



834 Benefit Enrollment and Maintenance Standard Companion Guide

Refers to the Implementation Guides
Based on ASC X12 version 005010

March 2024



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Preface

This companion Guide to the v5010 ASC X12N Implementation Guides and associated errata adopted under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) clarifies and specifies the data content when exchanging electronically with VBA. Transmissions based on this companion guide, used in tandem with the v5010 ASC X12N Implementation Guides, are compliant with both ASC X12N syntax and those guides. This companion guide is intended to convey information that is within the framework of the ASC X12N Implementation Guides adopted for use under HIPAA. The VBA 834 Benefit Enrollment and Maintenance Companion Guide is not intended to convey information that in any way exceeds the requirements or usages of data expressed in the v5010 ASC X12N Implementation Guides.

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Introduction

Scope

The HIPAA transaction implementation guides for Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) transactions are called Technical Reports, Type 3 (TR3s). These TR3s provide guidelines for submitting and receiving HIPAA-standard EDI transactions. The TR3s require transmitters and receivers to make certain determinations. The VBA 834 Benefit Enrollment and Maintenance Companion Guide does not replace the HIPAA ASC X12N TR3s, nor does it attempt to amend any of the information therein. It does not impose any additional obligations that are not permitted to be imposed by the HIPAA standards for electronic transactions. If inconsistencies exist between the terms of this companion guide and the TR3(s), the relevant TR3(s) will govern with respect to HIPAA edits. The VBA Companion Guide will govern with respect to business edits.

The VBA 834 Benefit Enrollment and Maintenance Companion Guide provides supplemental information to the Trading Partner Agreement (TPA) that exists between VBA and its electronic trading partners. Trading partners should refer to their TPA for guidelines pertaining to any legal conditions surrounding implementation of EDI transactions and code sets. Information contained in this companion guide is not intended to amend, revoke, contradict, or otherwise alter the terms and conditions of the TPA. If there is an inconsistency with the terms of this guide and the terms of the TPA, the terms of the TPA shall govern.

Overview

HIPAA requires that the health care industry in the United States comply with the EDI standards as established by the Secretary of Health and Human Services. The ASC X12 834 v005010X220A1 is the established standard for the benefit enrollment and maintenance transaction.

The companion guide contains assumptions, conventions, determinations or data specifications that are related for all employer groups, vendors and other submitters of the 834 transactions. It is critical that your software vendor or IT staff review this document carefully and follow its requirements to send HIPAA-compliant files to VBA.

References

This companion guide should be used in conjunction with the HIPAA mandated, Benefit Enrollment & Maintenance (834) 005010x220A1 Technical Report 3 (TR3).

Getting Started

Working with VBA

Vision Benefits of America (VBA) offers a flexible, standards-compliant platform for supporting the electronic exchange of benefit and enrollment maintenance information to further streamline and automate the manual efforts usually associated with maintaining such information in multiple systems.

VBA will serve as your partner in the efforts to establish a successful integration solution.

Trading Partner Registration

VBA receives a letter of intent from the contracted Employer group, vendor or clearinghouse on behalf of the Employer group. Once the trading partner information is verified, a link to the companion guide on the VBA website and a copy of the group-specific eligibility details and the transmission details will be emailed to the sender of the letter of intent.

Testing with the Payer

Overview

VBA utilizes two (2) different levels of validation when processing 834 transactions. The first level of validation is “Message Validation” that determines whether VBA will accept the submitted transaction request. The second level of validation occurs after VBA accepts a transaction for processing. This validation determines if the transaction was able to be successfully processed against the existing data and business rules of VBA’s enterprise architecture.



If switching vendors, we will not process production files from the new vendor until we are sure we have received the last file from the old vendor.

