

# Frequently Asked Questions on EFAST2 Credentials



U.S. Department of Labor  
Employee Benefits Security Administration  
July 2012

## Q1. Who needs to register to use EFAST2?

- Anyone wishing to complete the Form 5500 or Form 5500-SF and/or the schedules by using IFILE must register for author credentials. Check the “Filing Author” and/or “Schedule Author” user type(s) when registering.
- All plan sponsors, plan administrators, individuals signing for DFEs, and plan service providers which have written authorization to file on behalf of the plan administrator under the EFAST2 e-signature option must register for credentials to sign filings. Check the “Filing Signer” user type when registering. If an individual is signing a filing as the plan sponsor is the plan administrator, that individual only needs to register once.
- Anyone wishing to transmit completed filings through third party software may need to register for credentials and check the “Transmitter” user type. Check with your third party software provider to determine if this is necessary.

Enrolled actuaries and accountants do not need to register as a Filing Signer to manually sign Schedule SB, Schedule MB or an accountant’s opinion and audit report filed with a Form 5500 or Form 5500-SF. Registration as a Filing Signer is required for individuals who will be electronically signing filings submitted to EFAST2. Upon registering, you will be issued the following credentials:

- User ID (used to identify you)
- PIN (used as your electronic signature)
- Password (allows you access to authorized EFAST2 Web site applications such as IFILE)

Although you provide employment information when registering, the credentials are personal and are not linked to a company or plan.

Access to the part of the EFAST2 Web site that provides basic public disclosure and reference information does not require registration.

## Q2. How do I register for EFAST2 credentials?

Registration is performed on the EFAST2 Web site, select "Register" on the Welcome screen. You can get your EFAST2 credentials by completing seven easy steps. The whole process should take just a few minutes.

1. Read and accept the privacy statement.

2. On the next screen, provide contact information (name, address, phone, company name, etc.) and select one or more of the five user types. For example, someone preparing, signing, and submitting a filing through IFILE will choose “Filing Author” and “Filing Signer”.
3. Select one of the two challenge (or security) questions and provide an answer. The challenge question and answer is used in case you forget your password.
4. After verifying that the information you entered is correct, you will see the Registration Confirmation screen telling you that completion of your registration will be pending until you receive your Credentials Notification email with further instructions. EFAST2 generates and sends the Credentials Notification email within five minutes.
5. Once you receive the Credentials Notification email, select the link in the email that will take you to a secure EFAST2 web site, which will ask you for the answer to your challenge (or security) question.
6. You will be asked to accept the PIN Agreement, which describes the security of your PIN and what to do if your PIN is lost or stolen. You will also be asked to accept the Signature Agreement if you will be signing the Form 5500 or Form 5500-SF.
7. You will be prompted to create a password. The password must be between 8 and 16 characters long and must not contain spaces. You must use at least one uppercase letter, one lower case letter at least one number and at least one of the following special characters [!, @, \$, %, ^, &, \*, (, )] No other special characters are allowed. Your new password must be different from your last 12 previous passwords. This field is case-sensitive and must be re-set after 90 days.

Once you have your UserID, PIN, and password, your EFAST2 registration is complete.

### **Q3. How long does it take to receive my Credentials Notification e-mail?**

Within five minutes of submission and acceptance of the registration form, EFAST2 should generate the credentials. Once the credentials are generated, EFAST2 sends a notification to the email address provided during registration. In this e-mail notification, you will find a link to a secure Web site as well as instructions on how to retrieve and activate the credentials.

### **Q4. I did not receive my registration e-mail. What should I do?**

If you did not receive the Credentials Notification email in your inbox within about five minutes, it may have been blocked as “spam” or “junk mail.” Check your “spam” or “junk” email folders to see if you have received the email.

Some e-mail providers require that you add an email address to your address book before you can receive any email from that address. To ensure that our messages can be delivered to your inbox, enter into your address book both our originating email address, [efast2@efastsys.dol.gov](mailto:efast2@efastsys.dol.gov) and our “reply to” e-mail address, [efast2@efast.dol.gov](mailto:efast2@efast.dol.gov).

If you checked your “spam” or “junk” e-mail folders and the email has not been received, you can complete the final registration steps using "Forgot User ID" on the [Login page](#). After clicking “Forgot User ID,” enter the email address that you entered during registration. If you have not completed the

registration process, you will see an option to “Complete Registration” on the screen. Follow the instructions on the remaining screens to complete your registration.

#### **Q5. My account has been locked. What should I do?**

To reset your locked account, from the EFAST2 Web site select “Login” on the Welcome screen, then select "Forgot Password." You will be prompted to enter either your User ID or your email address. Once you enter either your User ID or email address, you will then be prompted to answer your challenge question.

You will have three attempts to provide your challenge answer correctly before your user account is temporarily revoked for up to 20 minutes. After the allotted time, you may attempt to answer the challenge question again. If you repeatedly reach the limit of invalid challenge responses, your account may be permanently revoked. If that occurs, you will need to call the EFAST2 Help Desk at **1-866-GO-EFAST** (1-866-463-3278) or register again.

#### **Q6. I don't remember my User ID. How can I retrieve it?**

From the EFAST2 Web site (<http://www.efast.dol.gov>) click “Login” on the Welcome screen. Then click "Forgot User ID" and enter the email address that you provided during registration. You will need to provide the answer to your challenge question to view your User ID.

If you have not fully completed the registration process, you will see an option to “Complete Registration” after answering your challenge question.

#### **Q7. I don't remember my Password. How can I retrieve it?**

If you have forgotten your password, or if your password is locked, from the EFAST2 Web site (<http://www.efast.dol.gov>) click “Login” on the Welcome screen, then click "Forgot Password" on the Login page. To use the “Forgot Password” option, you must enter a valid User ID or registered email address. You will also be prompted to enter the answer to your challenge question. If done successfully, you will be allowed to create a new password.

