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Employer Single Sign-On (ESSO) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Objective

The VEC Employer Single Sign-On (ESSO) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are available to provide Employers and Authorized Users with clear, consistent, and accessible guidance on the upcoming transition to ID.me for VEC Employer Self Service (ESS). The FAQs are designed to proactively address common questions, reduce confusion, and enable users to understand what is changing, why it matters, and what actions they need to take regarding the August 1, 2026 deadline. By serving as a single, reliable source of truth across all communication channels, the FAQs also support Call Center efficiency by reducing avoidable inquiries and ensuring consistent messaging throughout the transition period.

Important Note from Virginia Department of Taxation

Starting August 1, 2026, Employers will no longer be able to access iFile using their VEC Account Number. To continue using iFile to manage withholding and/or sales tax accounts with Virginia Tax after July 31, please log into iFile using your FEIN. If you have questions for Virginia Tax, visit tax.virginia.gov/VEC.

ESS vs. ESSO Definitions

ESS (Employer Self Service) refers to the online platform used by Employers and Authorized Users to manage unemployment insurance responsibilities.

ESSO (Employer Single Sign-On) refers to the initiative creating a method for users to access ESS from a sign-in process managed by VEC. This improves and modernizes how users access and interact with ESS, as well as supporting the transition from ESS access via Virginia Tax's website to ESS access via VEC's website.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Q1. What is changing with ESS access?

Starting August 1, 2026, the way you log in to Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) Employer Self Service (ESS) is permanently changing. You will no longer access ESS through the Virginia Tax iFile website. All ESS access will occur exclusively through VEC website, using ID.me as the login and identity verification method.

Your account data, filing history, and employer information are not changing – only the login pathway is being updated.

Q2. Why is VEC making this change?

VEC is transitioning ESS to ID.me for three reasons:

- **Security:** ID.me uses government-grade identity verification to protect Employer Accounts from unauthorized access and fraud.
- **Streamlined access:** A single ID.me credential provides one consistent login experience across VEC services, eliminating the need to maintain separate VEC-specific credentials.
- **Multi-user flexibility:** ID.me enables multiple Authorized Users – such as employees or third-party agents – to be individually linked to the same Employer Account, improving access management and accountability.

Q3. Who does this change affect?

This change applies to all individuals and organizations that currently access VEC ESS in any capacity, including:

- Employers managing their own VEC accounts
- Authorized employees or staff members with ESS access
- Third-party administrators (TPAs), Certified Public Accountants (CPAs), payroll processors, and tax preparers
- Any individual with an existing ESS login, regardless of how often they access the system

There are no exceptions. All active ESS users must complete ID.me setup and access ESS via VEC's website before August 1, 2026.

Q4. Will any of my account data or filing history be lost?

No. Your VEC employer account, all quarterly filing history, wage report records, and account details remain fully intact. This transition only changes how you log in; nothing about your underlying account data or history is affected.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Q5. What do I need to do to keep access to ESS?

All ESS users must complete one of the following steps before August 1, 2026:

- If you do not have an ID.me account: Create one at the VEC ESS login page and complete identity verification.
- If you already have an ID.me account: Confirm your profile information is current and that you can successfully log into ESS through the VEC website.

Once setup is complete, test your VEC ESS login before the deadline to confirm access. VEC strongly recommends that you do not wait until August 1 to attempt your first login through ID.me.

Q6. How do I create an ID.me account?

Follow these steps:

1. Go to vec.virginia.gov and click 'Employer Self Service.'
2. Select 'Sign in with ID.me.'
3. Choose 'Create an ID.me Account' and enter your email address and a password.
4. Verify your identity. You will need a valid, unexpired government-issued photo ID (driver's license or passport) and your Social Security number.
5. Select your preferred verification method: online (fastest, typically 5-10 minutes), video call with an ID.me agent, or in-person at a participating location.
6. Once verified, return to the VEC ESS login page and confirm you can access your account.

VEC strongly recommends completing this process as soon as possible ahead of the August 1, 2026 deadline to allow time to resolve any issues.

Q7. I already have an ID.me account. Do I need to do anything?

If you have an existing ID.me account, you do not need to create a new one. Before August 1, please confirm the following:

- Your email address on file with ID.me is current and accessible.
- Your phone number is up to date (ID.me uses it for multi-factor authentication).
- Your mailing address is current.
- You can successfully log into ESS through the VEC website using your existing ID.me credentials.

If any information has changed since you created your account, update it through ID.me before attempting to access ESS.

You may use an existing ID.me account already set up with a personal email address. ID.me provides your identity verification to VEC, but VEC will continue to send communications to the email address you provide within ESS.

Q8. What do I need to verify my identity through ID.me?

To complete ID.me identity verification, you will need:

- A valid, unexpired government-issued photo ID (driver's license, state ID, or passport)
- Your Social Security number
- Access to the email address you are registering (or already registered) with ID.me
- A smartphone or webcam if choosing video or online verification

ID.me cannot accept expired documents. If your government-issued ID has expired, obtain a current one before beginning the verification process.

TIMELINE & DEADLINES

Q9. What are the key dates I need to know?

August 1, 2026: VEC ESS Access via Virginia Tax iFile website is no longer available.

The ability to access VEC ESS is only available via VEC's website using ID.me. ESS access via the Virginia Tax website (iFile) is permanently disabled. No grace period applies.

Q10. Can I wait until August 1 to complete my ID.me setup?

You should not wait. ID.me identity verification can take time – particularly if online verification is unsuccessful and you must schedule a video call or in-person appointment.

Waiting until August 1 risks a gap in online access that can affect your ability to file required reports or respond to time-sensitive VEC requests. VEC strongly recommends completing setup as soon as possible.

