



# AIRS Style Guide

## United Way 2-1-1 Style Guide

2016 Revision

For I&R Resource Specialists striving to be ...

- ◆ Clear
  - ◆ Concise
    - ◆ Natural
      - ◆ Accurate
        - ◆ Consistent
          - ◆ Relevant

In partnership with:



# **AIRS Style Guide** in partnership with United Way Worldwide

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- ◆ The AIRS Style Guide remains a collection of recommended best practices rather than a set of prescriptive (or absolute) solutions. The AIRS Standards require the use of *a* style guide rather than *the* AIRS Style Guide. It is also acknowledged that some I&R software might make it difficult to fully follow all of the recommendations in this document.
  - ◆ The previous edition of the AIRS Style Guide provided several options in some areas, allowing members to select their preference. However, in response to member requests, this edition outlines a single option wherever possible. The United Way Worldwide will be advocating that 2-1-1 agencies follow a consistent resource database style based on this edition.
  - ◆ For new I&Rs, or a collection of I&Rs seeking to maintain a single resource database within a multi-partner environment, there is a significant efficiency to use the AIRS Style Guide as the starting point before making any modifications that seem necessary to meet internal/external needs/preferences.
  - ◆ The AIRS Style Guide is based on the data elements of the 8.0 version of the AIRS Standards (due for publication in the spring of 2016).
  - ◆ The development of the first version of this Style Guide in 2008 was overseen by a team of experienced Resource Specialists from across North America. A similar team, many of whom have been working with variations of this document, undertook a full-scale review in 2015. As part of their process, a survey aimed at measuring existing practices and preferences was completed by a broad range of more than 60 resource specialists. The final draft was also shared with more than 250 resource specialists for feedback.
  - ◆ Style is often a subjective matter and sometimes there is no inherently “right” way to style a certain data element. However, once a decision is made, it must be applied consistently.
  - ◆ Visual inconsistency is often most apparent in service description fields with some agencies using formal sentences and others using point formats. When resource databases are merged such disparities make it more difficult for users to follow. The AIRS Style Guide provides suggestions for the creation of “good” service descriptions.
  - ◆ The AIRS Style Guide includes guidance on organizational naming conventions. However, every “rule” in this area, inevitably results in some local exceptions. This remains an area where the judgment of resource specialists is key.
  - ◆ This document is written in U.S. English and follows U.S. spelling conventions. It is envisioned that InformCanada will use this guide as a foundation to develop Canadian versions in English and French.
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## Benefits of the AIRS Style Guide

- ◆ There is a need to clearly document quality expectations.

- ◆ There are not enough dedicated resource managers or skilled resource staff to consistently devise local quality solutions.
  - ◆ As I&R and 2-1-1 grows, access to other resource databases and the ability to search them effectively becomes more important, especially in disaster scenarios. Consistency of data entry helps.
  - ◆ When promoting public online databases that involve resource material maintained by different organizations, variations in style make the data appear disorganized and confusing. Even if the information is correct, the overall look can diminish its credibility for public use.
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## Data Elements/Data Fields

These two terms are sometimes used (even in this document) interchangeably. But they are different in meaning.

**Data elements** refer to specific types of information (for example, a “mailing address”) while **data fields** refer to the “containers” in a specific database for one or more specific types of information.

Sometimes that “container” (that is, a data field) might contain a single data element (for example, when the data element “mailing address” is contained in the data field “Mailing Address”). In other cases, a single data field may contain more than one data element (for example, the data elements “eligibility” and “fee/payment options” may both be included within a data field called “Description Narrative”).

The AIRS Standards only deals with “data elements” (whether mandatory or recommended) and leaves decisions as to how that information is incorporated into a database to the individual I&R agency based usually on the data design of their I&R software.

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## Agency, Sites and Services/Programs

The basic structure of AIRS I&R resource databases begins with the information on the organization that provides the services (the agency), the locations from which one or more services/programs are available (the sites), and the services/programs themselves.

### AGENCY

An agency is an organization that delivers services. An agency can be incorporated, a division of government, or an unincorporated group that offers, for example, a food pantry or support group. The agency operates from the main location where the administrative functions occur, where the organization's director is generally located and where it is licensed for business. An agency may or may not deliver direct services from this location.

