

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Contents

Section 1:	What is Multifactor Authentication (MFA) and how does it affect me using the PCS application?.....	2
Section 2:	Getting Access.....	13
Section 3:	Using the Application.....	14
Section 4:	CAIRS-MHARS.....	15
Section 5:	Uploads .....	15
Section 6:	Other Questions.....	16

## Section 1: What is Multifactor Authentication (MFA) and how does it affect me using the PCS application?

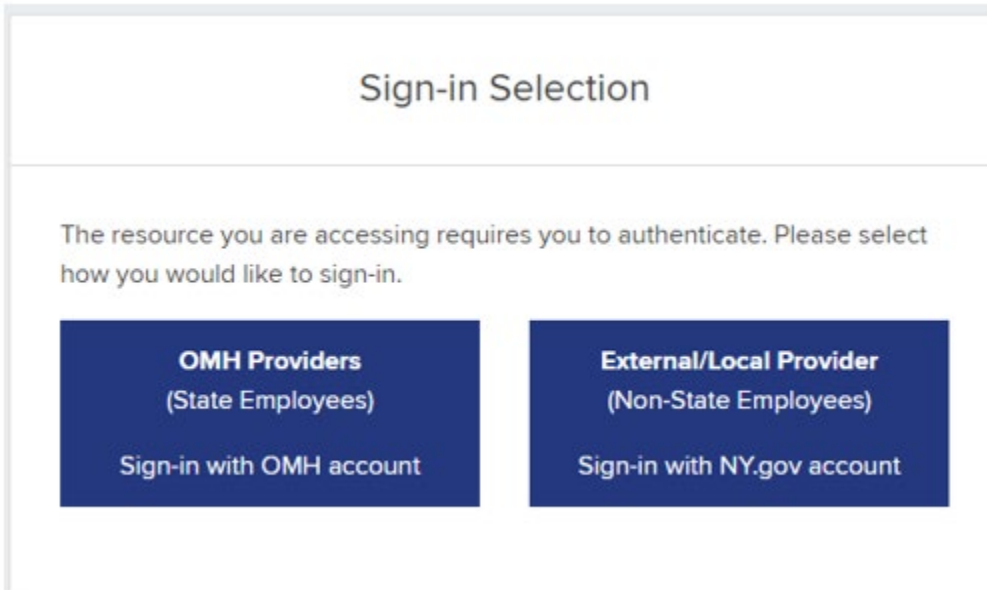
### 1. What is Multifactor Authentication (MFA)?

**Answer:** Multifactor Authentication (MFA) is a way of securing your online account by requiring more than just a username and password to sign in. It adds a layer of security as it requires a 2<sup>nd</sup> form of authentication needed to access the PCS application.

The user goes to the PCS homepage [Patient Characteristics Survey \(ny.gov\)](https://ny.gov) and clicks on application link. The user is navigated to the Sign-in selection landing page and selects Sign-in with “OMH Providers (State employees) OR “External/Local Provider” (Non-State Employee).

### 2. What’s the difference between Internal and External Users?

**Answer:** Internal Users are OMH Providers or State Employees. External Users are local providers or Non-State Employees.



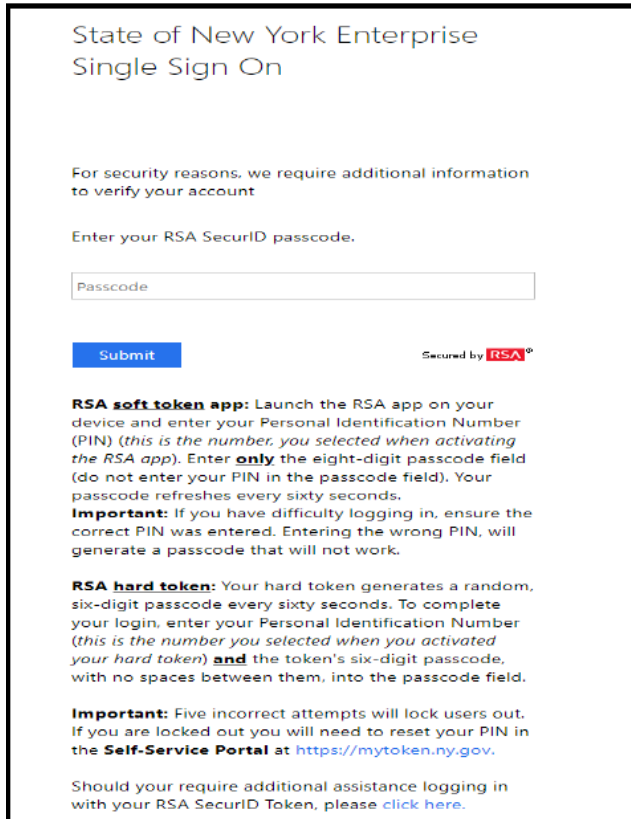
Sign-in Selection

The resource you are accessing requires you to authenticate. Please select how you would like to sign-in.

<b>OMH Providers</b> (State Employees) Sign-in with OMH account	<b>External/Local Provider</b> (Non-State Employees) Sign-in with NY.gov account
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### 3. I work at one of the Psychiatric Centers, what is my login process?

**Answer:** The user would follow the Internal Users instructions. After clicking on the PC Homepage and “OMH Providers (State Employees), the user is prompted to enter their passcode either from the hardware or software token. Upon authentication, the user is directed to the PCS application.



