

**Direct Secure Messaging Frequently Asked Questions**

1. **What is Direct Secure Messaging?**

​Direct Secure Messaging is a secure email system using the standards and specifications developed through [The Direct Project​](http://www.healthit.gov/policy-researchers-implementers/direct-project) that allows participants to send (push) encrypted health information directly to known, trusted recipients over the Internet.

1. **Is there a cost to use Direct?**

No, as long as you have an internet connection and a computer, tablet or smart phone, there is no additional cost to register for and use Direct Secure Messaging to begin securely exchanging patient information electronically with other health care organizations and providers.

1. **What devices does Direct Secure Messaging work with?**

Computers, tablets and smart phones with internet access.

1. **What internet browsers is Direct Secure Messaging compatible with?**

Firefox and Microsoft Internet Explorer versions 8 & 9. Google’s Chrome and Apple’s Safari internet browsers are not currently supported by DC HIE’s Direct vendor.

1. **Is a download of software required to use Direct Secure Messaging?**

No, you do not need to download any software. You will login into a secure web portal to use Direct.

1. **Can I send a Direct Secure message to a District Government email address or to an email address from internet service providers such as Google, Yahoo or AOL?**

No, Direct Secure messages may only be sent/received by those with Direct Secure Messaging accounts.

1. **Does Direct Secure Messaging include a directory of accounts/users?**

Yes, Direct Secure Messaging’s directory includes name, clinical specialty (if applicable), address, telephone, mailing address and direct email address.

1. **Do I have to login to Direct Secure Messaging to determine if I have a Direct message?**

No, in your registration for a Direct Secure Messaging account you should provide an external email address to which you would like notification of Direct messages to be sent. It is similar to the way in which Facebook or LinkedIn operate. When you receive a LinkedIn message, LinkedIn will send notice to the email address you provided at time of registration.

1. **How do I register for a Direct Secure Messaging account?**

The Subscription Agreement and Identity Verification Form are available online at: <http://dhcf.dc.gov/page/subscribe-dc-hie>. Once you have completed the forms, email them to [dc-hie@dc.gov](mailto:dc-hie@dc.gov). The DC HIE Program Management Office will process your application, and issue your Direct Secure Messaging account.

1. **How long does it take to be issued a Direct Secure Messaging account?**

Once we receive your application (forms), your account will be issued within three to five business days. When your account is created, you will receive an email at the address you provided in your application that will provide your login information and some basic instructions to get you started.

1. **I understand DC HIE has a relationship with CRISP, the state-designated HIE for Maryland. Can I send a DC HIE Direct message to a CRISP Direct account?**

Yes, you may send and/or receive a Direct Secure message to/from CRISP Direct provided you know the CRISP Direct email address. The CRISP Direct user directory will not appear in the DC HIE Direct user directory and vice versa.

1. **I am a Direct user and I am encountering a problem or have a question about using Direct that is not covered above.**

Send an email to [dc-hie@dc.gov](mailto:dc-hie@dc.gov). The DC HIE Program Management Office staff will review your email and respond within twenty-four hours or the next business day.