ACCESS & IMPACT

Q11. What happens if I do not complete ID.me setup before August 1?

If you do not complete ID.me setup before August 1, 2026, you will lose access to ESS immediately when the login via Virginia Tax's iFile website is disabled. Specifically:

- You will not be able to log in to ESS through any previous login method.
- You will not be able to file required quarterly wage reports through VEC ESS.
- You will not be able to view, update, or manage your VEC Employer Account.
- You will not be able to respond to VEC correspondence that requires account access.

There are no exceptions or extensions to this deadline. VEC is implementing a system-level change that cannot be overridden for individual users. To restore VEC ESS access after August 1, you must complete

ID.me setup – but this results in a period of interrupted access that may affect your compliance obligations.

Q12. Will my filing deadlines change because of this transition?

No. Quarterly filing deadlines and all other VEC employer obligations remain unchanged. This transition only affects how you log into VEC ESS.

If a lack of ESS access causes you to miss a filing deadline, VEC will not automatically waive late penalties. It is your responsibility to complete ID.me setup before the deadline to ensure uninterrupted access.

Q13. Will I still use the Virginia Department of Taxation website for anything?

After August 1, 2026, you will no longer use the Virginia Tax website (iFile) to access VEC Employer Accounts or ESS. That login pathway is permanently discontinued.

If you separately use the Virginia Tax iFile website for state tax services such as withholding tax, sales tax, or income tax filing, those services are not affected by this change. You will continue to access them using your Virginia Tax credentials.

To summarize: VEC Employer Account access moves to ID.me via the VEC website. State tax services remain on the Virginia Tax website and are unaffected.

THIRD-PARTY & MULTI-USER ACCESS

Q14. I use a CPA, TPA, or payroll company to manage my ESS account. What do they need to do?

Third-party administrators, CPAs, and payroll processors who access ESS on behalf of employers must each create their own individual ID.me account. Credentials cannot be shared – each person must log in with their own verified identity.

Each employer must send an access invitation to their third-party representative through ESS. The invitation must be sent to the exact email address registered with the third-party individual's ID.me account. If the email addresses do not match, the invitation will not connect the third-party individual to the employer in ESS and the third-party individual will not be able to access the Employer Account.

VEC recommends that employers and their representatives coordinate now to set up ID.me accounts where necessary and to confirm which email address is linked to the third party's ID.me account before invitations are sent.

Q15. Is there a limit on how many Employer Accounts a third-party user can access?

Yes. A single ID.me user profile designated as a third-party user (TPA, CPA, etc.) can be linked to a maximum of 25 VEC employer tax accounts. Third-party administrators who manage more than 25 accounts should contact VEC Business Customer Service at (866) 354-5579 for guidance on how to structure access across multiple profiles.

Q16. Can multiple staff members from the same company each have their own ESS access?

Yes. ID.me supports individual logins for multiple authorized users associated with the same Employer Account. Each authorized user must create their own ID.me account and receive an invitation from the employer to access the specific VEC Account.

This replaces the previous model in which multiple staff members may have shared a single set of credentials. Each user will now have a distinct, individually-authenticated login, which improves security and accountability.

HELP & SUPPORT

Q17. Where can I get help setting up my ID.me account?

The following resources are available:

- VEC Website (vec.virginia.gov): Step-by-step ID.me setup guides and ESS transition FAQs on the ESS landing page.
- ID.me Help Center Website (help.id.me): Available 24/7 for account setup questions, verification issues, and technical troubleshooting.
- VEC Employer Call Center: Live agent support during business hours. Call (866) 354-5579 for assistance with ID.me setup or ESS access.

Q18. What if I cannot verify my identity online?

If online verification is unsuccessful, ID.me offers two alternatives:

- Video call verification: Schedule a live video session with an ID.me agent who will verify your identity in real time. This can typically be completed within a few business days.
- In-person verification: Visit a participating verification location with your government-issued photo ID. Locations are listed through the ID.me Help Center at help.id.me.

VEC recommends attempting setup early so that you have time to complete an alternative verification method before the August 1 deadline if needed.

Q19. What if I have technical problems accessing ESS after August 1?

If you have completed ID.me setup but are experiencing difficulty accessing ESS after August 1:

- Confirm you are logging in through the VEC website (vec.virginia.gov), not through the Virginia Tax iFile website.
- Confirm the email address you are attempting to use for ESS access matches the email address registered with your ID.me account.
- Clear your browser cache and cookies, then attempt login again.
- Contact the VEC Employer Call Center at (866) 354-5579 for support.
- If the issue is with your ID.me account itself (verification failures, locked accounts), contact the ID.me Help Center at help.id.me.

Q20. Who do I contact with additional questions?

- VEC Website: vec.virginia.gov – FAQs, guides, and self-service resources
- VEC Business Customer Service: (866) 354-5579 – Live agent support during business hours
- ID.me Help Center: help.id.me – Technical support for ID.me account and verification issues

BEST PRACTICES & EMPLOYER CHECKLIST

To ensure uninterrupted ESS access through and after the August 1 transition:

- Complete ID.me setup now – do not wait until the deadline.
- Test your ESS login through the VEC website after ID.me account setup to confirm access before August 1.
- Notify all staff members, authorized users, and third parties who access your VEC ESS Account that they must also complete their own individual ID.me setup.
- Coordinate with your CPA, TPA, or payroll company to confirm they have set up ID.me and that Account invitations will be sent to the correct email address.
- If you manage multiple Employer Accounts, verify that each Account is accessible via ID.me before the deadline.
- Save the VEC Business Customer Service phone number: (866) 354-5579 – Live support is available if you encounter issues.