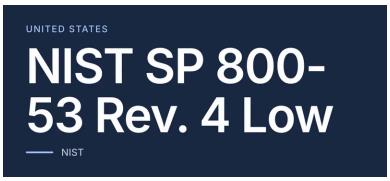
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NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 Low-Impact Security Control Baseline (Appendix D; withdrawn September 23, 2021)

The withdrawn NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 low-impact baseline: all three FIPS 199 objectives low, 115 controls and 9 enhancements per NIST's OSCAL profile, tailored under Section 3.2.



What it is

This page covers one baseline of a withdrawn publication: the low-impact security control baseline in Appendix D of NIST SP 800-53 Revision 4 , which NIST withdrew on September 23, 2021 in favor of NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 5 ; the current low baseline is published separately in NIST SP 800-53B . Under FIPS 199 and FIPS 200 a system is low-impact only when all three security objectives, confidentiality, integrity and availability, are rated low, and Section 3.1 of Rev. 4 directed the organization to this baseline as its starting point.

At a glance

PUBLISHER
National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)

TYPE
Control Framework

VERSION
Revision 4 (April 2013; updated January 22, 2015); withdrawn September 23, 2021

EFFECTIVE
April 2013

DOMAIN
Cybersecurity

FAMILY
NIST Special Publications

REGION
United States

INDUSTRY
Government & Public Sector

ADOPTION MODEL
Regulatory Compliance

IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY
High

Source: csrc.nist.gov/pubs/sp/800/53/r4/upd3/final

Why it matters

- **A defined floor** 115 controls and 9 enhancements in NIST's OSCAL profile, so a low system owner knows the minimum set before tailoring begins (Appendix D, Table D-2).
- **Every family represented** The low column selects at least one control from each of the seventeen Appendix F families, from AC-1 to SI-12, so no area of protection is skipped at the lowest level.
- **Priority codes for a small team** Table D-1 gives each selected control a P1, P2 or P3 code, so a team with limited staff can implement the policy, access and audit controls that others depend on first.
- **Scoping written for small systems** Section 3.2 names public access, limited functionality, single-user operation and non-persistence as grounds to tailor, the cases low systems meet most often.

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How SmartSuite supports NIST 800-53 Rev.4 Low

Low Baseline Register

Load the 115 controls and 9 enhancements from the Table D-2 low column as records with family, number, priority code and implementation status.

Categorization Record

Keep the FIPS 199 rating of each information type and the system-level high water mark with the evidence that every objective is low (Section 3.1).

Tailoring Decisions

Record the scoping ground applied to each control, public access, limited functionality or single-user operation, with the rationale and approver that Section 3.2 and Section 3.4 require.

Inherited Common Controls

Mark which low-baseline controls the agency provides as common controls (Section 2.4) and name the provider, so the system owner's share is clear.

Assessment Evidence

Attach evidence to each control in Compliance Management and record the assessment result and open findings against the control number.

Move to the Rev. 5 Low Baseline

Map each record to its SP 800-53B low counterpart and track the gap to the 131 controls and 18 enhancements in the current profile.

Common framework mappings

CIS Controls v8.1 | FedRAMP Rev. 5 | HIPAA | ISO 27002:2022 | ISO 27701 | NIST CSF 2.0 | PCI DSS 4.0.1 | SOC 2

Official resources

NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4 Document

Defines security and privacy controls for low impact federal information systems.

csrc.nist.gov/publications/detail/sp/800-53/rev-4/final

Frequently asked questions

What makes a system low-impact under NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4?

Section 3.1 applies FIPS 199 and FIPS 200: the organization rates confidentiality, integrity and availability for each information type, takes the highest value per objective, and uses the highest of the three (the high water mark) as the impact level. A system is low-impact only when all three objectives are low. If any objective is moderate the system takes the moderate baseline, and if any is high it takes the high baseline.

How large is the Rev. 4 low baseline?

NIST's OSCAL profile of the Rev. 4 low baseline (version 2015-01-22) lists 124 items: 115 base controls and 9 control enhancements. Table D-2 in Appendix D is the printed source; it shows each control as selected or Not Selected in the low column and gives the Table D-1 priority code used to sequence implementation.

Which control enhancements does the Rev. 4 low baseline include?

Nine, all in two families: IA-2(1), IA-2(12), IA-5(1), IA-5(11), IA-8(1), IA-8(2), IA-8(3), IA-8(4) and SA-4(10), according to NIST's OSCAL profile. Every other low-baseline entry in Table D-2 is a base control, which is the main difference from the moderate baseline, where the same OSCAL source lists 102 enhancements.

Can an organization tailor controls out of the low baseline?

Yes, within Section 3.2. Scoping considerations allow a control to be removed when its assumption does not hold, for example AC-7 on a public-access website or SI-3 on a component that cannot execute code, and compensating controls may replace a baseline control with a documented rationale and accepted risk. Rev. 4 says controls are not removed for operational convenience, and Section 3.4 requires every decision to be recorded in the security plan and approved.

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Where is the low baseline now that Rev. 4 is withdrawn?

In NIST SP 800-53B, which took the baselines out of SP 800-53 when Rev. 5 was published. SP 800-53B keeps the same trigger in Section 2.2 (all three objectives low) and lists the low baseline in Tables 3-1 to 3-20; NIST's OSCAL Release 5.2.0 profile of it holds 131 controls and 18 enhancements. Rev. 4 was withdrawn on September 23, 2021, so new selections use the SP 800-53B baseline.

License included / downloadable: Yes The Rev. 4 low baseline is part of NIST SP 800-53 Rev. 4, which NIST provides free of charge as an archived, withdrawn publication; the text is not subject to copyright in the United States.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/nist-sp-800-53-rev-4-low-baseline