Message Validation

Files may be rejected upon receipt for the following reasons:

- Syntax Errors – such as valid segments, segment order, testing for number values in numeric data elements, etc.
- Loop 2000 missing REF*0F*SSN or not using the member ID (SSN)
- NM109 – Invalid SSN’s such as 000000000, too long, too short or special characters such as #####
- Loop 2300 Missing REF*1L*subgroup
- Ending segments improperly with extra delimiters such as **~ or ~
- Using special characters not part of the Basic character or Extended Character Set.
- PER Segment – invalid phone numbers – format should be AAABBBCCCC (AAA-Area Code) (BBB – Telephone Number prefix) (CCC – telephone #)
- COBRA Updates – INS07 (Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) Qualifying Event Code is Required) is missing. It is required when INS05 is ‘C’
- INS09 should not be used when INS02 is ‘01’. Student Status Code should not be used for Member Level Detail
- Missing policyholder or dependents birthdates
- Missing policyholder addresses
- Incorrect file naming format. For example, a correct format would be: vbannnn-ccymmdd.txt

Connectivity

VBA tests all files through a test database that is refreshed weekly. Testing will not be considered complete until the test file matches our current production system.

Process Flows

Files are due every week on the day decided when ready for production. Files are due by 10 AM ET on the selected day.



If the file is encrypted, it must open in one of the following formats.

Test files should be named: **vbannnnTEST-ccyymmdd.txt**

Production files should be named: **vbannnn-ccyymmdd.txt**

Open enrollment files should be named: **vbannnnOE-ccyymmdd.txt**



nnnn will represent the 3 or 4 digit assigned numeric Group number.

Transmission Administrative Procedures

Enrollment files received before 10 AM ET are normally processed, reviewed and approved to load the same day, except for weekends and holidays. There are two (2) points where files can be rejected: during Compliance and Business Rules Editing or at the Internal Review of the file.

Employer Groups/Vendors whose files are rejected by the Internal Review of the file will be contacted directly. Although, the HIPAA 834 file may have loaded to the enrollment database, individual records that do not pass business edits may be rejected. Refer to the LOAD REPORT.

Retransmission

Files that have been rejected can be retransmitted on the same day.



The file name of the retransmitted file must be the same as the original file.

Communication Protocols

Files can be placed on VBA's SFTP site (<sftp://ftp.vbaplans.com:22>).

Let us know if you need a folder setup on our site. We will need the static IP address of the sender.

Passwords

If you cannot connect, check to see if the static IP of the sender has changed. Please send the new static IP to edi@vbaplans.com to be whitelisted.

Contact Information

EDI Customer Service

VBA has a web portal that can be used to make eligibility changes until a group starts sending electronic files. Changes should be made on the electronic 834 files. Occasionally, there is a need to make emergency changes to eligibility. This can be done by calling 1-800-432.4966, Option 8 or emailing edi@vbaplans.com. Any change that is requested must also be included on the next eligibility file sent to VBA. If those changes are not sent on the file, they will be overridden in VBA's system.

EDI Technical Assistance

The Technical team is referred to as the Eligibility team and can be reached by sending an email to edi@VBAplans.com. The Technical Team is available Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM.-4:00 PM. ET of any calendar week excluding weekends and corporate holidays listed below:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the day after
- ½ day Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- ½ day New Year's Eve

The VBA EDI Analyst is responsible for providing testing results.

Applicable Websites/E-mail

A copy of the 834 companion guide can be found at www.vbaplans.com or can be requested at edi@vbaplans.com. Specific details of a group will not be posted on VBA's website.

Control Segments/Envelope

ISA-IEA

This section describes VBA's use of the interchange control segments. It includes a description of expected sender and receiver codes, authorization information and delimiters. All positions within each of the data elements must be filled. The ISA segment can be considered a fixed record length segment.

ISA05 – Will be assigned ZZ or 30

ISA06 – is individually assigned by VBA to each trading partner

ISA07 – ZZ

ISA08 – VBA

ISA15 – defines whether the transaction is a T(est) or P(roduction)

GS-GE

This section describes VBA's use of the functional group control segments. It includes a description of expected application sender and receiver codes.

