

# **Information Technology (IT) System Maintenance (MA) Standard**

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**U.S. Department of Education (ED)  
Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO)  
Information Assurance Services (IAS)**



Questions about the policies outlined in this document should be directed to Information Assurance Services (IAS) at [OCIO\\_IAS@ed.gov](mailto:OCIO_IAS@ed.gov)

## **APPROVAL**

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## Revision History

The table below identifies all changes that have been incorporated into this document.

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
1.0	12/22/2021	Initial draft of new standard which combines NIST SP 800-53, Revision 5 controls, including ED specific control parameter values, with existing policy standards.
1.1	1/14/2022	Update to incorporate feedback from Information Assurance Services (IAS), Governance, Risk and Policy (GRP) Team.
1.2	1/31/2022	Update to incorporate feedback from IAS; address new security measures required by Executive Order (EO) 14028, including Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations and memoranda and updated NIST guidance issued to comply with the EO.

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Purpose

The Federal Information Security Modernization Act (FISMA)<sup>1</sup> and implementing regulation Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, *Managing Information as a Strategic Resource*<sup>2</sup>, requires each federal agency to develop, document, and implement an agency-wide program to provide information security for the information and information systems that support the operations and assets of the agency, including those provided or managed by another agency, contractor, or other source, and services that are either fully or partially provided, including agency-hosted, outsourced, and cloud-based solutions. Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Publication 200, *Minimum Security Requirements for Federal Information and Information Systems*<sup>3</sup>, mandates the use of National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-53, *Security and Privacy Controls for Information Systems and Organizations*<sup>4</sup>, as baseline information system controls.

This governance document establishes Department information technology (IT) system maintenance controls standards necessary to improve the efficiency of operation or security of Department information systems and comply with Federal laws, regulations, Executive Orders, Emergency Orders, Binding Operational Directives, and Department Administrative Communications System (ACS) directives and policies. In doing so, these standards supersede any prior governance documentation establishing such standards.

### 1.2 Scope

These standards apply to all information and information systems that support the operations and assets of the Department, including those provided or managed by another agency, contractor, or other source, as well as services that are either fully or partially provided, including Department-hosted, outsourced, and cloud-based solutions. Principal Offices, employees, contractors, external service providers and system users are required to comply with these maintenance control standards.

## 2 STANDARDS

The Department standards for IT system maintenance controls are organized to follow the order in which controls are presented in the current version of NIST SP 800-53. To define a control baseline for Department information systems, a FIPS 199 categorization level (e.g., Low (L), Moderate (M) and High (H)) is assigned to each requirement. This designator indicates a

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<sup>1</sup> Public Law 113-283-Dec. 18, 2014, <https://www.congress.gov/113/plaws/publ283/PLAW-113publ283.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/omb/circulars/A130/a130revised.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> FIPS 200, <https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/fips/nist.fips.200.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> NIST SP 800-53, <https://csrc.nist.gov/publications/detail/sp/800-53/rev-5/final>

requirement applies to information systems categorized at that FIPS 199 impact-level. Designators are also used to indicate when NIST SP 800-53 Privacy (P) baseline controls are required. To manage risk to within the Department's risk tolerance and appetite, control overlays are provided when the Department requires implementation of control(s) that are not required by the FIPS 199 impact-level or privacy baseline. In addition to the controls required by this standard, High Value Assets (HVAs) must implement and comply with the current version of the HVA Control Overlay issued and maintained by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA).

This standard directly supports the Department's integration of the NIST Cyber Security Framework (CSF) in focusing on using business drivers to guide cybersecurity activities and considering cybersecurity risks as part of the Department's risk management processes. Refer to Appendix A for a summary of controls by baseline and corresponding NIST CSF categories and subcategories.

## **2.1 MA-1 Maintenance Policy and Procedures (L, M, H)**

The Department shall develop, document, and disseminate to all ED employees, contractors, and users authorized to access to ED information systems, or systems operated or maintained on behalf of ED, or ED information as defined in OCIO: 3-112/ACSD-OCIO-004, *Cybersecurity Policy* a Department-level IT system maintenance policy (e.g., this document) that:

- (a) addresses purpose, scope, roles, responsibilities, management commitment, coordination among organizational entities, and compliance; and
- (b) is consistent with applicable laws, executive orders, directives, regulations, policies, standards, and guidelines.

The Department Chief Information Security Officer (CISO) is designated to manage the development, documentation, and dissemination of the Department-level maintenance policy.

This policy is reviewed and updated annually (i.e., each fiscal year) and following the identification of evolving threats, issuance of new or significantly changed existing Federal laws, executive orders, directives, regulations, and ED policies, identification of emerging technology and information technology service delivery models and determination that adjustments are deemed necessary to improve its effectiveness based upon feedback from Principal Office personnel.

Principal Office (PO) Information System Owners (ISO) and Information System Security Officers (ISSOs) are required to manage the development, documentation, and dissemination of system specific procedures to facilitate the implementation of the Department's maintenance policy and the associated maintenance controls. The ISO and ISSO shall review maintenance procedures annually (i.e., each fiscal year) and following the identification of evolving threats, issuance of new or significantly changed existing Federal laws, executive orders, directives, regulations, and ED policies, identification of emerging technology and information technology

service delivery models and determination that adjustments are deemed necessary to improve its effectiveness based upon feedback from Principal Office personnel.