State of New York Enterprise  
Single Sign On

For security reasons, we require additional information to verify your account

Enter your RSA SecurID passcode.

Passcode

Submit Secured by RSA®

**RSA soft token app:** Launch the RSA app on your device and enter your Personal Identification Number (PIN) (*this is the number, you selected when activating the RSA app*). Enter **only** the eight-digit passcode field (do not enter your PIN in the passcode field). Your passcode refreshes every sixty seconds.

**Important:** If you have difficulty logging in, ensure the correct PIN was entered. Entering the wrong PIN, will generate a passcode that will not work.

**RSA hard token:** Your hard token generates a random, six-digit passcode every sixty seconds. To complete your login, enter your Personal Identification Number (*this is the number you selected when you activated your hard token*) **and** the token's six-digit passcode, with no spaces between them, into the passcode field.

**Important:** Five incorrect attempts will lock users out. If you are locked out you will need to reset your PIN in the **Self-Service Portal** at <https://mytoken.ny.gov>.

Should you require additional assistance logging in with your RSA SecurID Token, please [click here](#).

**4. I work for a local provider, so I follow directions for External Users, correct?**

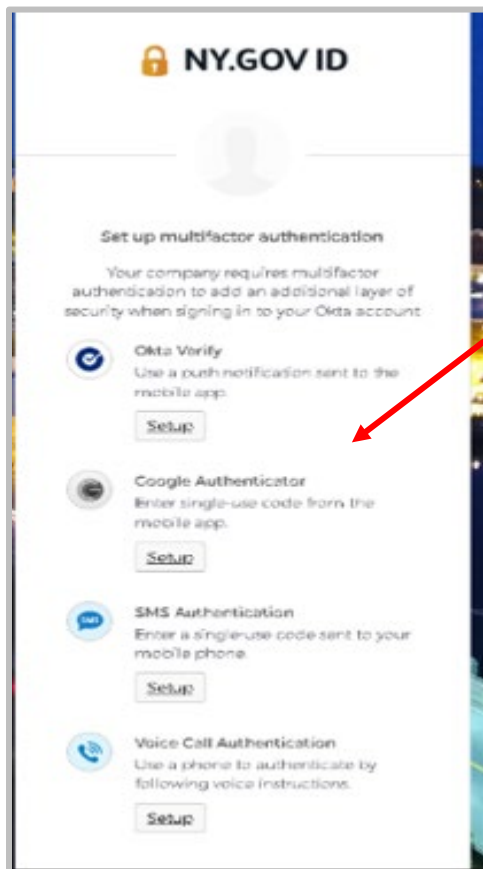
**Answer:** Yes, you follow the External User/Local Provider instructions logging in using OKTA-Multifactor Authentication. After clicking the blue box for External Users, you enter your username and password on the NY.GOV ID (Secure Access to NYS Services).

You are now asked to set up multifactor authentication:

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**NOTE:** You only need to set up your MFA upon initial login.  
We recommend setting up SMS and Voice Call Authentications.

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- 1) Okta Verify
- 2) Google Authenticator
- 3) SMS Authentication
- 4) Voice Call Authenticator

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**NOTE:** You should set up at least two authentication options.

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Upon authentication, the user is directed to the PCS application homepage.

**5. I've tried to follow the MFA instructions, but I cannot access PCS and need help.**

**Answer:** If you are unable to log in using your credentials (i.e., the username and password) received via email, please reach out to your facility Security Manager to reset the password from the SMS application. This username and password can be used to log in to any other OMH application that you may have access to. If you are still unable to login, then you can reach out to [healthhelp@its.ny.gov](mailto:healthhelp@its.ny.gov) or contact the OMH helpdesk at 1-800-435-7697, select Option #2.

**6. I don't remember my password. What do I do?**

**Answer:** External users of applications that switched over to NY.Gov authentication can use the "forgot password self-service of NY.Gov" to reset their NY.Gov password. This feature will allow users to set their own 14 characters password.

If the user has access to another application that is still authenticated with ClearTrust, they can continue to use their existing ClearTrust password. No changes to the existing passwords. As always, the password can also be reset by the Security Manager. If the password is reset by the Security Manager, the user will receive an email with the new password. If you have forgotten your NY.gov password or your password is expired, go to the URL for an application and select "Forgot your Password."

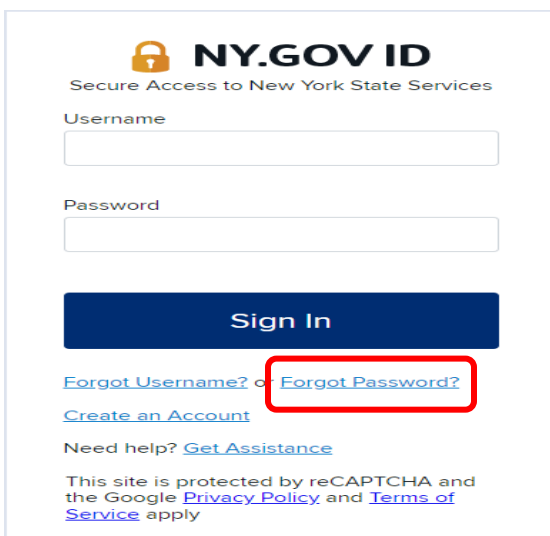
If you need to reset your password, forgotten your NY.gov password or your password is expired, go to the URL for an application (Ex. <https://pcs.omh.ny.gov/>) and click on "**External/Local Provider (Non-State Employees) Sign-in with NY/gov account**" button to authenticate. The following page will display. Right click on the "Forgot Password?" and click on open link in a new tab.

