

From: [Communications, VCF \(CIV\)](#)
To: [Communications, VCF \(CIV\)](#)
Subject: Important Updates: VCF Password Policy and Client Authorization Form
Date: Tuesday, August 16, 2022 6:01:20 PM
Attachments: [Instructions for accessing pre-populated CAF.pdf](#)
[VCFOnlineSystemUsePolicy.pdf](#)
[Email re VCF Website Update – New Password Policy Aug082022.pdf](#)
[image002.png](#)

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Good afternoon,

This email contains important information about recent updates to the VCF's online claims management system.

***NEW* Password Policy and update to Acceptable Use Policy:** The VCF sent an email to law firms on Tuesday, August 9, 2022, alerting you to the new online claims system password policy that became effective on Monday, August 15, 2022. The email is attached for your reference. As noted in that email, **all user passwords will now expire after 90 days**. If more than 90 days have passed since your password was last changed, when you login to the system, you will automatically be re-directed to the Change Password page. You will be prompted to change your password every 90 days going forward.

This change is required by DOJ security and is a best practice given the sensitive information contained in the claims system. The [VCF Online System Acceptable Use Policy](#) has been updated to reflect the new password policy. As always, we encourage you to review the policy in detail with every member of your team.

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***NEW* System-generated Client Authorization Form:** In September 2021, the VCF created a Client Authorization Form and law firms were instructed that the form must be used for any new Client Authorizations submitted from that point forward. Details about the rollout of the form can be found on the VCF website at <https://www.vcf.gov/communications-law-firms/email-new-vcf-client-authorization-form-payments-made-law-firm-accounts>.

The VCF has now added functionality to the online system that enables you to generate a pre-populated PDF version of the form with data pulled directly from the claim. Instructions for generating the form are attached. The form can be generated, completed, printed, signed, and uploaded to the claim similar to what is done today. We strongly encourage you to use the system-generated form for all new Client Authorizations. Within the next 1-2 months, we will transition to using only the system-generated form.

When using the system-generated form, **the same instructions and rules apply** regarding law firm verification of the accuracy of the data, the requirement for a wet signature, and the need for the firm to maintain a copy of the original document. Instructions for completing the form are included with each form you generate from the system.

As with the Client Authorization Form available on the VCF website, if you identify any information in the claims system that needs to be corrected, those changes should be made before generating and completing the Client Authorization.

Thank you.

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VCF Helpline: 1-855-885-1555

Website: www.vcf.gov

Information for Law Firms: www.vcf.gov/lawfirms

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A pre-populated Client Authorization Form can now be generated from the claims system. This feature is available once Registration has been submitted for a claim.

To generate the form, click on “**Downloadable Forms**” on the claim summary page. Select “**Client Authorization Form**” from the dropdown menu.

Claim details for the Victim, Personal Representative (if applicable), and law firm name are automatically populated as the PDF form is generated. All fields in the form are still editable.

September 11th
Victim Compensation Fund

Client Authorization Form for Payments
made to Law Firm Accounts

You have been asked by your attorney to complete this form in order to authorize the VCF to deposit any payments on your claim directly into a bank account maintained by the law firm. The law firm is then responsible for disbursing your VCF payment to you within 30 days of the VCF confirming the payment has been deposited into the law firm's account. You should review the instructions before completing the form.

This authorization and the information it contains is specific to payments from the
September 11th Victim Compensation Fund for the claim listed below.

Section I: Victim Information (required for all claims)

VCF Claim Number (7 digits): VCF 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 (Input the 7 numbers after VCF)

Victim's Full Legal Name (as shown in online claim):

Test First Name Test Middle Name Test Last Name

Victim's First Name Victim's Middle Name Victim's Last Name

Victim's Social Security Number/National ID Number: 999999999

Section II: Personal Representative Information (required only if victim is deceased)

Personal Representative's Full Legal Name (as shown in online claim):

Personal Rep First Name Personal Rep Middle Name Personal Rep Last Name

Personal Representative's First Name Personal Representative's Middle Name Personal Representative's Last Name

Personal Representative's Social Security Number/National ID Number: 000000000

Section III: Authorization and Penalty of Perjury Statement

I hereby authorize the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund to issue all payments for my claim to the attorney trust/escrow account maintained by: Test Law Firm

Print Law Firm Name

I, Print Victim's/Personal Representative's Full Legal Name, declare (or certify, verify, or state) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the United States of America that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: Date Authorization is Signed Victim's/Personal Representative's Original Signature

The VCF does not accept electronic signatures. You must sign this form and provide the original to your attorney.

Section IV: Law Firm Attestation

I, Print Full Name of Authorized Law Firm Representative, attest to the following:

- I am in receipt of the original version of this form, including an original victim signature or an original Personal Representative signature, as applicable.
- I understand that I must retain the original fully executed version of the form in the event the VCF requests to see it at any time, including after payment has been disbursed.
- I have reviewed and confirmed the accuracy of all information contained in this form and have confirmed that it matches to the information reflected in the online claim system for this claim.

Executed on: Date Authorization is Signed Authorized Law Firm Representative's Signature

Released: August 2021 www.vcf.gov / VCF Helpline 1-855-885-1555



Important reminders when using the system-generated Client Authorization Form:

- The form can be generated, completed, printed, signed, and uploaded to the claim similar to what is done today. We strongly encourage you to use the system-generated form for all new Client Authorizations.
- When using the system-generated form, **the same instructions and rules apply** regarding law firm verification of the accuracy of the data, the requirement for a wet signature, and the need for the firm to maintain a copy of the original document. Instructions for completing the form are included with each form you generate from the system.
- As with the current form, if you identify any information in the claims system that needs to be corrected, those changes should be made **before** generating and completing the Client Authorization. If you generate the form and identify an error, you should destroy the incorrect version of the form, update the data in the system, and then generate a new form.
- If a claimant changes law firms over the course of a claim, the new law firm will be able to generate a new Client Authorization for the claim. There is no limit to the number of versions that can be generated. Please exercise caution in the generation, saving, and handling of these forms, and follow all guidelines in the VCF Online System Acceptable Use Policy for storage and protection of sensitive information.



