

Empowering Your Ministry with Enhanced Security

LAUNCH TWO-STEP VERIFICATION GUIDE



Provide an extra layer of security for your Realm account



In today's digital world, where information flows seamlessly online, the need for enhanced security measures has never been greater. As your partner in ministry, it's essential that we provide you with ways to safeguard your data further.

Two-step verification is a powerful security tool that adds a layer of protection to your data in Realm. But what exactly is two-step verification, and why is it so important, especially for the church?

Two-step verification is a security process that requires not just a password but an additional piece of information or verification method to access an account. For Realm, it includes:

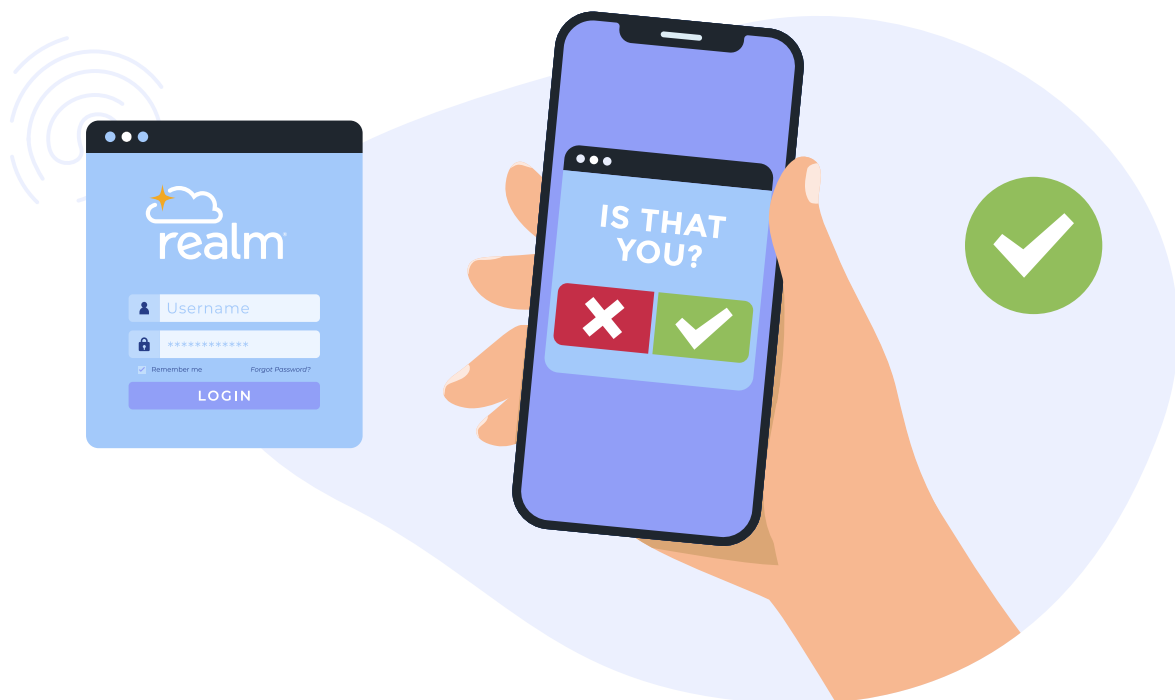
1. Something you know – your password
2. Something you have – code sent via text message or email

Two-Step Verification

Password

Proof

Access



This security feature goes by many names – Two (2)-step verification, 2FA, Multi-factor Authentication (MFA), and 2-factor authentication, but they all are the same.

Picture this scenario:

Your church relies on Realm for online contributions and managing your ministry's finances. One day, a cybercriminal compromises the church's financial administrator's login credentials through a phishing attack.



What is a phishing attack? A scam where someone pretends to be trustworthy to trick you into revealing your personal information, such as your password. They often do this through fake emails that look real but are designed to steal your information.

Because the church did not have an added layer of security, the cybercriminal gains unauthorized access to the financial admin's Realm account, which has sensitive information about your congregants, such as contact or giving information.

