What is Pharos and why are we using it?

Pharos is a software package that provides “hold-and-release” printing. Normally, when you print a job, it is sent directly to the printer. Under a hold-and-release system, when you print a job, it goes into a queue where it is held until retrieved by you at a “release station”. MIT aims to reduce the cost of public printing by eliminating waste and encouraging deliberate printing, without unduly reducing access or increasing cost to students.

Where are all the printers located?

Most printers are located in Athena clusters and dorms. A few can be found in the MIT Libraries and near Athena Quickstation kiosks.

- See MIT Printer Locations for the complete list.

Who can use Pharos at MIT? Is there a quota?

- All MIT Kerberos Account holders can print with Pharos. However, Affiliates would need to request that their MIT ID Card is linked to the Pharos system. This link is automatically done for staff and students, but not Affiliates. Affiliates must request this link be created via the MIT Card office in order to print to Pharos.

- The current quota is 3000 pages per year. For more information see Is there a print quota or charge for printing?.

Policies

From the Athena Rules of Use:

Printing is a shared resource; restraint must still be exercised when using printers to ensure fair access for everyone to this important service. This holds especially true when the clusters are busy. Violation of these rules can result in loss of printing privileges.
What’s in a username?

MIT encourages you to set your username on your personal computer to be the same as your MIT Kerberos username. This gives you more flexibility when setting up your computer for personal printing, simplifies connecting to Athena and using Kerberos on your computer. Find out how at: Setting your username on your personal computer to your MIT Kerberos username. If, however, you prefer to use a different username on your personal computer, you can still print to the Pharos printers using the Pharos "Popup" client described below.

How to print from...

Microsoft Windows

Option 1: Install the Pharos "Popup" client
Option 2: Set it up as a network printer (⚠️ Your username on your computer must match your MIT Kerberos username for this option to work.)

Apple Mac OS X

Option 1: Install the Pharos "Popup" client
Option 2: Set it up as an LPR network printer (⚠️ Your username on your computer must match your MIT Kerberos username for this option to work.)

Athena

- Select the printer "mitprint" (from a print dialog box or the command line).

Linux

Option 1: Install the Pharos printing client on Ubuntu
Option 2: Set up Pharos as an LPR network printer on Ubuntu (⚠️ Your username on your computer must match your MIT Kerberos username for this option to work.)

⚠️ Instructions are for Ubuntu 14.04 but should readily translate to other distributions on Linux.

Getting Help

1. To report a problem with a printer or the Pharos system send mail to CopyTech at icp-help@mit.edu
   - Make sure you include your username, the name of the specific printer, and any error messages you received.
   - Mail you send will generate a trouble ticket and you should receive a ticket reference number almost immediately.
   - Examples of the kinds of things to report:
     - Printer out of paper or toner.
     - Printer physically broken
     - Printer is stuck on a job or not accepting new jobs.
     - Printer is displaying an error that won’t go away.
     - Your card does not work on Pharos or you get an error when you swipe.
     - Your account quota needs to be reset

2. To get help with printing from an application on Athena, contact Athena Consulting as you would for other Athena software questions
3. To get help setting up a network printer on your Mac or Windows computer contact the Computing Help Desk as you would for other Mac or Windows questions
Printing from mobile devices

There is no vendor support (or indeed industry standard OS support) for mobile devices such as iPhones or Android phones to print to Pharos or generally to networked LP printers and other enterprise-scale printing infrastructures.

Additional escalation information for Help Staff can be found here: [hd:Pharos Printing Recon].