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**NOTE 1:** As always, the password can also be reset by the Security Manager. Password reset by the Security Manager will be sent to the user's email.

**NOTE 2:** Once your password is reset, please wait one hour before using it so that the databases can update.


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You will be taken to a page below where you will enter your username.

## FORGOT PASSWORD SELF SERVICE

To reset your password, please enter valid user name and click on the Continue button.



Secure Access to New York State Services

\* indicates required field

Username\*

This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

Enter your NY.GOV username and then click “**Continue.**” Click the “**I’m not a robot**” box. Next, you will have two options – to “**Reset by answering shared secret questions**” or “**Reset using email.**”

### FORGOT PASSWORD SELF SERVICE

Choose how you would like to reset your password.

Select one reset option—

Reset by answering shared secret questions       Reset using eMail

Selecting shared secret option will allow you to set a new password after answering your shared secret questions correctly.

Selecting email option will allow you to reactivate your account. During this process you will be asked to enter three new shared secrets and set a new password.

If you choose to reset using your secret questions, you will answer a series of questions that you previously answered. After that, you will have a “**Continue**” button that lets you set up a new password. If you choose to reset by email, you will receive an email with a link to reset your security questions.

This email was sent in response to your "Forgot Password" request. If you DID NOT make the request, you may disregard this email.

By selecting forgotten password you have begun the account reactivation process. For security reasons you will be asked to complete two steps. First, establish three new shared secrets and second, create a new password. Once you have completed these steps your account will be reactivated.

Please [click here](#) to reactivate your account. Please do not close out of the browser while completing the account activation.

If the above link does not work please copy and paste the below URL into your browser.

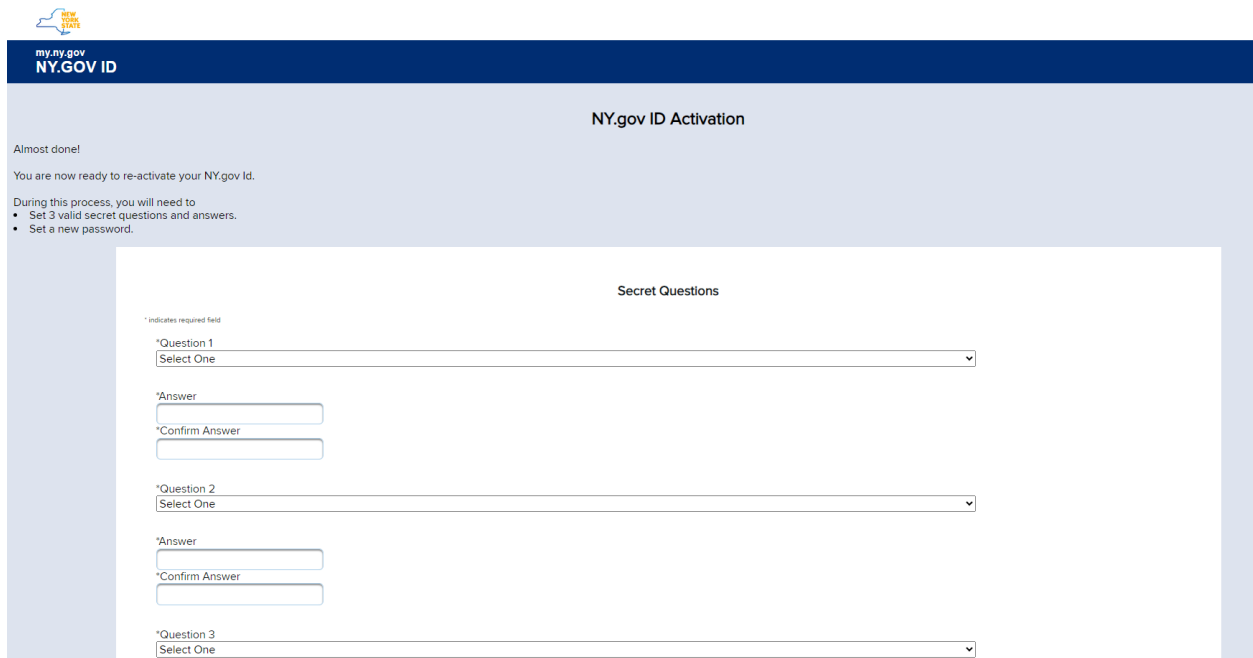
<https://my.ny.gov/FPSV4/reset.xhtml?rid=edb1f337-8955-4456-9828-aaec89ebd6eb&nygovidlang=en>

NOTE: The above link is valid for only 24 hours.

You will click on the link to reactivate your account. Click on **Continue**.



