County of San Bernardino
Department of Behavioral Health

MEDS Access and Contacts Procedure

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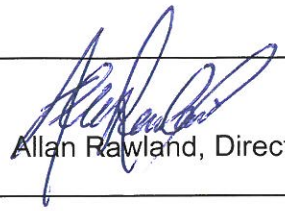

Allan Rawland, Director

Purpose

Provide DBH staff with procedural guidelines when requesting access for Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) and whom to contact.

Requesting Access

The following steps illustrates the roles and responsibilities that must be adhered to when requesting access to MEDS:

Role	Responsibility
Staff	• Request authorized access to MEDS directly to the immediate supervisor
Supervisor	• Verify that the employee requesting access works for one of the programs authorized to have MEDS access (see DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0943, Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) Policy for program listing) • Determine if the employee assists in the administration of the Medi-Cal Program by determination of eligibility for mental health services – If yes, initiate MEDS access to the DBH Office of Compliance via email on the MEDS Access Request form – If no, deny the request for MEDS access
DBH Office of Compliance	• Receive the MEDS Access Request form to make determination if access should be granted • If access is granted, provide the DBH staff person with the following: – Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS) Policy for training with the associated policies – MEDS Confidentiality Statements for agreement to adhere, acknowledgement of receipt and signature • Upon return of the confidentiality statements, initiate request to the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) • Ensure the user is up-to-date with the required Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training

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MEDS Contacts

The following table provides DBH staff with MEDS contact information:

MEDS Request Type	MEDS Contact Type	Program Contact	Contact Information
Add, Change or Delete User	MEDS Coordinator	Office of Compliance	Email: Compliance_questions@dbh.sbcounty.gov or Phone: (909) 382-3127
Reset Password	MEDS Liaison	Financial Interviewers	Email: fi@dbh.sbcounty.gov Phone: (909) 382-3048

MEDS Contact Responsibilities

The following table illustrates the responsibilities assigned to the MEDS contacts:

Role	Responsibility
MEDS Coordinator	• Submit remedy tickets to DHCS to add/delete/change MEDS users via the appropriate MEDS request form • Provide MEDS users with the following: – Resource Access Control Facility (RACF)/MEDS User Identification (ID), associated temporary password and Personal Identification Number (PIN) – Listing of MEDS Frequently Asked Questions
Primary MEDS Liaison	• Submit remedy tickets to DHCS to reset password • Assist MEDS users with difficulties with the following: – Troubleshooting MEDS difficulties – Notifying MEDS users when the system is down

References

Social Security Act, Sections 1137 and 453
Welfare and Institutions Code, Section 14100.2
DMH Medi-Cal Privacy and Security Agreement

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Related Policies and Procedures

County of San Bernardino Policy Manual, 16-01, Non-Public Personally Identifiable Information
County of San Bernardino Policy Manual, 16-02, Protection of Individually Identifiable Health Information
County of San Bernardino, 16-02SP1, Protection of Individually Identifiable Health Information
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0901, Sending Confidential Information by Facsimile Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0905, Confidentiality of Protected Health Information (PHI)
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0907, Unauthorized Access of Confidential Medical Records Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0909, Electronic Transfer of Client Protected Health Information – Internet and Intranet Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0924, Workstation and System Security Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0925, Data Integrity Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0926, HIPAA Violation Sanctions Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0943-1, MEDS Access and Contacts Procedure
DBH Standard Practice Manual, COM0944, Privacy or Security Breach Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, IT5004, Computer and Network Appropriate Use Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, IT5005, Electronic Mail Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, IT5006, Remote Access Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, IT5008, Device and Media Controls Policy
DBH Standard Practice Manual, IT5009, User I.D. and Password Policy

County of San Bernardino
Department of Behavioral Health
Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS)
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following questions and answers are intended to be a reference tool for MEDS users regarding questions they may have regarding MEDS, specifically RACF, passwords, revocation and documentation.

GENERAL RACF INFORMATION

1. What is Resource Access Control Facility (RACF)?
   RACF is the IBM security tool chosen to help protect the personal health information of the millions of beneficiaries on the Medi-Cal Eligibility Data System (MEDS). It provides added protection from unauthorized access, disclosure, modification, and destruction of that information. The addition of RACF to MEDS security added a new layer of control over every User ID and Password defined to MEDS and ensured traceability of the information being viewed and updated on MEDS back to a single individual.

