1.0 PURPOSE

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 the compromise of Collin County's entire network. As such, all Collin County IT employees (including contractors and vendors with access to Collin County's systems) are responsible for taking the appropriate steps, as outlined below, to select and secure their passwords.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy governs the length, complexity, age and lockout thresholds for IT passwords.

This policy covers passwords managed by Active Directory, Router Passwords, Local Account Passwords, and Voice System Passwords.

This policy also serves as a guideline for any applications which do not use Active Directory for authentication. Applications which maintain their own password routines will use this policy, in as much as it may apply, but modify the password to match the limitations of the application.

3.0 REFERENCE

The password policy has been modified based on the recommendations and findings of the Clifton, Larson and Allen security assessment conducted in early 2014.

4.0 BACKGROUND

This policy was modified to cover all passwords used in Collin County.

5.0 POLICY

❖ **Password Policy**
  ➢ Where supported, passwords for any device, system and account must comply with:
    ▪ Minimum of 10 characters in length:
      • At least 1 alpha character (A through Z in either Uppercase, lowercase or MixedCase)
      • At least 1 numeric character (0 through 9)
      • At least 1 special character (example: !, @, $, ~, etc.)
  ➢ Passwords will expire every 60 days
  ➢ Passwords may not repeat more frequently than every 12 months
  ➢ Password entry will be locked after 10 failed attempts
  ➢ Password lockout will last for 10 minutes
  ➢ Workstation screen saver will be set to require password entry after 5 minutes

❖ **Password Protection Standards**
- Do not use the same password for Collin County accounts as for other non-Collin County access. Do not share Collin County Passwords with anyone. All passwords are to be treated as sensitive, Confidential Collin County information.
- Users Shall Not:
  - Reveal a password to ANYONE
  - Reveal a password in an email message
  - Talk about a password in front of others
  - Hint at the format of a password (e.g., "my family name")
  - Reveal a password on questionnaires or security forms
  - Share a password with family members
  - Reveal a password to co-workers while on vacation
  - Write passwords down and store them anywhere in your office*[2]

❖ Do not use the "Remember Password" feature for Internet Explorer or other browsers
❖ Admin Passwords shall be changed within 24 hours or next business day upon termination of administrators. (Reference On-Boarding / Off-Boarding Policy)
❖ Vendors should never receive service accounts passwords
❖ This Policy is Non-Retroactive for service accounts
❖ Additional information regarding VPN passwords reference the Collin County VPN Policy

Notes:

*1 – If system supports
*2 - An encrypted password manager may be used

6.0 PROCEDURES

7.0 REVISION HISTORY

Date	Revision #	Description of Change
07/01/2010	1.0	Initial creation – Draft
	1.1	Final Draft
3/26/2014	2.0	Updated based on the CLA security assessment

8.0 INQUIRIES

9.0 APPENDICES