

AKO Transition

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is the Army transitioning from AKO?

A: The Army is seeking to modernize legacy solutions such as AKO into cloud services that are globally accessible, with enhanced capabilities. In order to accomplish this, the Army must sunset AKO and use AKO funding for modernized services.

Q: If we are transitioning from AKO, what are we moving to?

A: DISA provides the DoD Enterprise Email (DEE) to all Army CAC holders – this will be the global Army email solution after AKO goes away.

In addition, there are many collaboration services and solutions for Army business users, including the Defense Enterprise Portal Service (DEPS), MILSUITE, local SharePoint portals and file shares. DISA also offers other collaboration capabilities in Defense Collaboration Service, allowing users to collaborate online and to message each other via CHAT and IM.

Q: How does transitioning from AKO affect deployed Soldiers?

A: Deployed soldiers will continue to use DoD Enterprise Email (DEE) and communication services available on the internet.

Q: What can I expect on April 1, 2015?

A: On April 1, 2015, retirees and family members will no longer have access to the portal or to content on AKO and will not be able to login to other applications using the AKO username and password. The ability to forward to private email accounts ended in January 2015.

A: Additionally, users that were receiving and storing email on AKO will no longer receive email. Email will only be forwarded to DEE and other government email systems.

Q: What can I expect on July 1, 2015?

A: On July 1, 2015, Army CAC holders will no longer receive email forwarded from their AKO email accounts. CAC holders will still have access to the portal and all other AKO services. CAC holders will also be able to continue accessing applications that use AKO Single Sign On.

Q: How to do I establish another (commercial) email account?

A: Establishing a commercial email account is easy to do and many are free of charge. This list is not exhaustive, but has been compiled using the most frequently searched free email providers. The links below will direct users to the individual websites' step-by-step guide to establishing an email account....

Q: How is AKO instant messaging (IM) affected?

A: Instant messaging will remain a service on AKO until the Army determines otherwise.

Q: Are my phone and VTC capabilities impacted?

A: Phone and VTC capabilities will not be impacted by the termination of AKO email. Desktop VTC and telephone service will be collapsed into the Unified Capabilities service.

Q: What are Unified Capabilities? When will they be complete?

A: In the next two years, the Army will transition to an enterprise solution for Unified Capabilities. Currently the CIO/G-6, PEO EIS, PEO C3T, Second Army/NETCOM, and ARCYBER are engaging with DISA to formulate and provide the Army requirements for the Joint Information Environment (JIE) solution.

Q: How is access to AKO services other than email impacted?

A: For all users other than retirees and family members, access to all other AKO services (portal, single sign-on, etc.) will remain active.

Q: What does the cloud have to do with the transition?

A: The Army is looking at several different alternatives for how (and when) we purchase commercial services. Services hosted at contractor facilities may soon become a viable course of action.

Q: Why is AKO access ending?

A: The Army established Army Knowledge Online (AKO) in the late 1990s to provide online services for U.S. Army personnel, later extending some AKO services to retirees and family members. Services included email, collaboration, discussion forums, a directory, and direct access to many DoD and Veterans Affairs (VA) websites.

As part of the transition to next generation capabilities, the Army (along with other DoD partners) seeks to take advantage of commercially offered services/capabilities.

Q: What are the benefits of next generation enterprise services?

A: As Secretary McHugh detailed in his April 2013 memo, the Army anticipates significant financial economies, efficiencies, and security improvements with the transition to next generation enterprise services. (Need to link to McHugh memo and update to reference CIO memo)

Q: How do retirees and family members get access to DoD online services, if not by AKO?

A: Retirees and family members must create a premium DoD Self-Service Logon (DS Logon) to gain access to DoD online services, such as Tricare Online and [myPay](#). Instructions for creating a DS Logon account.

Q: What happens to my files on AKO?

A: For retirees and family members, access ended on April 1, 2015. For all other users storing personal files on the AKO Portal, transferring files from AKO Myfiles is made easy. You are able to download individual files or multiple files at once.

Q: Will enterprise directory services be affected?

A: The functionalities behind enterprise directory services will remain in place and operational. The Army will determine a follow-on capability when needed and appropriate.

Q: What is DS Logon?

A: DoD Self-Service Logon (DS Logon) allows secure access to multiple self-service DoD and VA resources without a CAC. For detailed information about DS Logon, including instructions for establishing an account, [click here](#).

Note: Enrollment in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is required to obtain a DS Logon account.

Q: How do I register for a DS Logon account?

A: Retirees have several options available:

- [Defense Financial Account Service \(DFAS\) Registration](#)
- [Email Registration](#)
- [Online Remote](#)
- [RAPIDS](#) (while getting a military ID card issued)
- In-person at a [VA Regional Office \(VARO\)](#)

[Family members](#) can obtain a DS Logon by:

- Sponsor's Common Access Card (CAC) Registration
- Sponsor's Defense Financial Account Service (DFAS) Registration
- Email Registration

Q: How do I access DoD websites not connected to DS Logon?

For sites not currently using DS Logon, such as [myPay](#), you must establish an individual username and password.

Q: How do I stay connected with other retirees and the Army community?

A: The Army Retirement Services Office (RSO) site

[\[http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/index.html\]](http://soldierforlife.army.mil/retirement/index.html) is keeping retirees and veterans

connected with a wealth of information, including links to benefit services and news. The Army's public website, www.army.mil, is also a source of official Army news and information.

Additionally, updates on the AKO transition and options are provided at www.eis.army.mil/ako