2. What are the RACF/MEDS User ID requirements?
   - It must be assigned by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS); it cannot be changed by the user
   - It must be requested through the MEDS41 Form/process by the DBH MEDS Coordinator
   - It must be unique to RACF and MEDS
   - It must be traceable to a single individual
   - It must be revoked if it is not used at least once every 90 days
   - The associated password must be changed at the first sign-on and then at least every 60 days thereafter

3. What does RACF mean to me as a MEDS User?
   - You will have a RACF/MEDS User ID assigned specifically for you
   - You will need to change your password the first time you sign-on to MEDS with a new or restored RACF/MEDS User ID, or a reset password, and then at least once every 60 days thereafter
   - You will see an advisory message every time you log on to MEDS if you are within 5 days of the end of the 60 day period for changing your password. If you do not change your password by the end of the 60 day period, the next time you logon to MEDS, you will get a message indicating that your password has expired and you will have to enter a new password to complete the logon process
     - **NOTE:** MEDS users can change their passwords at any time; they do not need to wait to be prompted for a password change.
   - You will be responsible for all transactions associated with your RACF/MEDS User ID so you will need to be sure that no one else can see or easily figure out the password you choose.
   - You are responsible for ensuring that your RACF/MEDS User ID and Password information are not shared, revealed, or compromised in pre-recorded scripts, other files or scraps of paper that could be accessed by persons other than yourself.
   - You will be expected to change your password immediately if you have reason to believe that your password has been compromised.
   - If you do not sign-on to MEDS at least once every 90 days, your RACF/MEDS User ID will be revoked for inactivity.

4. What if I already have a RACF User ID – Can I use that ID to Access MEDS?
   You must use the RACF/MEDS User ID you received from DHCS to access MEDS. If you already have a RACF User ID issued by DHCS, you will be able to use this ID to access MEDS if that DHCS RACF ID was identified on the MEDS41 form when your MEDS access was requested.
   - **NOTE:** RACF/MEDS User IDs previously issued for DBH employees will not work effective November 15, 2010.

REQUESTING NEW RACF/MEDS USER IDS OR CHANGES TO EXISTING USER IDS

5. Who can request assignment of new RACF/MEDS User IDs and changes to existing RACF/MEDS User IDs?
   Your DBH MEDS Coordinators is the only individual authorized to request new RACF/MEDS User IDs and to request a change in access level or transaction authority or deletion of an existing RACF/MEDS User ID.

6. How do the RACF/MEDS User IDs request/change process work?
   Requests for new RACF/MEDS User IDs as well as changes to or deletion of existing RACF/MEDS User IDs must be submitted by the DBH MEDS Coordinator via a MEDS41 form.

   The MEDS41 form and instructions for completing that form are accessible via the MEDS Home Web Site Forms page on the CDHS Extranet for the DBH MEDS Coordinator's use.

REQUESTING PASSWORD RESETS OR RESTORATION OF REVOKED USER IDS

7. What is the preferred method for requesting password resets and restoration of revoked RACF/MEDS User IDs?

   The preferred method for handling these types of requests is for individual MEDS Users to request assistance from their DBH MEDS Liaison, who, as an authorized individual, will then submit appropriate requests on behalf of their MEDS Users.

   The DHCS IT Service Desk prefers that the liaison submit a single request which includes all of their users who currently need to have their password reset or have a revoked RACF/MEDS User ID that needs to be restored. The request will need to include the RACF/MEDS User ID plus the individual name associated with each User ID to allow the DHCS IT Service Desk to verify that the RACF/MEDS User ID was reported correctly. The request also needs to include a valid area code and telephone number of the authorized individual submitting the request.

   When an authorized individual calls the DHCS IT Service Desk, the temporary password(s) will be provided during that call. For requests received from an authorized individual via e-mail, Remedy ticket, or voice mail message, the temporary password(s) will be returned to that individual either via a secure e-mail or via a phone call. The authorized individual will be responsible for forwarding each individual's temporary password to the appropriate MEDS User.

8. Can an individual MEDS User request a password reset or restoration of a revoked RACF/MEDS User ID for themselves?
   Yes. However, DHCS's preferred method is for individual MEDS Users to request assistance from their MEDS Security Coordinator or MEDS Liaison, who would then submit appropriate requests on behalf of their MEDS Users. DBH requires MEDS users utilize the appropriate DBH MEDS contact to reset the passwords or restore the RACF/MEDS User ID.

9. What is the 4-digit PIN associated with my RACF/MEDS User ID?
   The 4-digit PIN is an identifying number that tells DHCS that you have the authority to reset your password or restore your RACF/MEDS User ID when it has been revoked. Your PIN is the personal number that was provided to DHCS when your RACF/MEDS User ID was requested. The PIN will not be requested on any MEDS screen or in any other communication except when you request that we reset your password or restore your revoked RACF/MEDS User ID. Individual requests received without this information will not be processed. If you do not know your PIN, contact the DBH MEDS Coordinator who gave you your RACF/MEDS User ID.

SECURE METHODS FOR SUBMITTING RACF/MEDS SECURITY RELATED REQUESTS TO DHCS

10. When will my RACF/MEDS User ID be issued by DHCS?
    Upon your DBH MEDS Coordinator submitting the MEDS41 the form to DHCS by the close of business (5 PM) each Friday, the request will be processed with the next scheduled batch on the following Tuesday night, unless Monday or Tuesday is a state holiday. In that case, the forms will be processed the following Wednesday. Turnaround times vary depending on submission, but are generally provided/distributed within 5-7 business days.

11. What happens when I am granted authority to access MEDS?
    - A RACF/MEDS User ID and temporary password will be provided to you by your MEDS Coordinator.
    - You will be asked to enter your RACF/MEDS User ID and temporary password.
    - You will then be prompted to change your password on the Change Password screen. You will be asked to type the new password twice. The new password will be valid for 60 days.