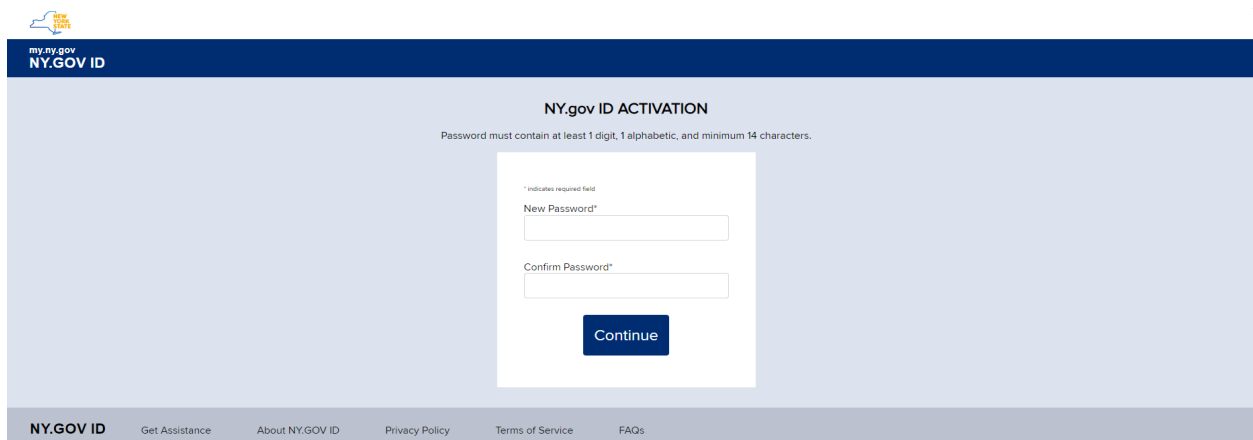
Answer three secret questions.



Once you complete the questions you will be able to create a new password. The system displays the following page, click on **Continue**.



Create New Password and Confirm Password.

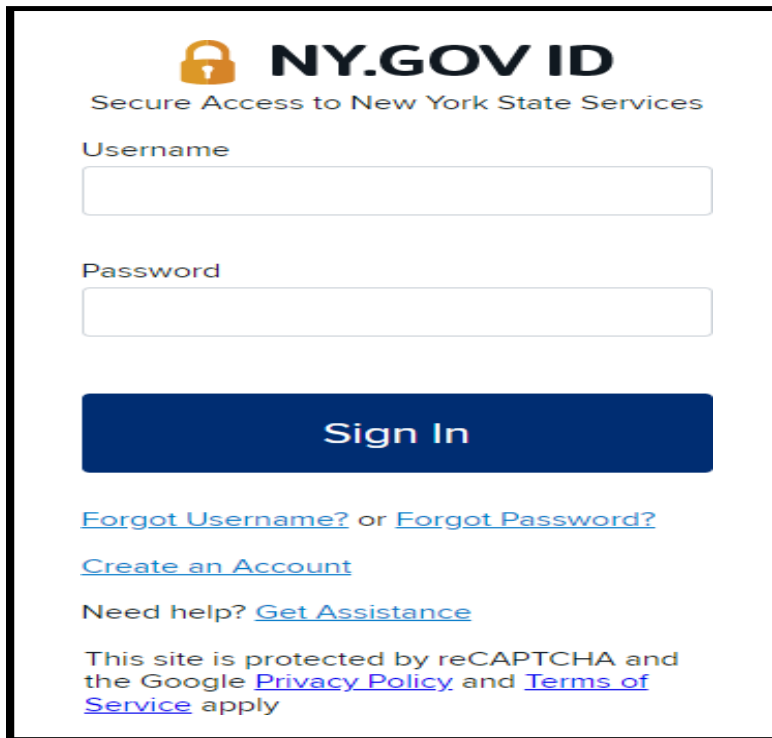


After the password change, you will be logged into NY.GOV, but please log-out, and complete all the steps.

**7. Is there a way to change the OKTA MFA form of authentication that I chose?**

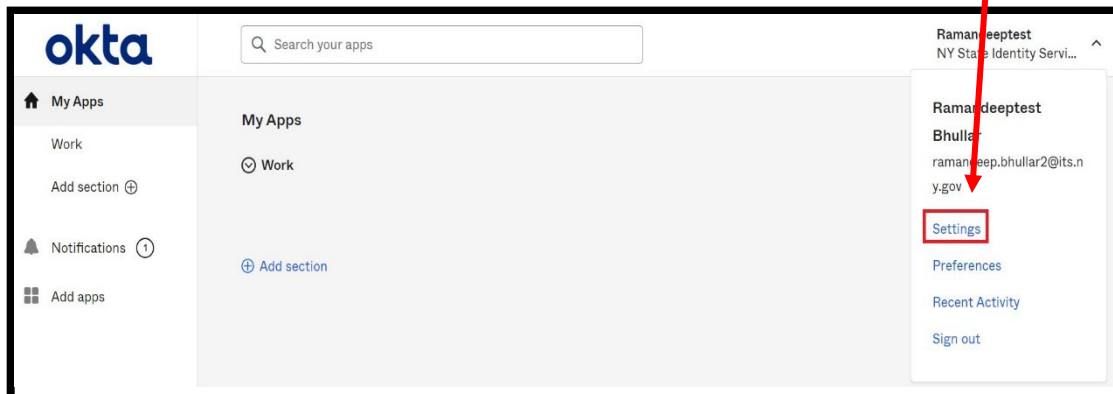


**Answer:** The External users will be able to manage their OKTA MFA mode of authentications by the following steps below. If you need to set up or remove the current mode of authentication that you have setup initially then go to <https://my.ny.gov/LoginV4/login.xhtml> and enter your NY.gov ID (i.e., Username) and the password and click on **Sign In**.



The screenshot shows the NY.GOV ID login page. At the top, there is a lock icon and the text "NY.GOV ID" followed by "Secure Access to New York State Services". Below this are two input fields: "Username" and "Password". A large blue "Sign In" button is centered below the fields. At the bottom, there are links for "Forgot Username? or Forgot Password?", "Create an Account", and "Need help? Get Assistance". A footer note states: "This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google Privacy Policy and Terms of Service apply".

