltLinc card from the reader, and I have applications still open or am running a process, what happens to the application or process?

The lock workstation behavior is the same with the LincPass/ AltLinc + PIN as it is when using network credentials. Removing the card is the same as pressing Ctrl+Alt+Del and selecting "Lock Computer."

1.16 If I am at my desk and my LincPass/ AltLinc is in the reader, but my computer becomes locked because of inactivity, how do I get the PIN prompt to appear?

If your computer is locked and the card is still in the reader, pressing a key or moving the mouse will bring up the "workstation is locked" message on the screen. To get the PIN prompt to appear, you have to pull the card out enough for the reader to lose contact with the card's chip, then reinsert the card again.

1.17   In the middle of shutting down or logging off my computer, I removed my LincPass/ AltLinc from the reader, and it locked the workstation instead of continuing with the shutdown or log-off process. Why did it do that?

The ActivClient software is designed to watch for card-removal events and lock the workstation when it happens. If the operating system is in the process of shutting down or logging off, it may not have yet shut down the ActivClient "watcher," and it overrides the shutdown/log off process. The solution is to wait until the computer is completely off or you see the system message that the procedure is complete before removing the card.

1.18 Can I use my LincPass/ AltLinc + PIN to log on to someone else's computer?

Yes, if the computer has a working card reader and the ActivClient software, and you are connecting to the same domain. It might take a little longer the first time you do this, as the operating system is creating a new profile behind the scenes.

1.19 I share a computer with another employee. Can I use my LincPass/ AltLinc + PIN in the shared computer?

Yes, if the computer has a working card reader and the ActivClient software. During the transition period, you can use your LincPass/ AltLinc + PIN or your network credentials to log on, and the other person can do the same. If you get your LincPass/ AltLinc and an HSPD-12 enabled account before the other person, s/he can still continue to log on with network credentials until s/he gets a LincPass/ AltLinc.

1.20 When my network account is HSPD-12 enabled, will I get a new account on my local computer that shows UPN instead of my name?

No, the account on your local computer does not change. Behind the scenes, the UPN (User Principal Name) replaces the data in the Subject Alternative Name field, but the record still also maintains the original network credential (e.g., firstname.m.lastname) information.

1.21 During the transition period, if I have both network credentials and a LincPass/ AltLinc, will the network password aging policy still be in effect? What if my network credential password expires and locks my account before I use it again?

Your agency's network (Enterprise Active Directory) will still require you to change your 'network password' will still have to be reset every 60 days. If this happens, switch from LincPass/ AltLinc login in the ctrl+alt+delete, and change this password. You do not have to take your LincPass/ AltLinc out of the card reader to change your network password.

2   HR Role Holder FAQ's

2.1   As an HR Representative, when I make an employment status change, how does this affect the LincPass/ AltLinc?

Given the following status definitions:

- A= Active employment, includes vacation time, short-term disability, short-term leave
- S= HR suspension or employment, long term leave, long term disability, sabbatical, seasonal employees
- T= Resigned, retired, deceased, fired, etc.

Active to Suspend

a) HR updates employment status from active to suspend in HR system
b) This systematically suspends the LincPass/ AltLinc
c) End user keeps possession of LincPass/AltLinc
d) Impact: LincPass/ AltLinc is suspended and user cannot use LincPass/ AltLinc login until it is reactivated
e) If employee does not return, see 'Suspend to Terminate'

Active to Terminate

a) HR updates employment status from active to terminate in HR system
b) This systematically terminates the LincPass/ AltLinc
c) Impact: LincPass/ AltLinc is terminated and destroyed and user no longer has LincPass/ AltLinc

Suspend to Terminate

a) HR updates employment status from Suspend to Terminate in HR system

b) This systematically terminates the LincPass/ AltLinc
c) Impact: LincPass/ AltLinc is terminated and destroyed and user no longer has LincPass/ AltLinc

Suspend to Active

a) HR updates employment status from Suspend to Active in HR system
b) This systematically reactivates the LincPass/ AltLinc
c) Impact: LincPass/ AltLinc is re-activated and user can use LincPass/ AltLinc

Terminate to Active

- HR updates employment status from Terminate to Active in HR system
- Requires new sponsorship for LincPass/ AltLinc
- Impact: user gets a new LincPass/ AltLinc

Terminate to Suspend

- No user impact (no LincPass/ AltLinc exists and no LincPass/ AltLinc will be re-issued.)

2.2 As an Adjudicator, when I make an Adjudication change, how does this affect the LincPass/ AltLinc?

FBI Adjudication change – negative result

a. Adjudicator changes result to negative
b. Impact: LincPass/ AltLinc will be terminated

Tier 1 (Low Risk) Adjudication change – negative result

a. Adjudicator changes result to negative
b. Impact: LincPass/ AltLinc will be terminated

3 System Administrator FAQ's

3.1 We have an account on a standalone special-purpose computer (e.g., it's attached to a special printer) that is connected to the network. Can I use my LincPass/ AltLinc + PIN to log into this computer?

Yes, as long as the computer connects to the domain that has your HSPD-12 enabled account, and the computer has a working card reader and the ActivClient software.

3.2 As a system administrator, I need to log into other people's computers as part of my job. How will I do that with the LincPass/ AltLinc?

Using Two-Factor Authentication for system administrator accounts is still being researched. For the interim, system administrators will continue using the network accounts they use now for system administrator functions, and their LincPass/ AltLinc for ordinary end-user operations on their own computer. Using Two-Factor Authentication in cases where you have multiple Active Directory accounts in the same domain is

also still being researched. (See also Question 1.14 - Are the certificates on the LincPass/ AltLinc linked to my profile?)

3.3 How do I contact ActivIdentity for support of the ActivClient software?

Work with your agency's procurement officer or project manager who manages the Two Factor project for your agency. They can contact ActivIdentity, Inc. at customersupport@actividentity.com and request assistance.