GS02 – is the same as ISA06

GS03 – is the same as ISA08

ST-SE

The total number of segments included in a transaction set including ST and SE segments are reported here.

VBA-Specific Business Rules and Limitations

This section describes VBA's business rules, for example, communicating payer specific edits.

- Term by absence from file (policyholder or dependent)
- Active and term records conflict for policyholders or dependents
- Term dates on the file are different than the current VBA system term date
- Effective dates on the file are different than the current VBA system effective date
- Transmission of files are limited to 10 megabytes

Acknowledgements and/or Reports

Load Reports

A load report is sent to all Employer Groups or their representatives after a file is processed.

If changes are accepted, there is no need to respond. If changes are needed, be sure to include the changes in the next file. Manual changes can be sent to edi@VBPlans.com. Manual changes will be overridden if they are not sent in the next eligibility file.

LOAD_REPORT1234TEST-052719.pdf or LOAD_REPORT1234-052719.pdf

Load Code: R = Employee Record Rejected C = COBRA Term
 E = Dependent Error - not loaded
 K = Kickout - loaded but record may need corrected
 I = Information message D = Prior to Term Date
 N = Name Issues M = Multiple Groups L = Coverage Level Change
 T = Employee Termination P = New Start Date
 W = Check for Twins S = Spouse Name Changed V = Invalid Coverage

ELECTRONIC LOAD REPORT Page 1

Group #: 1234 – GROUP NAME Report run on: May 27, 2019 11:45AM
 Date Processed: 27-MAY-19

Grp #	Subgrp	Date Loaded	Ssn	Fullname	Dep Name	Load Code	Load Text
1234		*****	000001234	DOE, JONATHAN		T	Eligibility auto term as of 04302019

EMPLOYEES PROCESSED
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DEPENDENTS TERMINATED:

Employee SSN	Employee Name	Dependent Name	Dependent Birth Date	Date Terminated
# Dependents Terminated:		0		

Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA)

The NDA, also called confidentiality agreement, is a legal contract in which the parties involved agree to keep the information included private. This type of contract creates a confidential relationship between the parties and protects the confidential or proprietary information outlined in the agreement.

Contact us if you would like to obtain a full file audit/membership extract of your current members enrolled in Vision Benefits of America (VBA). An excel spreadsheet can be obtained, if requested, on your initial 834 file set-up.

If the membership extract is being sent to the Group's contact on file, an NDA does not need to be completed. If it is going to be sent to a third party, the group along with the third-party administrator will need to complete the Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA).

The NDA will be sent upon request.

Transaction-Specific Information

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	ISA	01	Authorization Info Qualifier	00 = No Auth Info		R	00
	ISA	02	Authorization Info	BLANK	Space fill 10 characters	R	Spaces
	ISA	03	Security Info Qualifier	00 = No Security Info		R	00
	ISA	04	Security Info	BLANK	Space fill 10 characters	R	Spaces
	ISA	05	Interchange ID Qualifier	01 - Duns (Dun & Bradstreet) 14 - Duns Plus Suffix 20 - Health Industry Number (HIN) 27 - HCFA Carrier Identification Number 28 - HCFA Fiscal Intermediary Identification Number 29 - HCFA Medicare Provider and Supplier Identification Number 30 - U.S. Federal Tax Identification Number 33 - NAIC Company Code ZZ - Mutually Defined	VBA prefers 30 (VBA and Sender will mutually define)	R	Assigned by Vendor
	ISA	06	Interchange Sender ID	Sender Tax ID or Mutually Defined ID	Sender EIN (if ISA05 is 30) Left justify and space fill to 15 total characters	R	Assigned by Vendor
	ISA	07	Receiver ID Qualifier	ZZ = Mutually Defined		R	ZZ
	ISA	08	Receiver ID	VBA	Left justify and space fill to 15 total characters	R	VBA
	ISA	09	Interchange Date	YYMMDD		R	File generation date
	ISA	10	Interchange Time	HHMM		R	File generation time