#### **Q8. I don't remember my PIN. How can I retrieve it?**

After successfully logging in to the EFAST2 Web site, you may view your EFAST2 PIN and other registration information by clicking "User Profile." The User Profile page will display your credentials and provide options to “Change Profile,” “Change Password,” and “Change PIN.”

#### **Q9. What are the differences among a password, a PIN, and an ETIN?**

An EFAST2 password is a 10-16 character password that is created by the registered EFAST2 user. It can be changed using “Forgot Password” on the Login page, or by using “Change Password” on the User Profile page. In conjunction with the assigned User ID, the password is used to log in to the EFAST Web site.

An EFAST2 PIN is a 4-digit number assigned to a registered user. It can be changed by using “Change PIN” on the User Profile page. In conjunction with the assigned User ID, the PIN is used to provide an electronic signature on a Form 5500 or Form 5500-SF.

An EFAST2 ETIN is an Electronic Transmitter Identification Number. The ETIN, along with a PIN, is required for preparers to submit filings or batches of filings on behalf of others using EFAST2-approved third-party software. Filing Authors and Filing Signers normally do not need the ETIN.

**Q10. How can I change the address, email address, or user types I entered when I initially registered?**

If you need to change your profile information, including the type(s) that are associated with your User ID, first login to the EFAST2 Web site. Click "User Profile," then on the resulting User Profile page click "Change Profile." Don't forget to save your changes when you are finished.

The EFAST2 system does not allow changes to the answer provided to the challenge question (place of birth or date of birth). Also, the EFAST2 User ID itself is a unique, system-generated ID that cannot be changed for an established account.

**Q11. I didn't print my registration page that listed my PIN. How can I see my PIN now?**

You can view your EFAST2 PIN at any time. After successfully logging in, click "User Profile" to view your PIN at the top of the screen.

**Q12. I am not sure if I have already registered. How can I check?**

There are multiple ways that you may check to see if you have successfully registered with EFAST2.

If you are not sure that you have successfully completed the registration process, click either "Forgot User ID" or "Forgot Password" on the Login page and enter the email address that you believe you entered during registration.

- If you have registered that email address, you will be prompted to enter the answer to the associated challenge question.
- If you have not registered that email address, you will see an error indicating this email address doesn't match what we have on file.
- If you began registering that email address but have not yet completed the registration process, you will see an option to "Complete Registration" on the screen. Follow the instructions on the remaining screens to complete your registration.

Alternately, you may attempt to complete the registration process by clicking "Register." After you enter the required information, including email address, click "Next." If the email address you have entered is already associated with an EFAST2 account, you will receive the message that the email address you provided is already in use.

**Q13. I work for multiple companies but the "Company Name" field will not let me enter both company names, and I can't register for another UserID using the same email address. How can I register for all my companies/plans?**

The EFAST2 registration process does not provide a way to add multiple companies to a profile, nor is it necessary for you to do so. Although you provide employment information when registering, the credentials are personal and are not linked to a company or plan. The EFAST2 credentials can be used

to identify the registrant for multiple years and on multiple filings. EFAST2 registration allows only one active User ID per valid email account. Each person should need only one active registration.

#### **Q14. What are “User Types” and which should I choose?**

Each user type has specific filing tasks associated with it. If the registrant will be performing filing tasks associated with more than one user type, he or she may select multiple user types.

**Filing Author:** Filing Authors can complete Form 5500/5500-SF and the accompanying schedules, submit the filing, and check filing status. Filing Authors cannot sign filings unless they also have the “Filing Signer” role. If you are using EFAST2-approved third-party software to author your filing rather than IFILE, you do not need to check this box.

**Filing Signer:** Filing signers are Plan Administrators, Employers/Plan Sponsors, or Direct Filing Entities who electronically sign the Form 5500/5500-SF. This role should also be selected by plan service providers that have written authorization to file on behalf of the plan administrator under the EFAST2 e-signature option. No other filing-related functions may be performed by selecting this user role alone.

**Schedule Author:** Schedule Authors can complete one or more of the schedules that accompany Form 5500/5500-SF. Schedules created by a Schedule Author are not associated with a filing. For a schedule created by a Schedule Author to be used in a filing, the schedule must be exported. This exported file will then be imported by the Filing Author to the correct filing. Schedule Authors cannot initiate, sign, or submit a filing. If the Filing Author is using EFAST2-approved third-party software to author your filing rather than IFILE, then you do not need to check this box.

**Transmitter:** Transmitters can transmit Form 5500/5500-SF filings to the EFAST2 system for processing on behalf of others. Transmitters are responsible for the security of all filing information prior to and during its transmission. A Transmitter can be a company, trade, business, or individual.

**Third-Party Software Developer:** Third-Party Software Developers make Form 5500 filing preparation or transmission software for use in the EFAST2 system. They submit test cases using their software to the Participant Acceptance Testing System (PATS) Team. The PATS Certification Team will then review their submissions and provide feedback, or will approve and certify the software. A Third-Party Software Developer can be a company, trade, business, or individual.

#### **Q15. Do I need to register each year?**

No, you should only need to register one time. However, credentials that have never been used for three consecutive calendar years will expire.

#### **Q16. Where can I find more information about EFAST2 credentials?**

The EFAST2 Web site contains several Frequently Asked Questions and User Guides. To locate much of this material, including the Instructions for Form 5500, the "EFAST2 Guide for Filers and Service Providers," the “EFAST2 Quick Start Guide,” the "EFAST2 IFILE User's Guide,” and a link to "EFAST2 Tutorials," please go to **Forms, Instructions, and Publications**.