



Submission of Medicare Data Finder and Crosswalk Files

April 2018

Finder File Encryption Policy

This section describes the minimum standards of data security that must be met by all finder files sent to HealthAPT. (General Dynamics Information Technology).

Encryption Requirements

To maintain and assure the security of identifiable information shipped to HealthApt, all finder files containing secure information must be encrypted with an Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) of at least 256-bit encryption algorithm. This is a block cipher adopted as an encryption standard by the U.S. government. The National Security Agency (NSA) has deemed the use of 256-bit AES encryption algorithm as secure enough for U.S. government top secret information.

Software Options

Files should be encrypted using software programs capable of 256-bit encryption. HealthAPT is unable to install all encryption tools in use; therefore, the finder file should be:

- A self-decrypting archive (SDA) or the file is WinZIP (version < 12.0) or 7-Zip compatible
- Decrypted on Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) or Windows using a password only. (HealthAPT does not have other platforms available)

Submitting executables that require installation of software could result in delay or denial of your finder file.

Password and Shipping Requirements

The files must be password protected with a password no less than 10 digits in length and must contain a combination of letters and numbers. The data shipment must be sent by a courier service with tracking capabilities, such as FedEx, UPS, DHL, or Registered Mail options. Do not include the password along with the data shipment, but instead, email the password and the DUA# to which the finder file belongs to HealthAPT at CMSdata@gdit.com.



Ship Encrypted Finder Files to:

Shannon Pietzsch
General Dynamics Information Technology
Health Solutions
1401 50th St., Suite 200
West Des Moines, IA 50266

Finder Files and Crosswalks

The Chronic Condition Data Warehouse (CCW) can extract data from Medicare’s Research Identifiable Files (RIFs) and from the Medicaid Analytic eXtract (MAX) files for individual beneficiaries using information provided through finder files submitted along with data requests approved by CMS. Finder files may consist of the following types:

- *BENE_IDs* - Beneficiary IDs received from a previous data shipment
- *HICs* - Health Insurance Claim numbers
- *SSNs* - Social Security numbers
- *MBIs* – Medicare Beneficiary Identifier numbers
- *RES_ID / State Code* - Identifies resident in the national repository
- *UPINs* - Unique Physician Identification Number
- *NPIs* – National Provider Identifiers
- *EINTIN* – Employer Identification Number / Tax Identification Number
- *Secondary Identifiers** – Last Name or Partial SSN or HIC

*Please note that match rates on Last Name have not been found to be reliable search criteria and users should be prepared for a lower match rate. Partial SSNs should be the last four or last six digits of the SSN while the partial HIC is considered to be the nine digits minus the alphanumeric identifier.

The following describes the required format of the finder files, along with the rules applied to extract the data. In addition, this document specifies the form of “crosswalk” (or “conversion” files) that link the *submitted* beneficiary ID with the *new* BENE_IDs assigned in the new shipment of Medicare data.

BENE_ID Finder Files

BENE_IDs are the CCW’s way of identifying the claims associated with particular beneficiaries in deliveries of research identifiable files (RIF). The CCW delivers RIFs with a BENE_ID data element incorporated as a part of each claim. A BENE_ID designates a specific Medicare beneficiary, with the same BENE_ID identifying this beneficiary in all claims included in the shipment. So, claims for an individual can readily be linked using the person’s BENE_ID, across all categories of claims and all years making up the shipment. The assignment of



BENE_IDs is unique for each Data Use Agreement (DUA).

Identifying a beneficiary's claims from previous shipments requires submission of a BENE_ID finder file. A finder file identifying beneficiaries in a previous job must include only one informational item per individual which would be the beneficiary's BENE_ID. The person's gender and date of birth are not necessary for a BENE_ID finder file since each BENE_ID has already been uniquely assigned.

A BENE_ID finder file must be in CSV (ASCII comma delimited) format structured as follows:

1st line

List the variable name as follows:

BENE_ID

2nd line and beyond

Data for BENE_ID for each beneficiary:

BENE_ID: 15 digit CHAR identifying beneficiary

A carriage return must end each line.



