Long-Term Care Facility (LTCF) National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) Frequently Asked Questions, Scenarios, and Important Links

Common Scenarios

How Do New LTCF Staff Members Gain Access to NHSN?

Scenario: I am new to a facility and would like to gain access to NHSN to report my facility's COVID-19 data to meet the [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reporting requirements](#).

- Important Reminder: Do not use the [5-Step Enrollment for LTCFs](#) to re-enroll your facility.
- **If your facility's NHSN Facility Administrator (FADMIN) is still available,** the FADMIN can [add you as a new user](#). If they would like to reassign you as the new FADMIN, please follow the steps available on the [NHSN FADMIN page](#) to [reassign the NHSN FADMIN role](#). The NHSN FADMIN does not need to be the Nursing Home Administrator. The NHSN FADMIN is the only person who can reassign the role of NHSN FADMIN to another existing user. This individual enrolls the facility, adds users, and then gives those users whichever rights are most appropriate—including administrative rights. Therefore, more than one person per facility can have administrative rights, but only one will be designated as the NHSN FADMIN.
- **If your facility's FADMIN is no longer available,** the incoming NHSN FADMIN should complete the [NHSN Facility Administrator Change Request Form](#) to request the change in the absence of the current FADMIN. If you are already registered for SAMS previously from another facility, please use the same email address you used to log into NHSN. If you are not already registered for SAMS, completing this online change request form will invite you to register for SAMS. An email from sams-no-reply@cdc.gov will be sent to the email address you provide. Follow the steps on the [CDC's SAMS webpage](#) to register for SAMS.

Important Links

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) NHSN

- [Overview](#)
- [FAQs about NHSN](#)

CDC's Secure Access Management Services (SAMS)

- [Overview](#)
- [SAMS NHSN User FAQs](#)

LTCF Component in NHSN

- [Overview](#)
- [LTCF COVID-19 Module](#)

❓ What to Do When NHSN FADMIN is Leaving Facility

Scenario: I have access to my nursing home's NHSN account, but I am leaving my current facility.

- If you know who the incoming NHSN FADMIN is for your current facility, follow steps on the NHSN FADMIN page to reassign the FADMIN role.
- If you will lose access to the email address you are currently using for NHSN and SAMS follow the steps to edit your email address in SAMS and NHSN.

❓ How to Enroll in NHSN

Scenario: My NHSN facility administrator has added me to NHSN. What are the next steps?

- Once added to NHSN, here is the order of emails you should receive with each of the action items:
  1. Subject: **Welcome to NHSN**, from nhsn@cdc.gov
     a. Agree to the rules of behavior and select the current date as when you completed the training.
  2. Subject: **U.S. Centers for Disease Control: SAMS Partner Portal - Invitation to Register**, from sams-no-reply@cdc.gov
     a. Complete the registration using the temporary password provided in the email. IMPORTANT: You must use your home address when registering for SAMS in this step.
  3. Subject: **CDC: SAMS Partner Portal - Identity Verification Request**, from sams-no-reply@cdc.gov
     a. HSAG recommends using option 1: Experian Precise ID Check. Sometimes it doesn't work the first time you try. You have 3 attempts, so try again. If all 3 attempts don't work, then you should do option 2: Document Submission/Validation and upload the form and copies of your IDs after they have been notarized.
  4. Subject: U.S. Centers for Disease Control: SAMS Partner Portal - SAMS Activity Authorization, from sams-no-reply@cdc.gov
     a. You need to set up a second factor authentication. HSAG recommends setting up a SAMS soft token using the Entrust Identity app on your phone (instructions below).
     b. SAMS Soft Token Set Up
        1. Download the Entrust Identity app (Black background with a purple hexagon).
        2. Once you download the app, log in to SAMS at https://sams.cdc.gov
           a. Use the SAMS Credentials (left side) to log in with username (email address) and password you set up in the registration process.
        3. Once you are in SAMS, on the "My Applications" screen, click on "Manage Mobile Soft Token"
        4. Answer your security questions.
        5. Select "Activate Soft Token"
        6. We recommend setting up a mobile soft token with a QR code, but you can also request a physical grid card to be sent in the mail.

7. If you choose to set up the app, scan the QR Code in the Entrust Identity app and type the red activation code under the QR code in.
8. Set up a 4-digit PIN. You'll use PIN anytime you open the app **(make it something easy to remember)**.
9. In the future when you log in, use the SAMS Multi-factor Login (right side) to sign in with your Mobile Soft Token.

How to Upgrade to Level-3 in NHSN

Scenario: I can access NHSN but don't have a SAMS Grid Card. How do I obtain a SAMS Grid Card—upgrade to Level-3?

- Carefully review the CDC's guidance on [increasing LTCF SAMS Level Access to NHSN.](#)
- If you did not receive an email from SAMS for identify verification, search your email inbox for an email from sams-no-reply@cdc.gov.

  – Many invitations have been sent and have not been answered because they are in email inboxes or spam folders.

- If you still did not receive the invitation email from SAMS after conducting a search in your email boxes or your invitation has expired, please email NHSN@cdc.gov with "LTCF Enhanced Security Access" in the subject line. In the email be sure to provide your full name, facility name, CCN, and your email address.
- Additional tips for Level-3 upgrade:

  – Confirm that your mailing address is current within your SAMS profile. To confirm or change your residential/home address, please log into SAMS at https://sams.cdc.gov and use the "Update Profile" menu option on the left side of the page. Confirm that the address is correct and current.

  – Confirm the photo ID being submitted contains your current **home address**. If the photo ID does **not** include your home address, for example if a U.S. Passport is used, please submit a photocopy of a utility bill, pay stub, voter registration card, or other document which displays your current home address which will be used for validation.

  – You can upload a *single* PDF that includes all of your proofing documentation (form, scan(s) of identification, supplemental documentation, etc.) by logging into SAMS using your SAMS username and established password. You can also upload a document by visiting the link provided in the email received from sams-no-reply@cdc.gov with subject: CDC: SAMS Partner Portal - Identity Verification Request Form.

- Prepare your computer to interact with NHSN. This is an important step to ensure that you receive all emails from NHSN and SAMS. To ensure the best experience with NHSN, use a recommended, up-to-date browser. In your browser, add **cdc.gov** and **verisign.com** to your list of trusted websites and permit pop-ups for these sites. Check spam-blocker settings to allow emails from **NHSN@cdc.gov** and **SAMS-NO-REPLY@cdc.gov**

What to Do if You Submitted Identity Proofing Documents and Did Not Receive a Confirmation

Scenario: I have submitted my Identity Proofing document and <u>have not received a SAMS Activity Authorization email within 35 days.</u>

- **Please reach out to SAMS help desk at 877.681.2901 (Select Option 5) or samshelp@cdc.gov for an** update on your SAMS profile. Be sure to provide your full name and email address.

Next Steps After NHSN Level-3 Access is Obtained

Scenario: I have Level-3 access to my nursing home's NHSN account. What else can I do?

- Add additional users—see NHSN [How to Add a User Guide](#)
- Use the optional event-level reporting feature to assist with COVID-19 vaccine data monitoring and tracking: https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/pdfs/ltc/covidvax/person-level-form-one-pager-508.pdf
- Review the recordings or slides of an NHSN webinar training: https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html
- Check for and review updated COVID-19 module resources: https://www.cdc.gov/nhsn/ltc/covid19/index.html

For additional support email NHSN at NHSN@cdc.gov or Simi Williams at swilliams1@hsag.com