On occasions, I&R services may choose to designate a middle level of the organization as the agency. For example, a county Department of Human Services may offer dozens of services but is often recognized by the names of its component programs such as Social Services, Health Department, etc. It is acceptable to use those components as 'agencies' as long as their relationship to the larger Department of Human Services and the county itself is acknowledged in the description or by the way the data record is structured.

## SITES

Sites are the physical locations (sometimes called branches) from which clients access services provided by an agency. An agency must have at least one site but can have several (although occasionally with the growth of web-based services, there will be agencies that have no physical location).

Site records contain identifying information about the specific location (such as address, telephone number, manager, hours, and any other detail that appears helpful about the specific location).

Specific details about services/programs that are available at a site are contained at the Service/Program level of the data structure. Some of these elements (such as Phone Number) should be styled in the same manner as their counterpart element within the "Agency" record. However, the content must be specific to that location (for example, any URL should be specific to that site and not the main agency URL that was already entered at the Agency level).

## SERVICES/PROGRAMS

A service/program record describes the types of assistance an agency delivers to its clients.

Technically, "services" are specific activities that can be classified using Taxonomy terms. Specific types of services should be essentially the same no matter what organization is providing them.

Sometimes agencies will provide a group of services (some primary and some secondary) and organize them as a "program". Programs may be considered as groups of services under a specific title (which could be a well-established name such as the WIC Program or a name locally created by the agency itself). For example, a job training *program* may be made up of a number of *services* such as vocational assessment, a resume preparation class and job placement assistance. While services are essentially the same across organizations, the definitions of programs may differ significantly. (Just to make it more confusing, sometimes a program name will contain the word "Service" and sometimes an agency will promote a service under the name "Program").

I&R services often group similar agency services into a “Service Group” for ease of data entry, management and display; and assign a name (Service Group Name) to the services represented in the cluster.

Service/program records generally include a narrative that offers a summary of what is provided, in addition to other key data elements such as eligibility and application procedures.

## Summary of Organizational Data Elements

Note that “Mandatory” means that a data element should be entered if that information is available (for example, if you need to provide documentation to apply for a service, then that information must be added. If no documentation is required, the field can be left empty).

<i>AIRS Data Elements</i>	<i>AIRS Data Record Category</i>		
	<i>Agency</i>	<i>Site</i>	<i>Service/Program</i>
<u><a href="#">Name</a></u>	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
<u><a href="#">AKA (Also Known As) Name(s)</a></u>	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
<u><a href="#">Legal Status</a></u>	Mandatory	x	x
<u><a href="#">Federal Employer Identification Number</a></u>	Recommended	x	x
<u><a href="#">IRS Status</a></u>	Recommended	x	x
<u><a href="#">Licenses or Accreditation</a></u>	Recommended	x	x
<u><a href="#">Street/Physical Address(es)</a></u>	x	Mandatory	x
<u><a href="#">Mailing Address(es)</a></u>	x	Mandatory	x
<u><a href="#">Phone Number(s) and Types</a></u>	Mandatory	Mandatory	Mandatory
<u><a href="#">Website URL(s) including Social Media</a></u>	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
<u><a href="#">Email Address(es)</a></u>	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
<u><a href="#">Name and Title of Director/Manager</a></u>	Mandatory	Recommended	Recommended
<u><a href="#">Description</a></u>	Mandatory	Mandatory	<u><a href="#">Mandatory</a></u>
<u><a href="#">Days/Hours of Operation</a></u>	Mandatory	Recommended	Mandatory
<u><a href="#">Access for People with Disabilities</a></u>	x	Recommended	x
<u><a href="#">Travel Information</a></u>	x	Recommended	x
<u><a href="#">Service Group Name</a></u>	x	x	Recommended
<u><a href="#">Eligibility</a></u>	x	x	Mandatory

<a href="#"><u>Geographic Area Served</u></a>	x	x	Mandatory
<a href="#"><u>Languages Available</u></a>	x	x	Mandatory
<a href="#"><u>Application/Intake Process</u></a>	x	x	Mandatory
<a href="#"><u>Documents Required</u></a>	x	x	Mandatory
<a href="#"><u>Fees/Payment Options</u></a>	x	x	Mandatory
<a href="#"><u>Taxonomy Term(s) for Services/Targets</u></a>	x	x	Mandatory

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Agency Name</i>	Agency	Mandatory
<i>Site Name</i>	Site	Mandatory
<i>Service/Program Name</i>	Service/Program	Recommended

### AGENCY NAME

This is the name of the organization that provides the programs/services that are being included within the resource database. It is the name that an organization uses to identify themselves and by which they are best known to others. In many but not all cases, this may be their full legal name. but the key is the name under which the organization is more commonly known or is “doing business as” (for example, YWCA instead of Young Women’s Christian Association).