The U.S. Department of Justice (“DOJ”) requires that ALL users of the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (“VCF”) online claims system (also commonly referred to as the “Claimant Portal,” the “Online Claim Form,” and the “Claims Management System”) must comply with the requirements outlined in this document. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in termination of a user’s access. The VCF is not required to provide notice before terminating a user’s account if the use of the account presents security concerns.

Scope

This policy is applicable to anyone using the VCF online claims system in any capacity.

Enforcement

Misuse of the VCF’s systems is strictly prohibited by the DOJ and VCF. The DOJ and VCF reserve the right to terminate access at any time at DOJ’s sole discretion.

Use of any of the VCF’s systems or claimant data in any illegal activity may result in an investigation or criminal prosecution.

The VCF online claims system is protected by multiple laws, including, but not limited to, the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act (CFAA), 18 U.S.C. 1030.

General Access

Per Department of Justice policy, the VCF **only** supports Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge for use with the online claims management system. ***You may experience issues with the online claims management system, including loss of data, if you access it using a browser not supported by the Department of Justice, such as Safari or Firefox.***

Please only access the online claims management system using Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge.

Acceptable Use – All Users

- Each user must create and use his or her own unique username and password.
- A user’s unique username and password **may not be shared with any individual** under any circumstances.
- All users must authenticate their identity each time they log into the system using their own unique username and password.
- Group, shared, or generic accounts and passwords are prohibited. This means you may not log in using another individual’s username and password. Users cannot log in with an account that is not their own account.
- Special care should be exercised with portable devices such as laptops, tablets, and smartphones because the information they contain is especially vulnerable.
- Users who export data or download documents from the system are responsible for the proper safeguarding of the data and the information contained in the documents.
- All users are encouraged to install, run, and maintain up-to-date software that protects their computer from vulnerabilities and threats associated with malware, trojans, and viruses.
- All passwords will expire after 90 days, and users will be prompted to create a new password that meets DOJ password requirements.



Unacceptable Use – All Users

The activities below are provided as examples of unacceptable use; however the list is not exhaustive. Should a user of the online claims system need to violate these guidelines for any reason, he or she should contact the VCF to obtain written approval before proceeding.

- Passwords must not be shared with anyone.
- Passwords cannot be reset more than once in a 24-hour period.
- Use of shared, or generic, usernames and passwords is strictly prohibited.
- Multiple logins (connections) with the same username and password is prohibited.
- Each user is required, when logged in to the online claims system, to either log off or lock their computer screen when they are away from the computer or workstation (e.g. they do not have visual or physical control of the computer or workstation).
- Session sharing is prohibited. A user may not login with their username and password for use or access by another individual, regardless of whether the second individual is an authorized or unauthorized user of CMS.
- Publishing any claimant Personally Identifiable Information or Protected Health Information (PII/PHI) in a publicly accessible or insecure location is prohibited.
- All illegal activities, including but not limited to theft, computer hacking, malware distribution, contravening copyrights and patents, and using illegal or unlicensed software or services is prohibited. These also include activities that contravene data protection regulations, activities detrimental to the success of the VCF and/or VCF claimants, as well as sharing sensitive information with anyone who is not authorized to have that information.
- Any activities or actions prohibited by Federal, State, or Local regulation or law, are prohibited.

Additional Requirements for Law Firm Users

- Law firm users who have online access to a claim for a VCF claimant whom they no longer represent should immediately contact the VCF to have their access to the claim revoked.
- Law firms must notify the VCF immediately when an employee, contractor, or associate with access to the online claims system leaves the law firm for any reason, or remains at the firm but no longer represents VCF claimants.
- Law firms should review on a quarterly basis the user accounts associated with their firm in the online claims system to ensure that malicious, out-of-date, or unknown accounts do not exist.
- Law firms and other entities working with VCF claimants may not store PII/PHI on a network location that is accessible to individuals within the firm or organization who are not authorized to see VCF claim data.
- **Users with Delegated Access to Claims:** Each law firm may identify up to two users who have the ability to delegate claims in the online system to other employees of the same firm who work on VCF claims. Each user who has the delegation authority will receive an email from the VCF that must be reviewed and acknowledged before the delegation authority is granted.

From: [Communications, VCF \(CIV\)](#)
To: [Communications, VCF \(CIV\)](#)
Subject: VCF Website Update – New Password Policy
Date: Monday, August 08, 2022 3:27:24 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

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Good afternoon,

Please see below for an update about changes we are making to our password policies in the VCF's online claims management system:

- Effective August 15, 2022, all user passwords will expire 90 days after being set. If more than 90 days have passed since your password was last changed, on login to the VCF's online claims management system, you will automatically be re-directed to the Change Password page.
- The minimum password lifespan is 24 hours. Please note, if you attempt to change a password less than 24 hours from your last password change, an error message will be displayed.

If your current password for accessing the VCF's online claims management system is more than 90 days old, we ***strongly recommend*** that you log in immediately to change your password in advance of this update. As a reminder, your new password must include the following and cannot be the same as any of your five (5) most recent passwords.

1. 12 Characters Long
2. One Uppercase Letter
3. One Lowercase Letter
4. One Special Character
5. One Number

If you have issues resetting your password, please contact the VCF Helpline at 1-855-885-1555.

We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

Please do not reply to this email. This email was sent from a mailbox that is not monitored.



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