

M365 Breakglass Immaturity Model

GitHub.com/KuShuSec v1



Fire Hazard

Used for daily operations

No MFA enforced

Password never rotated

Account exempt from logging

Alerts suppressed or ignored

Used from unmanaged or insecure devices

Password reused anywhere else in the tenant or on-prem AD

Sign-ins allowed from any country and any IP range instead of a privileged access workstation (PAW)

Global Administrator kept eligible in PIM rather than permanent (breakglass must bypass PIM)

Only one breakglass account exists, so any lockout of that identity is catastrophic



Shared Secrets

Account shared between multiple people

Password stored in plaintext or password manager

No usage audit trail

Used for routine mailbox or SharePoint tasks

No individual accountability or auditability

Used for Logic Apps, Power Automate, or integration auth

Credential copies emailed, pasted in chat, or sitting in ticket history

Stored in DevOps variable groups that a broad set of engineers can read

Injected by automation into containers or function apps without secret-rotation workflow

No quarterly attestation forcing each individual to re-confirm "I still know this secret"

Account federated to on-prem IdP, so if ADFS is down the secret is useless



Hidden Traps

Credentials embedded in scripts or pipelines

Breakglass excluded from Conditional Access as workaround

Cloud-only account with no backup recovery route

Licensed for all services, increasing attack surface

Risk-based policies include the account, meaning a high-risk sign-in might be blocked during an actual crisis

Alternate email and phone set to an ex-employee who is now unreachable

Account subject to automated cleanup because it has not signed in within the last X days



We Don't Talk About Breakglass

No documentation or ownership

Never tested

No out-of-band recovery plan

Relying on 'we'll just reset it'



Governance

Runbook rests in a SharePoint site that itself requires normal SSO to open

No dual-administrator approval recorded when the password envelope is opened

Recovery exercise never scheduled after tenant migrations or CA revisions

Owner left the company; their replacement was never assigned in Entra ID

Incident-response team unaware of the existence of the account until an outage happens

Post-use review does not revoke the password, leaving an unknown number of copies in circulation