You will be directed to the OKTA Dashboard. Under the profile, click on **Settings**.

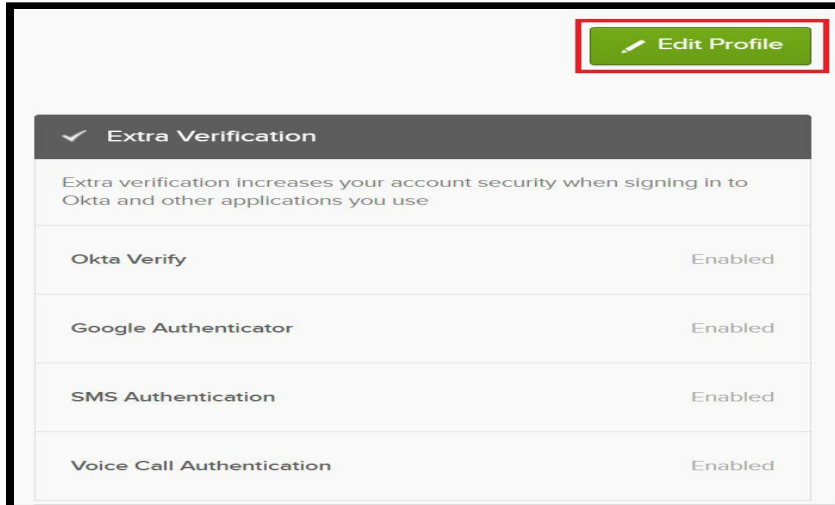


System displays the account personal information as well as the extra verification section. Click on the edit profile button to add or remove mode of authentication.

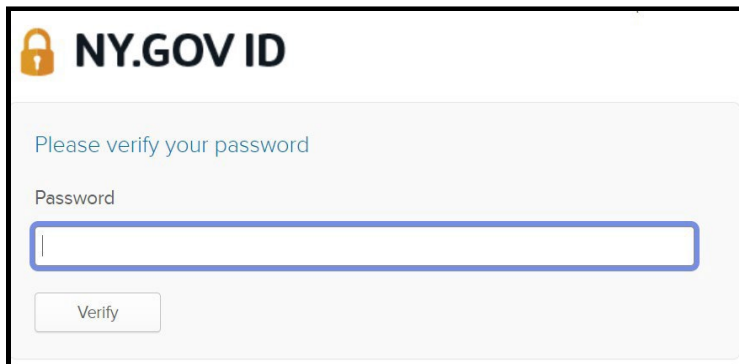
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**NOTE: User should set up at least two authentication options.**

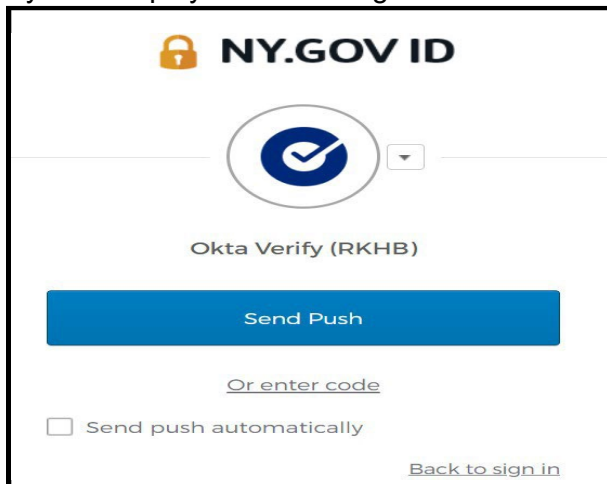
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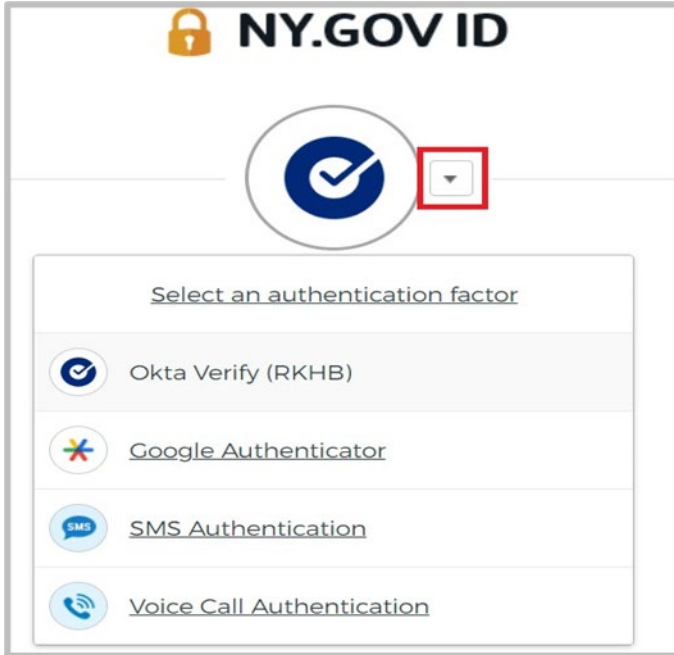
Enter your password and click on **Verify** button.