12. What does a RACF/MEDS User ID look like?
    A RACF/MEDS User ID is 8 characters long with a format of **#CCANNNN.**
    NOTE: The pound sign (#) is part of the User ID. You must enter all eight characters each and every time you access MEDS. The RACF/MEDS User ID and Password are not case sensitive so Caps Lock being on or off will not affect sign-on.

Position	Description
1	The pound sign (#) identifies the RACF ID as a RACF/MEDS User ID.
2-3	The CC represents the county code or organization code of the employer of the RACF/MEDS User.
4	The A is an alpha assigned group letter.
5-8	The NNNN is a numeric assigned number.

13. What are the requirements when I create my own password?
    - It must be at least 5 but no more than 8 characters in length.
    - It must consist of only letters, numbers, at signs (@), pound signs (#) or dollar signs ($).
    - Passwords may not be reused; the new password must have at least one character that is different from any RACF/MEDS password you used previously.
    - The RACF/MEDS password is not case sensitive (i.e., A and a are considered the same character).

14. How often do I have to change my password?
    - You are required to change your password the first time you sign-on with a temporary password (i.e., you have a new RACF/MEDS User ID, your revoked RACF/MEDS User ID has been restored, or your password has been reset).
    - The system will require you to change your password at least once every 60 days.
    - You may change it sooner if you wish; however, when you change your password, it resets the 60-day clock.
    - If your RACF/MEDS User ID is revoked, you will have to select a different password even if your old password has been in use for less than 60 days.
    - You must change your password immediately if you believe someone else may have knowledge of your password.

15. Will I be warned when my password is about to expire?
    - A warning that your password is about to expire will be issued beginning 5 days prior to your password actually expiring.
    - Each time you log on to MEDS during those 5 days you will receive the same warning message on the Change Password screen until your password is changed.
    - If you ignore this message, or are out of the office and your password expires during this time, the next time you log on to MEDS you will be prompted and required to change your password.

16. Is each MEDS User required to sign-on with their temporary password and change it within a certain period of time?
    - Yes. If a MEDS User does not log on within 90 days after their RACF/MEDS User ID is initially set up or their RACF/MEDS User ID has been restored, their RACF/MEDS User ID will be revoked.
    - It is recommended that each MEDS User log on as soon as they get a temporary password so that the temporary password is not forgotten. The temporary password will be good only until the MEDS User logs on for the first time.
    - A MEDS User is required to change a temporary password the first time they logon and to change their password at least every 60 days thereafter.

17. What happens if I make a mistake when signing on to MEDS?
    - Message numbers S801–S828 are received during MEDS sign-on and sign-off.
    - ONLY messages S804 and S805 create "pre-revoke" incidents.
      The user receives these messages if signing on with an otherwise valid, but INCORRECT password. Only **four (4)** such "pre-revoke" incidents are allowed since the last time the user successfully signed on to MEDS and are necessary to protect MEDS data from unauthorized access.
      On the 4th unsuccessful attempt, the User ID is revoked, requiring the user's password to be reset.

Each successful sign-on restores the user's "pre-revoke" counter to zero.

- All other errors (other than S804 and S805) do not create "pre-revoke" incidents. Messages include brief descriptions of the error and how to correct.
- If the user makes a mistake, the cursor will be placed in the location requiring correction – all fields from that point forward should be carefully re-entered.

18. When the MEDS Sign-on Request screen is displayed, is there a timeout period before I have to complete my logon to MEDS?
    - There is a timeout period for logging on to MEDS which is determined by the 3270 emulator software being used in your office (typically 30 minutes or less).
    - For security purposes, once you have logged on to MEDS, timeout initiates after 20 minutes of non-use.

SUPPORT AND DOCUMENTATION

19. Who do I contact for assistance with my RACF/MEDS User ID or Password?
    For MEDS Users, the primary point of contact is the DBH MEDS Coordinator who gave you your RACF/MEDS User ID or the DBH MEDS Liaison for password resets. If your contact cannot resolve the issue, ideally that individual [the DBH MEDS Coordinator or DBH MEDS Liaison] should contact the DHCS IT Help Desk for assistance. If needed, the MEDS Liaison will contact the DHCS IT Service Desk. DBH MEDS User shall contact the secondary MEDS Liaison if the primary liaison is not available. Additionally, DBH MEDS Users may directly contact the MEDS Coordinator for assistance if their primary MEDS liaison is not readily available.

    NOTE: DHCS IT Service Desk requires DBH MEDS Users work with their DBH MEDS Liaisons to communicate with the DHCS IT Service Desk. By having the authorized coordinator making the request, the issue can be handled more quickly since there is no need to verify the PIN. If your liaison is not available or cannot resolve the issue, you may contact the MEDS Coordinator and if your DBH contacts are unable to assist you, they can direct you to contact DHCS directly:

Reference: State of California, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Health Care Services. (2008). *MEDS RACF Security Post-Implementation Frequently Asked Questions.*