HIC Finder and Crosswalk Files

Submitting a HIC finder file requires a listing of beneficiaries' HICs. HealthAPT will extract data for all Medicare beneficiaries identified by the submitted HICs. The requestor may also include individual's gender and DOB information along with HICs in the finder file. While submitting these additional variables does not change the process of strictly matching to HIC, the crosswalk returned to the requestor will show the matches made to the gender and DOB variables.

The requestor does have the option of restricting the linkage of HIC finder file beneficiaries to include only those who strictly match on their gender and/or DOB as well as on HIC. If the requestor desires to have these additional selection criteria imposed, this must be clearly stated on the RIF Specification Worksheet.

A HIC finder file must be in CSV (ASCII comma delimited) format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows: HIC, Gender, DOB

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each record:

HIC: 12 character alpha-numeric code identifying beneficiary
Gender: 'M' or '1' = male, 'F' or '2' = female and '0' = unknown
DOB: mm/dd/yyyy
(Gender and DOB are optional variables)

A carriage return must end each line.



When submitting HICs, the following guidelines will reduce the risk of misinterpretation of the finder file:

- 10 or 11 length (CMS HIC or RRB Number)
- Letters, Numbers, or leading ‘ ‘ Only
- Left Justified and void of any leading/trailing/embedded spaces

The HIC crosswalk file will be a fixed length text format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows:

HIC, BENE_ID

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary

The second variable in this file, BENE_ID, refers to the BENE_ID assigned to a beneficiary in the new shipment.

SSN Finder and Crosswalk Files

Submitting a SSN finder file requires a listing of beneficiaries' SSNs. HealthAPT will extract data for all Medicare beneficiaries identified by the submitted SSNs. The requestor may also include individual's gender and DOB information along with SSNs in the finder file. While submitting these additional variables does not change the process of strictly matching to SSN, the crosswalk returned to the requestor will show the matches made to the gender and DOB variables.

The requestor does have the option of restricting the linkage of SSN finder file beneficiaries to include only those who strictly match on their gender and/or DOB as well as on SSN. If the requestor desires to have these additional selection criteria imposed, this must be clearly stated on the RIF Specification Worksheet.

The CCW uses the SSA's validation rules found here:

- <https://secure.ssa.gov/poms.nsf/lnx/0110201035>



A SSN finder file must be in CSV (ASCII comma delimited) format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows: SSN, Gender, DOB

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary:

SSN: 9 digit number identifying beneficiary

Gender: 'M' or '1' = male, 'F' or '2' = female and '0' = unknown

DOB: mm/dd/yyyy

(Gender and DOB are optional variables)

A carriage return must end each line

When submitting SSNs, the following guidelines will reduce the risk of misinterpretation of the finder file:

- Length should be 9 and exclude all dashes or other separators
- Numbers Only
- Alphanumeric Formatting (leading zeroes preserved)
- Left Justified and void of any leading/trailing/embedded spaces

The SSN crosswalk file will be a fixed length text format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows:

SSN , BENE_ID

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary

The second variable in this file, BENE_ID, refers to the BENE_ID assigned to a beneficiary in the new shipment.

MBI Finder and Crosswalk Files

Submitting an MBI finder file requires a listing of beneficiaries' MBIs. HealthAPT will extract data for all Medicare beneficiaries identified by the submitted MBIs. The requestor may also include individual's gender and DOB information along with MBIs in the finder file. While submitting these additional variables does not change the process of strictly matching to MBI, the crosswalk returned to the requestor will show the matches made to the gender and DOB



variables.

The requestor does have the option of restricting the linkage of MBI finder file beneficiaries to include only those who strictly match on their gender and/or DOB as well as on SSN. If the requestor desires to have these additional selection criteria imposed, this must be clearly stated on the RIF Specification Worksheet.