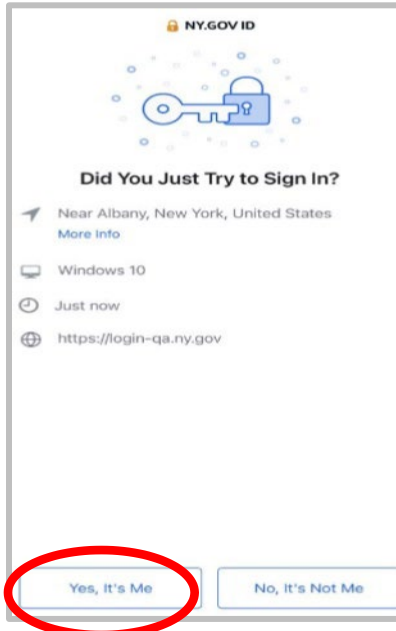
System displays the following screen.



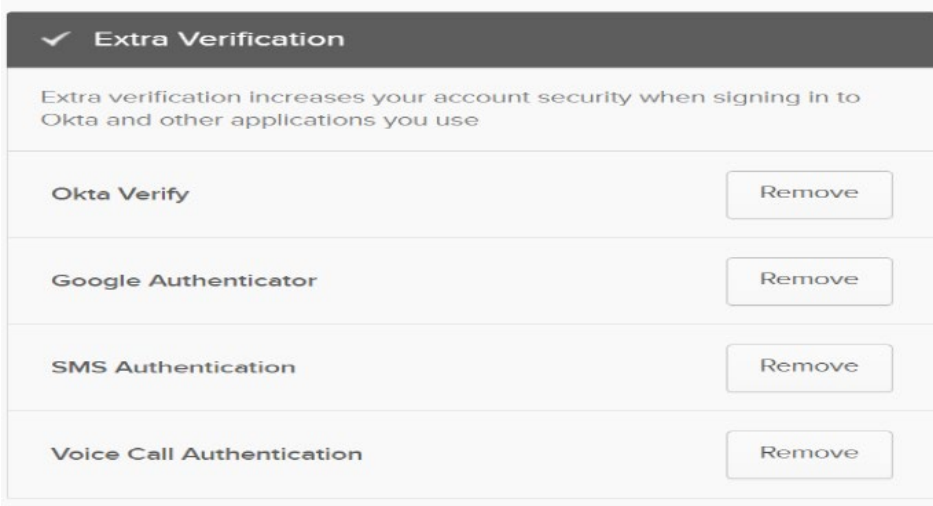
Select an authentication factor from the drop-down list.



If Okta verify is selected, you can select either Send Push or enter code. If you select **Send Push** button, a notification is sent out to your mobile device. You select, **Yes, It's me** option on the mobile device.

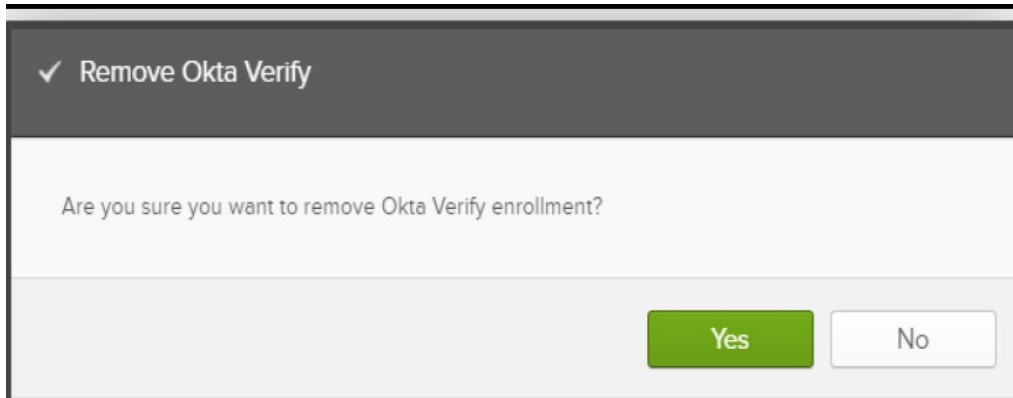


You are directed to add or remove additional mode of authentication from the extra verification section.



✓ Extra Verification	
Extra verification increases your account security when signing in to Okta and other applications you use	
Okta Verify	Remove
Google Authenticator	Remove
SMS Authentication	Remove
Voice Call Authentication	Remove

To remove a mode of authentication, you must click on the **Remove** button.