ACS Technologies is dedicated to safeguarding your data through robust security measures and systems, ensuring that your data is secure from cybercriminals or malware. Implementing two-step verification is a proactive step your ministry can take to enhance the security of your Realm account.



Importance of Two-Step Verification

- Enhances Security – Reduces the risk of unauthorized access to your Realm account.
- Mitigates Password Vulnerability – An attacker can't access your account without the second factor, even if your password is compromised.
- Protects you if you have been Phished - If your password is compromised as a result of phishing, two-step verification prevents the cybercriminal from accessing your account.

“Implementing MFA can make you 99% less likely to get hacked.”

– Jen Easterly
Director of CISA



**CYBERSECURITY &
INFRASTRUCTURE
SECURITY AGENCY**

How is two-step verification relevant to ministries?

Churches and ministries often store sensitive information, including personal information about their congregants and financial records. They also communicate and coordinate events and community outreach activities.

Let's look at how two-step verification is relevant to your ministry:

1. Data Protection

Your church stores sensitive information in Realm, including personal details and financial records. Two-step verification safeguards this information and reduces the risk of data breaches. We partner with you in protecting your data by providing a two-step verification solution that gives your ministry some authority in how it is used and launched.

2. Communication

Your ministry relies on digital tools for communication, planning events, and coordinating volunteers. Implementing two-step verification helps protect these channels from unauthorized access and misuse.

3. Financial Security

It helps secure financial transactions and online contributions, ensuring that funds are recorded accurately and used for their intended purposes.

4. Congregational Trust

By implementing strong security measures like two-step verification, your ministry demonstrates a commitment to its congregants' security, including their personal information.

By adopting two-step verification, your ministry stays current with security industry standards and protects the interests of your congregants and staff.

What you need to know about two-step verification in Realm



Two-step verification adds an extra layer of security to your Realm account. Here's what you need to know:

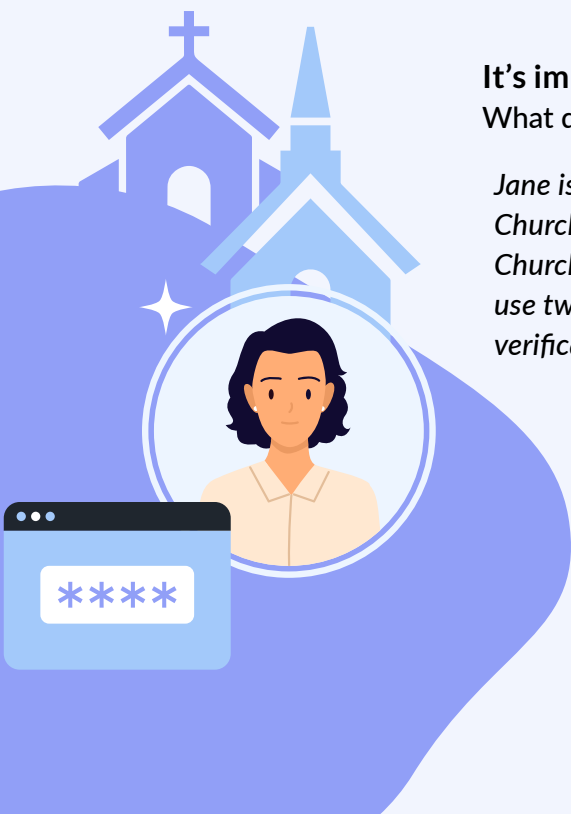
- Two-step verification is off by default.
- As the Realm Admin, you can make it optional for your ministry; staff and congregants can choose to turn on two-step verification.
- You may decide to make two-step verification a requirement for your ministry.
- If you decide to make two-step verification a requirement for your ministry, you can make it required for everyone or specific roles (*all staff, staff with specific permissions such as financial data*).
- When two-step verification is turned on by the user (staff or congregants), they can choose to verify their account by an email or text sent to their mobile device. This includes a numeric code they must enter into the Realm sign-in page to access their account.
- Users can add another form by managing their verification methods.
- Suppose a user changes their email address or mobile phone number or doesn't have access to their second verification form for any reason. In that case, they can use a recovery code to manage their verification methods.