An MBI finder file must be in CSV (ASCII comma delimited) format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows: MBI, Gender, DOB

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary:

SSN: 11 alphanumeric characters identifying beneficiary
Gender: 'M' or '1' = male, 'F' or '2' = female and '0' = unknown
DOB: mm/dd/yyyy
(Gender and DOB are optional variables)

A carriage return must end each line

When submitting MBIs, the following guidelines will reduce the risk of misinterpretation of the finder file:

- Length should be 11 and exclude all dashes or other separators
- Alphanumeric Only
- Alphanumeric Formatting (leading zeroes preserved)
- Left Justified and void of any leading/trailing/embedded spaces

The MBI crosswalk file will be a fixed length text format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows:
MBI, BENE_ID

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary

The second variable in this file, BENE_ID, refers to the BENE_ID assigned to a beneficiary in the new shipment.



RES_ID / State Code Finder and Crosswalk Files

A RES_ID /State Code finder file must be in CSV (ASCII comma delimited) format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows: RES_ID, State Code

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each record:

RES_ID: 10 character alpha-numeric code identifying a resident

State Code: 2 character variable identifying state abbreviation code

The RES_ID / State Code crosswalk file will be a fixed length text format:

1st line

List of variable names as follows:

RES_ID, State Code, BENE_ID

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary

The second variable in this file, BENE_ID, refers to the BENE_ID assigned to a beneficiary in the new shipment.

UPIN, NPI, EIN or TIN Finder Files

Submitting a UPIN, NPI, EIN or TIN finder file requires only a listing of the identifier.

An identifier finder file must be in ASCII format structured as follows:

1st line

List of the single variable name as follows:

UPIN, NPI, EIN or TIN

2nd line and beyond

Each UPIN of interest

A carriage return must end each line.



Secondary Identifier Finder and Crosswalk Files

There are some additional requirements when sending secondary identifiers in an effort to ensure the Bene IDs returned are the Benes approved for the study. In addition to Last Name or Partial SSN or HIC at least two other identifiers from Date of Birth, Gender, and ZIP code must be submitted. Unlike the other identifier searches, a strict match will be conducted on the variables submitted. If after the strict match, more than one Bene ID results, all Bene ID matches will be dropped.

A partial HIC or SSN finder file must be in CSV (ASCII comma delimited) format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows: Partial SSN, Gender, DOB, ZIP Code

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary:

Partial SSN: 4 or 6 digit number identifying beneficiary

Or

Partial HIC: First 9 digits of the beneficiary's HIC

And

Gender: 'M' or '1' = male, 'F' or '2' = female and '0' = unknown

DOB: mm/dd/yyyy

ZIP: nnnnn

A carriage return must end each line

When submitting SSNs or HICs, the following guidelines will reduce the risk of misinterpretation of the finder file:

- Exclude all dashes
- Numbers Only or leading '{ ' for HICs
- Alphanumeric Formatting (Leading Zeroes Preserved)
- Left Justified

The partial SSN or HIC crosswalk file will be a fixed length text format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows:

Partial SSN , BENE_ID

Or

Partial HIC, BENE_ID



2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary

The second variable in this file, BENE_ID, refers to the BENE_ID assigned to a beneficiary in the new shipment.

A Last Name finder file must be in CSV (ASCII comma delimited) format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows: Last Name, Gender, DOB, ZIP Code

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary:

Last Name:	Last Name of the beneficiary
Gender:	'M' or '1' = male, 'F' or '2' = female and '0' = unknown
DOB:	mm/dd/yyyy
ZIP:	nnnnn

A carriage return must end each line

The Last Name crosswalk file will be a fixed length text format structured as follows:

1st line

List of variable names as follows:

Last Name , BENE_ID

2nd line and beyond

Data for above variables for each beneficiary

The second variable in this file, BENE_ID, refers to the BENE_ID assigned to a beneficiary in the new shipment.