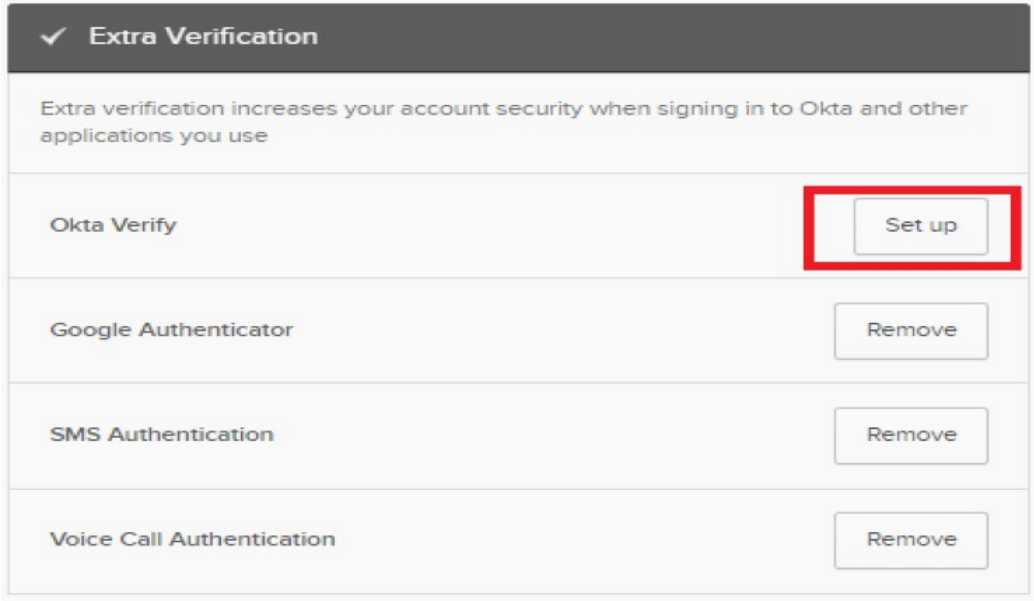


✓ Remove Okta Verify

Are you sure you want to remove Okta Verify enrollment?

Yes No

Click on Yes to remove the mode of authentication (OKTA Verify). Similarly other mode of authentication (I.e., Google Authenticator, SMS Authentication, and Voice Call Authentication) can be removed. (**Note: you need to have setup at least two authentication options**). Once the mode of authentication is removed, you will be able to set it up again by clicking on **Set up** button.



✓ Extra Verification	
Extra verification increases your account security when signing in to Okta and other applications you use	
Okta Verify	Set up
Google Authenticator	Remove
SMS Authentication	Remove
Voice Call Authentication	Remove

## Section 2: Getting Access

### 1. How do we obtain usernames and passwords if we do not have any yet?

**Answer:** If you do not have Patient Characteristics Survey (PCS) access, please contact your Security Manager. Your Security Manager will go into the Security Management System (SMS) to add you as a new user and grant you PCS Supervisor or PCS Submitter access. You will receive two emails: one with your User ID and the other with your password. Once you get the email with your password, please wait **one hour** for the databases to update before trying to access PCS.

### 2. How do I find out who the Security Manager is for my facility?

**Answer:** On the top menu of the application, there is a link to the list of Security Managers for your facility. Alternatively, you may email [PCS@omh.ny.gov](mailto:PCS@omh.ny.gov).

### 3. What browser works best for the PCS?

**Answer:** We have found that the PCS works best in Goggle Chrome and recommend using that browser.

**4. My supervisor asked me to help enter data. Can I log-on with his User ID to enter data for clients on his caseload?**

**Answer:** No. User IDs are user specific. Data in the Patient Characteristic Survey (PCS) are Protected Health Information (PHI), and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) rules require tracking users (“User IDs”) who access PHI. In order to do this, the Office of Mental Health (OMH) Security requires each user to have his own User ID. If appropriate, the Security Manager at your facility can establish a User ID for you and grant you access to the PCS application.

### **Section 3: Using the Application**

**1. My unit/site was closed prior to the start of the survey week, but still appears in the drop-down list for my facility. When will it be removed?**

**Answer:** Closed units/sites are retained in the PCS application so that the application does not delete any client data that may have been entered. If no data have been entered for a closed unit/site, the PCS Supervisor should note the site's closure on the application's Supervisor Page. If your unit/site closed after the start of the survey week, you are expected to enter data for services delivered during the PCS week when the unit/site was still open.

**2. My request to add a unit/site to my facility was approved in Mental Health Provider Data Exchange (MHPD) today, but it doesn't appear in the drop-down list for my facility. How do I report data?**

**Answer:** New unit/sites are added to the PCS application daily. You will see the unit tomorrow.

**3. I tried to edit an existing submission but received the message: “Another user is currently editing this survey. Try again later.” I did try again later and received the same message. What can I do to edit the submission?**

**Answer:** When a person is editing a submission, it becomes “locked” for editing by others. Sometimes a record will remain locked even though the original user is no longer editing it because the user was unable to exit from the edit mode. To exit completely from the edit mode, a user must select “Save this record” or “Cancel these changes.” When a record is locked from editing by others because of an incomplete exit, the PCS Supervisor can view the locked record, identify the user holding the lock, and “unlock” the record.

**5. What would make a submission invalid?**

**Answer:** An invalid submission would be a survey that was not fully completed, for example, items left blank, or 2 inconsistent answers. Please see [Validations](#).

## 6. Can an entry be printed once completed?

**Answer:** Yes. At the bottom of the List of Submissions, you will find an option to print a range of surveys. Choose one or several to print at a time. Remember, you should only print surveys if you need to do so for your own purposes. Do not send paper forms to OMH.

## 7. If one client has separate appointments with a doctor, nurse, and a clinician, do they need three PCS filled out?

**Answer:** If all three appointments are in the same program, then no, only one survey needs to be filled out, but make sure you indicate all the dates of service.

## 8. In a residential placement, what happens if a resident is on a trial visit at another site?

**Answer:** If your facility is holding a bed for the client, report on them as if they were in residence for the survey week.

## Section 4: CAIRS-MHARS

### 1. One of our unit/sites has data imported from Child and Adult Integrated Reporting System (CAIRS) or Mental Health Automated Record System (MHARS) and there are a large number of clients on the associated drop-down roster. Should we create a PCS submission for each client that appears on the associated client roster?

**Answer:** No. You should create a submission **only** for those clients who received a service during the survey week, which may or may not include the entire roster.

### 2. One of our unit/sites has data imported from CAIRS or MHARS. How can I find a client on this large list to include in the PCS?