## **2.2 MA-2 Controlled Maintenance (L, M, H)**

- a. Schedule, document, and review records of maintenance, repair, and replacement on system components in accordance with manufacturer or vendor specifications and/or organizational requirements.
- b. Approve and monitor all maintenance activities, whether performed on site or remotely and whether the system or system components are serviced on site or removed to another location.
- c. Require ISO, ISSO, or designated alternate to explicitly approve the removal of the system or system components from organizational facilities for off-site maintenance, repair, or replacement.
- d. Sanitize equipment to remove the following information from associated media prior to removal from organizational facilities for off-site maintenance, repair, or replacement: information the Department deems as sensitive, including but not limited to Personally Identifiable Information (PII), Sensitive PII, and Controlled Unclassified Information.
- e. Check all potentially impacted controls to verify that the controls are still functioning properly following maintenance, repair, or replacement actions.
- f. Include the following information in organizational maintenance records:
  1. the date and time of maintenance
  2. a description of the maintenance performed
  3. names of the individuals or group performing the maintenance
  4. name of the escort
  5. system components or equipment that are removed or replaced

### **2.2.1 MA-2(2) Controlled Maintenance | Automated Maintenance Activities (H)**

Schedule, conduct, and document maintenance, repair, and replacement actions for the system using ED approved automated mechanisms. Produce up-to date, accurate, and complete records of all maintenance, repair, and replacement actions requested, scheduled, in process, and completed.

## **2.3 MA-3 Maintenance Tools (M, H)**

Approve, control, and monitor the use of system maintenance tools. Review previously approved system maintenance tools at least annually (i.e., each fiscal year).

### **2.3.1 MA-3(1) Maintenance Tools | Inspect Tools (M, H)**

Inspect the maintenance tools used by maintenance personnel for improper or unauthorized modifications.

### **2.3.2 MA-3(2) Maintenance Tools | Inspect Media (M, H)**

Check media containing diagnostic and test programs for malicious code before the media are used in the system.

### **2.3.3 MA-3(3) Maintenance Tools | Prevent Unauthorized Removal (M, H)**

Prevent the removal of maintenance equipment containing organizational information by:

- a. Verifying that there is no organizational information contained on the equipment.
- b. Sanitizing or destroying the equipment
- c. Retaining the equipment within the facility; or
- d. Obtaining an exemption from the ISO, ISSO, or designated alternate explicitly authorizing removal of the equipment from the facility.

## **2.4 MA-4 Nonlocal Maintenance (L, M, H)**

- a. Approve and monitor nonlocal maintenance and diagnostic activities;
- b. Allow the use of nonlocal maintenance and diagnostic tools only as consistent with organizational policy and documented in the security plan for the system;
- c. Employ strong authentication in the establishment of nonlocal maintenance and diagnostic sessions;
- d. Maintain records for nonlocal maintenance and diagnostic activities; and
- e. Terminate session and network connections when nonlocal maintenance is completed.

### **2.4.1 MA-4(3) Nonlocal Maintenance | Comparable Security and Sanitization (H)**

- a. Require that nonlocal maintenance and diagnostic services be performed from a system that implements a security capability comparable to the capability implemented on the system being serviced; or
- b. Remove the component to be serviced from the system prior to nonlocal maintenance or diagnostic services; sanitize the component (for organizational information); and after the service is performed, inspect and sanitize the component (for potentially malicious software) before reconnecting the component to the system.

## **2.5 MA-5 Maintenance Personnel (L, M, H)**

- a. Establish a process for maintenance personnel authorization and maintain a list of authorized maintenance organizations or personnel;



- b. Verify that non-escorted personnel performing maintenance on the system possess the required access authorizations; and
- c. Designate organizational personnel with required access authorizations and technical competence to supervise the maintenance activities of personnel who do not possess the required access authorizations.

### **2.5.1 MA-5(1) Maintenance Personnel | Individuals Without Appropriate Access (H)**

- a. Implement procedures for the use of maintenance personnel that lack appropriate security clearances or are not U.S. citizens, that include the following requirements:
  - 1. Maintenance personnel who do not have needed access authorizations, clearances, or formal access approvals are escorted and supervised during the performance of maintenance and diagnostic activities on the system by approved organizational personnel who are fully cleared, have appropriate access authorizations, and are technically qualified; and
  - 2. Prior to initiating maintenance or diagnostic activities by personnel who do not have needed access authorizations, clearances or formal access approvals, all volatile information storage components within the system are sanitized and all nonvolatile storage media are removed or physically disconnected from the system and secured; and
- b. Develop and implement alternate security safeguards and/or AO approved alternate controls defined in the security plan in the event a system component cannot be sanitized, removed, or disconnected from the system.