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	ISA	11	Repetition Separator	^		R	^
	ISA	12	Interchange Control Version #	00501	834 Standard Version	R	00501
	ISA	13	Interchange Control #		The Interchange Control Number, ISA13, must be identical to the associated Interchange Trailer IEA02	R	Control Number
	ISA	14	Acknowledgement Requested	0 = No Acknowledgement Requested 1 = Interchange Acknowledgement Requested		R	0 or 1
	ISA	15	Usage Indicator	P = Prod T = Test		R	This will need to be set to 'T' while testing and then changed to 'P' before going live.
	ISA	16	Component Element Separator	">" or ":"	Component Separator	R	> or :
			Segment Terminator	~	Segment terminator may not be a Carriage Return, Line Feed, New Line or any combination thereof.	R	~
	GS	01	Functional ID Code	BE		R	BE
	GS	02	Sender ID	SAME AS ISA06		R	(Vendor Specific)
	GS	03	Receiver ID	SAME AS ISA08		R	VBA
	GS	04	Date	CCYYMMDD		R	File generation date
	GS	05	Time	HHMM		R	File generation time
	GS	06	Group Control Number		Client/TPA generated	R	Control Number
	GS	07	Responsible Agency Code	X		R	X

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	GS	08	Version/Release Code	005010X220A1		R	005010X220A1
	ST	01	Transaction ID Code	834		R	834
	ST	02	Transaction Set Control #		Client/TPA generated	R	Control Number
	ST	03	Implementation Convention Reference	005010X220A1		R	005010X220A1
	BGN	01	Transaction Set Purpose	00 = Original		R	00
	BGN	02	Reference Number		Unique Reference ID code	R	0001
	BGN	03	Date	CCYYMMDD	Transaction set creation date	R	File generation date
	BGN	04	Time	HHMM	Transaction set creation time	R	File generation time
	BGN	08	Action Code	2 = Changes (additions, terminations, and changes) 4 = Total population/Full file	VBA requires this based on what data is in these files	R	4
	REF	01	Reference Identification Qualifier	38 = Master Policy Number	VBA requires this value to be 38	R	38
	REF	02	Reference Identification		Group Number assigned by VBA	R	VBA Assigned Group Number
1000A	N1	01	Entity Identifier Code/Sponsor	P5 = Plan Sponsor	Sponsor is the party that ultimately pays for the coverage	R	P5
	N1	02	Name		Free-Form Name of Plan Sponsor	R	Group Name
	N1	03	Identification Code Qualifier	FI = Federal Tax ID		R	FI
	N1	04	Identification Code		Sponsor's Federal Tax ID	R	Federal Tax ID
1000B	N1	01	Entity Identifier Code/Payer	IN = Insurer	Insurer is the party that provides the coverage, VBA	R	IN

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	N1	02	Name	VBA	Free-Form Name of Insurer	R	VBA
	N1	03	Identification Code Qualifier	FI = Federal Tax ID	Tax identification number	R	FI
	N1	04	Identification Code	25-1149206	Insurer's (VBA's) Federal Tax ID	R	25-1149206
1000C	N1	01	Entity Identifier Code	BO = Broker TV = TPA	TPA/Broker Name Code	S	TV
	N1	02	Name	Broker or TPA Name	Free form Name	S	Broker/TPA NAME
	N1	03	Identification Code Qualifier	FI = Federal Tax ID		S	FI
	N1	04	Identification Code		Brokers or TPA's Federal Taxpayer's Identification	S	Federal Tax ID
2000	INS	01	Yes/No Condition	Y = Yes N = No	Subscriber Indicator	R	Subscriber Record: Y Dependent Record: N
	INS	02	Individual Relationship Code	18 = Self 19 = Child 01 = Spouse 10 = Foster Child 17 = Step Child 25 = Ex-Spouse 53 = Life Partner		R	Subscriber Record: 18 Dependent Record: Appropriate Code
	INS	03	Maintenance Type Code	001 = Change 021 = Add 024 = Termination 030 = Full Replace File	When BGN08 = 4, 030 should be used in all INS03 elements in the file, to indicate a full replace/audit file. When BGN08 = 2, INS03 can be 001, 021 or 024 to indicate the proper maintenance type	R	030