**Answer:** The drop-down client roster exhibits a column for each of the following variables: Client's First name, Client's Last name, Date of Birth, Gender, and CAIRS (or MHARS) ID. It may be sorted by any of these columns by clicking on the column header. Click any header a second time to sort in reverse order.

## Section 5: Uploads

### 1. Once I upload data, will the data appear on survey forms like other submissions, and can the data be edited?

**Answer:** Yes. Once data is successfully uploaded, it appears in PCS just as any other submission and can be edited and corrected in the same manner.

### 1. Are the specifications on the layout of the data for uploading affected by new questions that are being asked this year? Will we need to revamp our format from 2021?

**Answer:** Yes. New questions and new requirements mean that the file layout will be different. Please see [2023 Using the Electronic Data Upload Feature](#) for more information.

## **Section 6: Other Questions**

### **1. Is there a phone number/live person that we can speak to?**

**Answer:** Yes. You may call 1-800-430-3586 for help in accessing PCS. The best way to contact us for assistance with PCS is to send an email to [pcs@omh.ny.gov](mailto:pcs@omh.ny.gov).

### **2. Is the definition of "served" the same as the questions that ask about service during the survey week?**

**Answer:** Yes, it includes the survey week.

### **3. May I fill out a paper copy of the Survey Form and have someone else at my facility enter it into the PCS application?**

**Answer:** Yes. To access a paper copy, click on survey form hyperlink located on the [PCS homepage](#). Please do not send OMH the paper forms.

### **4. If we are using the client's full name, do we need releases to protect confidentiality?**

**Answer:** No release is necessary. State and Federal law permit disclosure of protected health information (PHI) for activities related to oversight of the public mental health system. The Patient Characteristics Survey has always collected PHI, for example, date of birth, gender, date of service and zip code of residence. In 2011, full name replaced initials to help with identifying unique individuals and linkage of the PCS with other OMH data systems. We also protect that data, both with secure servers and personnel who have been fully trained in handling data per Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act provisions. No PHI is released from OMH, all such data is stripped before any composite PCS data is made available to anyone.

### **5. We do not track Gender and Sexual Orientation and aren't sure about asking our clients about Gender and Sexual Orientation. What should we do? Is it necessary to collect this information?**

**Answer:** For the purposes of PCS, reporting on Gender and Sexual Orientation allows OMH to identify underserved populations and to plan for and provide better services statewide.

For your facility, asking the questions of your clients may give you a better clinical picture and help you provide better service for your clients, but you need to decide what to ask. For example, what is appropriate for a clinic may not be helpful for a drop-in program. When the questions are asked, however, this information is asked of all clients, Cisgender, Transgender Woman, Transgender man, Non-Binary, Gender Non-Conforming. As with all client data, PCS data are HIPAA protected and kept strictly confidential. It may be helpful to assure your clients about all three of these elements; that this information is asked of everyone, it allows for improved care, and is completely confidential. And, while we recommend that you add this question to your clinical records, if you do not have the information for the 2023 PCS, you may answer "unknown."



**6. If a resident does not want to disclose his/her gender or sexual orientation is that unknown or other?**

**Answer:** Enter “Client didn’t answer.” If the client has not been asked to self-identify, please answer “Unknown.” Do not guess.

**7. How do I respond when a client refuses to answer questions on the survey?**

**Answer:** The PCS is **not** designed to be completed directly with clients, but rather answered from data stored in your facility’s records. In general, your answers will be drawn from data that you have collected previously. Information needs to be updated if not relatively current. If you choose to supplement that data, it may be helpful to assure your clients that this information is asked of all clients, and, as with all client data, is HIPAA protected and kept strictly confidential. However, if a client refuses to answer, please enter “client didn’t answer” if that choice is in the response set. Otherwise, answer “unknown.”

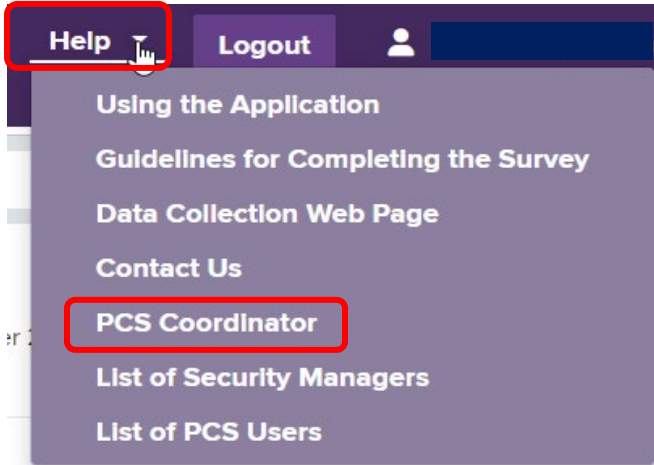
You need to decide whether asking the questions of your clients helps you provide better service for your clients. For example, what is appropriate for a clinic may not be helpful for a drop-in program.

**8. Can the survey be completed over the phone with clients that week or does it need to be face-to-face?**

**Answer:** The PCS is **not** designed to be completed directly with clients, but rather answered from data stored in your facility’s records. In general, your answers will be drawn from data that you have collected previously. If you are supplementing the data stored in your records, it is best to collect the data through a face-to-face interview.

**9. I know PCS questions should be brought to our PCS Coordinator first. How do I find out who my PCS Coordinator is?**

**Answer:** Once in the PCS application, in the purple bar at the top of the page, click Help and click PCS Coordinator.



This is where the PCS Coordinator information is located.