### **2.6 MA-6 Timely Maintenance (M, H)**

Obtain maintenance support and/or spare parts for security critical information system components and/or essential information technology components within system-level specified timeframes, defined in the Information System Contingency Plan (ISCP) and Business Impact Analysis (BIA), of a failure.

## **3 RISK ACCEPTANCE/POLICY EXCEPTIONS**

Deviations from the Department policies, Instructions, Standards, Procedures or Memos must be approved and documented through the Department's Risk Acceptance process. Deviations that introduce additional risks to the enterprise must be submitted through the Department Risk Acceptance Form (RAF) and must be approved by the ED CISO (as delegated). Requests must justify the reason for the deviation(s)/exception(s) as well as the compensating security controls implemented to secure the device or information, if applicable. Policy deviations that do not introduce additional risks do not need to be submitted through the Department RAF but will need to be approved by the Department CISO (as delegated).

## 4 ACRONYMS

<b>AO</b>	Authorizing Official
<b>BIA</b>	Business Impact Analysis
<b>CIO</b>	Chief Information Officer
<b>CISA</b>	Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency
<b>CISO</b>	Chief Information Security Officer
<b>CSAM</b>	Cyber Security Assessment and Management
<b>CSF</b>	Cybersecurity Framework
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Homeland Security
<b>ED</b>	Department of Education
<b>EO</b>	Executive Order
<b>FIPS</b>	Federal Information Processing Standard
<b>FISMA</b>	Federal Information Security Modernization Act
<b>IAS</b>	Information Assurance Services
<b>ISCP</b>	Information System Contingency Plan
<b>ISO</b>	Information System Owner
<b>ISSO</b>	Information Systems Security Officer
<b>IT</b>	Information Technology
<b>NIST</b>	National Institute of Standards and Technology
<b>OMB</b>	Office of Management and Budget
<b>PII</b>	Personally Identifiable Information
<b>PO</b>	Principal Office
<b>RAF</b>	Risk Acceptance Form
<b>SP</b>	Special Publication

## 5 APPENDIX A - BASELINE CONTROL PARAMETER SUMMARY

The applicability for each baseline control parameter is shown below. NIST SP 800-53 controls that are not applicable to any control baseline are shaded in gray.

Control Identifier	Control/Control Enhancement) Name	Privacy Baseline	Security Control Baseline Low	Security Control Baseline Moderate	Security Control Baseline High	CSF and Privacy Category	CSF and Privacy Subcategory
MA-1	Policy and Procedures		x	x	x	PR.MA, DE.DP, GV.PO-P, GV.MT-P, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, DE.DP-2, GV.PO-P1, GV.PO-P3, GV.PO-P5, GV.MT-P2, GV.MT-P6, PR.MA-P1
MA-2	Controlled Maintenance		x	x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-2(2)	Controlled Maintenance   Automated Maintenance Activities				x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-3	Maintenance Tools			x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-3(1)	Maintenance Tools   Inspect Tools			x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-3(2)	Maintenance Tools   Inspect Media			x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-3(3)	Maintenance Tools   Prevent Unauthorized Removal			x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-3(4)	Maintenance Tools   Restricted Tool Use					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-3(5)	Maintenance Tools   Execution with Privilege					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-3(6)	Maintenance Tools   Software Updates and Patches					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-4	Nonlocal Maintenance		x	x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-2, PR.MA-P2
MA-4(1)	Nonlocal Maintenance   Logging and Review					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-2, PR.MA-P2
MA-4(3)	Nonlocal Maintenance   Comparable Security and Sanitization				x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-2, PR.MA-P2
MA-4(4)	Nonlocal Maintenance   Authentication and Separation of Maintenance Sessions					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-2, PR.MA-P2
MA-4(5)	Nonlocal Maintenance   Approvals and Notifications					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-2, PR.MA-P2
MA-4(6)	Nonlocal Maintenance   Cryptographic Protection					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-2, PR.MA-P2
MA-4(7)	Nonlocal Maintenance   Disconnect Verification					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-2, PR.MA-P2
MA-5	Maintenance Personnel		x	x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-5(1)	Maintenance Personnel   Individuals Without Appropriate Access				x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-5(2)	Maintenance Personnel   Security Clearances for Classified Systems					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-5(3)	Maintenance Personnel   Citizenship Requirements for Classified Systems					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-5(4)	Maintenance Personnel   Foreign Nationals					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-5(5)	Maintenance Personnel   Non-system Maintenance					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-6	Timely Maintenance			x	x	PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-6(1)	Timely Maintenance   Preventive Maintenance					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1

<b>Control Identifier</b>	<b>Control/Control Enhancement) Name</b>	<b>Privacy Baseline</b>	<b>Security Control Baseline Low</b>	<b>Security Control Baseline Moderate</b>	<b>Security Control Baseline High</b>	<b>CSF and Privacy Category</b>	<b>CSF and Privacy Subcategory</b>
MA-6(2)	Timely Maintenance   Predictive Maintenance					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-6(3)	Timely Maintenance   Automated Support for Predictive Maintenance					PR.MA, PR.MA-P	PR.MA-1, PR.MA-P1
MA-7	Field Maintenance						