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	INS	04	Maintenance Reason Code	XN = Notification Only AI = No Reason Given		R	XN
	INS	05	Benefit Status Code	A = Active C = COBRA S = Surviving Insured	Benefit Status Code	R	A or C
	INS	07	Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA) Qualifying	1-Termination of Employment 2 – Reduction in work hours 3 -Medicare 4 – Death 5 – Divorce 6 – Separation 7 – Ineligible Child 8 - Bankruptcy of Retiree's Former Employer 9 – Layoff 10 – Leave of Absence	Required when a member is being enrolled in or is enrolled for a benefit covered by COBRA	S	1-10 when INS05 = C(obra)
	INS	08	Employment Status Code	AC = Active FT = Full-time active employee PT = Part-time active employee RT = Retiree TE = Termination		R	Subscriber Record: Appropriate Code Dependent Record: Not Applicable
	INS	09	Student Status Code	F = Full-time N = Not a student		S	Subscriber Record: Not Applicable leave BLANK or N
	INS	10	Yes/No Condition (Disabled Status Code)	Y = Yes N = No	Handicap Indicator	R	Y or N
	INS	17	Number (Corresponding Number Position)	Birth Sequence Number	If twins with same DOB, then this number will provide the order	S	
	REF	01	Reference Number Qualifier	OF = Subscriber ID	Subscriber ID - This is "zero"F	R	OF
	REF	02	Reference Number		Employee SSN or Subscriber Number	R	Employee SSN or Subscriber Number

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	DTP	01	Date/Time Qualifier	336 = Employment Begin	336 Employment Begin (Required for subscribers: Subscriber's original hire date.) In the event of a rehire, this date must be the original hire date. Any changes to the hire date must be handled manually by your Eligibility Specialist.	R	336
	DTP	02	Date/Time Format	D8 = CCYYMMDD		R	D8
	DTP	03	Date/Time Period		Employment Begin	R	Employment Begin Date
	DTP	01	Date/Time Qualifier	356 = Eligibility Begin	356 Eligibility Begin (Required for subscribers and dependents: This date should be the effective date the member is effective with group or the original plan effective date with VBA).	R	356
	DTP	02	Date/Time Format	D8 = CCYYMMDD		R	D8
	DTP	03	Date/Time Period		Eligibility Begin	R	Eligibility Begin Date
	DTP	01	Date/Time Qualifier	303 = Maintenance Effective	303 Maintenance Effective (Required for subscribers.) This date should reflect the most recent effective date.	R	303
	DTP	02	Date/Time Format	D8 = CCYYMMDD		R	D8

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	DTP	03	Date/Time Period		Maintenance Effective	R	Maintenance Effective Date
2100A	NM1	01	Entity Identifier Code	IL = Insured or Subscriber		R	IL
	NM1	02	Entity Type Qualifier	1 = Person		R	1
	NM1	03	Name Last		Last Name	R	Member Last Name
	NM1	04	Name First		First Name	R	Member First Name
	NM1	08	Identification Code Qualifier	34 = Social Security Number		R	34
	NM1	09	Identification Code		Member SSN	S	Subscriber Record: Required
	N3	01	Residence Address Line 1		Primary Member Residence Address Line 1	R	Member Address Line 1
	N3	02	Residence Address Line 2		Primary Member Residence Address Line 2	S	Member Address Line 2
	N4	01	Residence City		Primary Member Residence City	R	Member City
	N4	02	Residence State	Two-letter state code, e.g. PA	Primary Member Residence State	R	Member State
	N4	03	Residence Zip		Primary Member ZIP or ZIP + 4 (Do not include hyphens)	R	Member Zip Code
	N4	04	Country Code		Provide only if country is not USA	S	Alpah-2 country code
	DMG	01	Date/Time Format Qualifier	D8 = CCYYMMDD		R	D8
	DMG	02	Date/Time Period		Date of Birth	R	Member Date of Birth
	DMG	03	Gender Code	F = Female M = Male U = Unknown		R	Member Gender

