

# Release Plan for IT Changes

## Target Plan for Release 54.0, September 2025

Changes to IESO systems planned as part of Release 54.0 are described below. Unless noted otherwise, the planned deployment dates are:

**Sandbox Build on July 31, 2025**

**Non-Real Time Build on September 3, 2025**

**Real-Time Build on September 10, 2025**

For the annual 2025 IESO IT Release Schedule web page, [click here](#).

Any modification from a previous release plan is noted in the description. More information about the IT Release Plan is found at the end of this document. Questions or concerns about IESO Release Plans may be sent to the email address, [pending.changes@ieso.ca](mailto:pending.changes@ieso.ca) or directed to IESO Customer Relations.

# ID106110 – Removal of SMS Capability for Multi-Factor Authentication and Password Reset

## Type of change

Real Time, Category 3

## Stakeholder & Document References

- Market Manual 1.3 Identity Management Operations Guide
- [IESO Gateway Guide](#)

## Applications Impacted

Sandbox	Production
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Energy Market Interface (EMI)</li><li>• IESO Sandbox Participant Reports Click <a href="http://reports-sandbox.ieso.ca/">http://reports-sandbox.ieso.ca/</a> to go to this Web page on ieso.ca</li><li>• Crow Web Client</li><li>• Online IESO</li><li>• Prudential Manager</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Energy Market Interface (EMI)</li><li>• IESO Participant Reports Click <a href="http://reports.ieso.ca/">http://reports.ieso.ca/</a> to go to this Web page on ieso.ca</li><li>• Crow Web Client</li><li>• Online IESO</li><li>• Prudential Manager</li><li>• Dispatch Service</li><li>• Tricentis QTest</li><li>• IESO Workspaces</li></ul>

## Reason for Change

The IESO Gateway is a critical system used by all market participants to authenticate when accessing IESO applications. To improve security and align with evolving industry standards, the IESO is removing SMS (text messaging)-based multi-factor authentication (MFA) and password reset options. The decision is driven by both security and operational considerations. SMS is widely recognized as a less secure and less reliable method for authentication, and its continued use poses potential risks. Additionally, Okta, the identity provider platform, is discontinuing native support for telephony-based services, including SMS. While no specific incident tickets are referenced, the change is proactive and aligns with industry standards.

## Description of Change

SMS will no longer be supported as a method for multi-factor authentication (MFA) or for self-service password resets on the external identity provider used by all external users to access IESO market facing applications within the sandbox environment on **Thursday July 24, 2025** and production environment on **Wednesday August 27, 2025**.

External users will continue to have access to the following authentication and recovery options:

- Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA): Okta Verify, Security Questions
- Password Reset: Email-based self-service password reset

This change applies to all users authenticating through the IESO Gateway.

## Expected Impact

- Users currently relying on SMS for MFA or password resets will need to transition to one of the supported methods: Okta Verify or Security Questions before the change takes effect.
- Users will no longer be able to use SMS to reset their password, and password reset via email will be the only available self-service option.
- Users who set up Security Questions some time ago and may not remember their answers could face challenges during authentication. These users are encouraged to review and update their security questions in advance. IESO Customer Relations can reset Security Questions if needed, as per section 5.1 of the [IESO Gateway Guide](#).
- No impact is expected for users already using Okta Verify on a current device or Security Questions they remember.
- To minimize disruption, users are strongly encouraged to verify and update their authentication methods ahead of the change.

## About the IT Release Plan

Four times a year, the IESO coordinates a release package of changes to IESO systems that will impact users outside the IESO. These changes are categorized as either:

**Category 2 change (users will have to make a functional change, such as an update to a procedure), or**

**Category 3 change (users will have to modify a technical interface with an IESO system or solution).**

For each release, three versions of the Release Plan are published:

1. Preliminary Release Plan
2. Target Release Plan
3. Final Release Plan

The IT Release Schedule provides the planned dates for each release. Dates for specific changes may differ from the calendar dates, but these will be provided in the Release Plan. For the full 2025 Release Schedule on the IESO Web page, [click here](#).

Sandbox Implementation is the date the change is deployed on the IESO Sandbox environment, used for testing and training.

Production Build is the date the change goes live. This may happen during either:

1. Real-Time Build for systems used to interact with the IESO-Controlled Grid or IESO-Administered Market, or
2. Non-Real Time Build for other systems used to interact with the IESO, such as those used for settlements or registration activities.

Efforts are made to minimize the impacts of system outages during planned releases. Planned outages are posted in advance on the IESO Planned IT Outages Web page. [Click here for a link.](#)