VOLUNTEERING ESSENTIALS

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How to password protect a document

When working with information digitally, one of the easiest ways to keep it secure is to password protect the document – sometimes known as encryption. This will restrict the ability to open the document, which means only people with the password (and therefore people who are permitted to work with the data) will have access.

Follow these simple steps to apply a password to a document when you're working in Microsoft Office.

Setting a password

1. Ensure you have saved the document you want to protect.
2. With the document open, move your mouse to the top left of the screen and click on **FILE**.
3. When the File menu opens up, select **INFO**.
4. From the Info menu, select the icon **PROTECT DOCUMENT**.
5. From the Protect Document menu, select **ENCRYPT WITH PASSWORD**.
6. You will be prompted to enter a password you want to set for this document.
7. You will then be asked to retype the password you just set – this is to ensure they match.
8. You will now see that next to the Protect Document icon, the permissions have changed identifying that a password is required for this document.
9. Save and close the document.

Opening a password protected document

1. Select to open the document.
2. You will be prompted for the password.
3. Enter the password EXACTLY as it was set in the steps outlined above.
4. The document will open.
5. When you have finished with the document, save any changes you have made.
6. Close the document.
7. You do not need to reset the password – the document will ask for it automatically when it is next opened.

Top tips for password protecting documents

- Make sure your passwords are strong – at least eight characters long, don't contain your name or complete words, and include a mix of characters.

- Don't share passwords or use the same passwords multiple times.

- Do NOT change your passwords regularly – it leads to confusion.

- Don't send the password with the file – if the message is intercepted, the security of the document will be lost.

- Be accurate when setting passwords – if the password is forgotten, the document cannot be recovered.

- Share passwords only with those who need access to the document and are specifically in volunteer roles with Parkinson's UK that handle data.

If you're unsure about any of the steps in this document, or want further support about who can handle data for Parkinson's UK, please get in touch with your staff contact.