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
2300	HD	01	Maintenance Type Code	001 = Change 021 = Add 024 = Termination 030 = Full Replace File	When BGN08 = 4, 030 should be used in all INS03 elements in the file, to indicate a full replace/audit file. When BGN08 = 2, INS03 can be 001, 021 or 024 to indicate the proper maintenance type	R	030
	HD	03	Insurance Line Code	PPO = Preferred Provider Organization MM = Major Medical HMO = Health Maintenance Organization POS = Point of Service DEN = Dental VIS = Vision PDG = Prescription Drug HLT = Health DCP = Dental Capitation (DMO)	VBA only uses DEN = Dental VIS = Vision	R	VIS
	HD	04	Plan Coverage Description	Plan Code	This value will be provided to you by VBA as the Benefit Plan Code.	R	VBA Assigned Group Number
	HD	05	Coverage Level Code	834 Valid Values: EMP = Employee Only FAM = Employee, spouse, and children ESP=Employee and spouse ECH=Employee and 1 or more children TWO = Two-person	Coverage-Level Code. Required when entity is the subscriber. Do not use when entity is a dependent. Coverage levels will be defined per plan and may not include all valid values.	R	Required for Subscriber Group Specific assigned by VBA

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	DTP	01	Date/Time Qualifier	348 = Benefit Begin	348 - Date of plan enrollment or continuation of coverage. This date should reflect the most recent maintenance effective date	R	348
	DTP	02	Date/Time Format	D8 = CCYYMMDD		R	D8
	DTP	03	Date/Time Period		Benefit Begin Date	R	Benefit Begin Date
	DTP	01	Date/Time Qualifier	349 = Benefit End	349 – Benefit End	R	349
	DTP	02	Date/Time Format	D8 = CCYYMMDD		R	D8
	DTP	03	Date/Time Period		Benefit End Date	R	Benefit End Date
	REF	01	Reference Identification Qualifier	1L = Health Coverage Policy Number	Division Code or Subgroup Number	R	1L
	REF	02	Reference Identification		Division Code/Subgroup Number assigned by VBA	R	Group Specific assigned by VBA
	SE	01	Number of Included Segments	Segment count including ST and SE		R	Transaction Segment Count
	SE	02	Transaction Set Control Number		The Transaction Set Control Number, SE02, must be identical to the Transaction Set Control Number ST02	R	Must be identical to ST02

Loop ID	Seg ID	Element ID	Element Description	Element Values / Format	Element Note	Required / Situational / Optional	Value to Pass
	GE	01	Number of Transactions Sets Included		Total number of transaction sets included in the functional group or interchange (transmission) group	R	
	GE	02	Group Control Number		The data interchange control number in GE02 must be identical to GS06, Group Control Number	R	Must be identical to GS06
	IEA	01	Number of Included Functional Groups		A count of the number of functional groups included in an interchange	R	
	IEA	02	Interchange Control Number		A control number assigned by the interchange sender	R	Must be identical to ISA13

Implementation Checklist

- Receive Letter of Intent from Group.
- Return Group-Specific Transaction Information document that contains: ISA05-06, GS02, REF01-02 (Master Policy Number), HD04-05, REF01-02 in the 2300 Loop.
- Successfully submit a test file that passes all VBA gateway edits and validation requirements. At this point, the file will be forwarded on for further testing.
- Successfully process a test file that closely mirrors production. This is the final step that leads to approving the move from test to production.
- Establish the frequency and the day that production files can be sent.
- Set-up contacts for the Load Reports that are sent after a file is processed.