It's important to know this is turned on at the user level.

What does this mean? Let's look at this example:

Jane is part of two churches that use Realm – Church A and Church B. Church A decided to make it a requirement for logging into Realm. Church B makes it optional, which means congregants do not have to use two-step verification if they do not want to. To avoid using two-step verification for both, Jane must use different email addresses to log in.

Jane uses jane@example.com to log into both churches' Realm sites. Because Church A made two-step verification a requirement for logging in, Jane must use two-step verification for both churches to which she belongs. This is because two-step verification is turned on at the user level, not at the Realm site level.



Where do you start with implementing two-step verification for your ministry?

Now that you understand what two-step verification is and why it matters, we want to give you a plan for implementing two-step verification for your ministry.

Prepare Your Staff

You've already taken the first step by downloading this guide!
The next step is to prepare your staff. Here are some tips to guide you:

1

Share information on how this affects Realm, how it affects them, and how it will affect your congregation. You can share this guide or just share the FAQs.

2

Start by deciding if you want to make two-step verification a requirement for both staff and congregants or staff only. Some churches may make it a requirement for specific staff roles only. For example, if someone on your staff has access to giving or financial information, you may require it when they log into Realm, but not for other staff.

3

Ask that all staff use it before introducing it to your congregation. This allows your staff to become familiar with two-step verification in Realm, making it easier to answer questions from congregants if they arise.

4

Decide on your approach for launching two-step verification to your congregation. You can make it optional for both staff and congregants, required for staff only, or required for both staff and congregants. Ultimately, the decision is yours. You do not have to use two-step verification at all.

Educate Your Congregation

Now that your staff understands and is prepared to implement two-step verification, you'll want to give your congregants as much information as possible. Remember that your church is making this decision to protect its data further. So, as you communicate why you have chosen to implement two-step verification, help them understand what it is, why it's important in general and to your ministry, and how it benefits them. Here are some steps you can take:

1

Determine when you want to implement two-step verification for your church.

2

Use the email templates and graphics provided in this guide to send an email or a series of emails to educate your congregation on two-step verification. You can also turn the email templates or graphics into a newsfeed post in Realm.

3

Distribute FAQs via email or print. This provides congregants with answers to common questions, which could help reduce the number of questions they ask your staff.



Another reality: choosing the right ministry partner matters.

The know-how you need from experts you trust.

ACS Technologies is the original pioneer of Church Management Software (ChMS). But we don't just know technology and software, we know how to help you put it to best use to keep parishioners engaged, feeling welcome, and their pastoral needs tended to. We are evolving and changing to meet the changing needs of the Church. We're with you every step of the way.

Tools and support to strengthen churches.

We build great software, but we don't stop there. We have a "service-first" approach that truly sets us apart. With hundreds of dedicated support and consulting personnel, your staff can reach our team 24/7. We're in your corner to help you with the challenges you and your staff face every week.

Ideas and solutions powered by integrity.

Integrity is real for us, and it means consistently being faithful stewards by doing the right thing for church success. We have earned the trust of parish and diocese staff, our employees, and colleagues for over 40 years.

A plan to meet your needs and move your ministry.

We're not just interested in satisfied customers. We see ourselves as your real ministry partner and will work with you to make disciples who are formed and confident in sharing their faith with others. We're excited to talk about your goals, create a plan together, and set you up with the software, service, and resources you need.

We believe in YOU!


ACS Technologies believes in the local church. Over 75% of our team has experience serving in their local churches. We know firsthand that serving the Church means serving people, and we take seriously our commitment to helping ministries like yours achieve their God-given mandate - to make disciples in their communities, states, and across the world.

Let's Talk

We know the challenges of switching or implementing new technology—it can be intimidating! But we also know the unbelievable changes that have happened within churches that have partnered with us. Let's connect and see how we can assist you in the greatest thing you do - proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

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