Appendices

Transmission Examples

ISA*00* *00* *30*123456789 *ZZ*VBA *190424*1253*^*00501*000000001*0*T*:~
 GS*BE*123456789*VBA*20190402*1253*1*X*005010X220A1~
 ST*834*0001*005010X220A1~
 BGN*00*018140498*20190402*125319****4~
 REF*38*1234~
 DTP*007*D8*20191011~
 N1*P5*VBA GROUP NAME*FI*123456789~
 N1*IN*VBA*FI*25-1149206~
 INS*Y*18*030**A***FT~
 REF*0F*123456789~
 DTP*336*D8*20190101~
 NM1*IL*1*Doe*John*M***34*123456789~
 PER*IP**HP*4128814900~
 N3*400 Lydia Street~
 N4*Carnegie*PA*15106~
 DMG*D8*19790910*M~
 HD*030**VIS*1234*EMP~
 DTP*348*D8*20190101~
 REF*1L*0000~
 INS*Y*18*030**A***FT~
 REF*0F*987654321~
 DTP*336*D8*20190101~
 NM1*IL*1*Flinstone*Fred*M***34*987654321~
 PER*IP**HP*4128814901~
 N3*300 Lydia Street~
 N4*Carnegie*PA*15106~
 DMG*D8*19801010*M~
 HD*030**VIS*1234*ECH~
 DTP*348*D8*20190101~
 REF*1L*0000~

INS*N*19*030**A~
REF*0F*987654321~
DTP*336*D8*20190101~
NM1*IL*1*Flinstone*Jane*M***34*923456781~
PER*IP**HP*4128814901~
N3*300 Lydia Street~
N4*Carnegie*PA*15106~
DMG*D8*20000101*F~
HD*030**VIS*1234~
DTP*348*D8*20190101~
REF*1L*0000~
SE*40*0001~
GE*1*1~
IEA*1*000000001~

Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently asked questions contain a compilation of questions and answers relative to VBA and its trading partners.

Q: Should files always use ~-for the segment terminator

A: Yes “~” should always be used for the for the segment terminator

Q: Will VBA issue ID cards?

A: VBA does not issue ID cards; however, an ID card is available for download on VBA’s website.

Q: Do the files need to be encrypted (.pgp)?

A: Files do not have to be encrypted since they are sent via SFTP (Secure File Transfer Protocol). Authentication requires a login ID and password.

Q: How should telephone numbers be formatted when submitted?

A: AAABBBCCCC – AAA –area code, BBB is the telephone number prefix and CCCC is the telephone number (e.g., (534)224-2525 would be represented as 5342242525).

Q: How should postal codes (zip codes) be formatted in the file?

A: The zip code should be 5 or 9 digits if the member lives in the USA. If outside of the USA, refer to the TR3 (e.g., 12345-1234 would be represented as 123451234).

Q: Is the dependent's SSN required on the file?

A: No, only the member's SSN number is required.

Q: Should I send the LUI – Member Language Segment?

A: This segment is situational. It is required if the sponsor knows that the member's primary language is not English. If not required by this implementation guide, do not send.

Q: How should a change in circumstance, such as coverage level or subgroup change be handled for members/dependents?

A: A new effective date should appear in the 2300 Loop – DTP*349*D8*CCYYMMDD.

Q: How should a termination date be handled for a member/dependent?

A: The termination date should appear in the 2300 Loop -DTP*348*D8*CCYYMMDD. Do not send the termination date in the 2000 Loop - DTP*357*D8*CCYYMMDD.

Common Errors

- Incorrect coverage tiers based on the group's contract – such as dependents (e.g., group has employee and dependent (ECH) coverage and they list two (TWO) on the file)
- Group does not send new effective dates for members that have subgroup changes or coverage level changes
- Missing relationship codes
- Missing or Incomplete member addresses including city, state and/or zip code

Change Summary

The Change Summary log below will be used to document revisions that are made after the initial publication of this guide.

Version	Date	Change Description
V1	4/2021	Added link to VBA's SFTP site.
V2	1/2022	Updated VBA holiday schedule.
V3	3/2024	Updated EDI email address