### **Preferred style examples**

- Abacus Child Care Center
- Anytown Parks and Recreation Department
- Arizona Department of Labor
- Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Anytown
- Burton D Morgan Foundation
- Evergreen Youth Services
- Gathering Place
- George Dodge Intermediate School
- Saint Jude’s Emergency Shelter
- Saint Vincent de Paul Society
- South Carolina Department of Health
- Yellow County Social Services Department
- YMCA Bluetown



## **Guiding information**

- ◆ Use full names without abbreviations and ampersands (for example, Anytown Parks and Recreation Department rather than Anytown Parks & Rec. Dept.).
- ◆ Avoid beginning an organization name with the word “The” (such as The Gathering Place). A failure to follow this principle tends to create hard-to-follow alphabetical listings with dozens of agencies called “The X ...” and “The Y ...”.
- ◆ Sometimes the official name may make that organization harder to find in a listing of alphabetical names (for example, the official name may be Anytown Big Brothers but most users would search for – and expect to find – the name under Big Brothers, so perhaps it may be styled accordingly. Similarly, the official name – and the name provided you by the organization – may include legal words or phrases (such as “Inc”) that are not relevant and not part of the everyday name. When this is the case, omit them. However, in these examples, the organization itself may insist on their preference. A resource specialist can argue that the key factor user-friendliness but in the long run, it is best to maintain positive relations with the listed agency and respect their request.
- ◆ Use apostrophes in the same manner as the agency but use a version without the apostrophe in the AKA field (for example, Saint Jude’s Emergency Shelter with Saint Judes Emergency Shelter as an AKA) if your software has difficulty handling apostrophes in searching.
- ◆ When naming government organizations, use the same structure for divisions of the same level of government throughout the database. For example, Sycamore County Public Health Department rather than Public Health Department of Sycamore County, which would lead to similar stylings such as Sycamore County Social Services Department.

As a general rule, always structure these records with the level of jurisdiction listed first (for example, Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles or Armstrong County Sheriff’s Department).

When the organizations within a resource database are outlined in a single list, all of those government records should be grouped together in a consistently logical fashion.

- ◆ If the common name is an abbreviation, omit the punctuation (for example, ARC rather than A.R.C.). This holds true if the agency or the site name is taken from someone’s initial (for example, CJ Correctional Facility rather than C.J. Correctional Facility).
- ◆ An organization name which includes ‘compounded elements’ should not contain more than three levels, with the final level best styled with a hyphen:
  - Prince County Mental Health Department – Outpatient Services; Prince County Public Health Department – Crisis Services

In these cases, maintaining a consistency of approach is very important.

- ◆ Do not abbreviate Street, Avenue, Boulevard, Mount, Road, etc. when these words appear in organization names (for example, Spruce Street Community Center).
- ◆ Do not use abbreviations for geographic areas (for example, AZ Department of Labor; US Postal Service).
- ◆ Focus on how the agency consistently spells out its name in regular text rather than how it might appear on its corporate logo, which may play with capitalization, abbreviations and punctuation for design reasons.
- ◆ If an abbreviation is a well-known part of a name and the name would otherwise seem “odd” to anyone in the community, then the abbreviated version should be preferred with the full name going into the AKA field.

Note that for all of these “style preferences”, in the area of organization names, there will nearly always be exceptions to every rule.

### SITE NAME

This is the name of the site/location. If an agency has only a single location, then to all intents and purposes, the agency name is usually the site name.

For example, if Abacus Child Care Center is the agency name and there is only one location, then that site name is Abacus Child Care Center. However, if Abacus operates from a second location, the agency might have an existing name that it applies to the site such as Abacus2 Child Care Center or Jane’s Place. If not, the I&R might have to devise a way to identify the site name such as Abacus Child Care Center (Middletown Branch).

In some instances, the site name may have a distinct alternative title that has no obvious relationship with the main agency. For example, the CM Mathewson Mental Health Clinic may be a site of the regional public health authority.

In other cases, the site name may be drawn from the function that it provides for the agency. For example, if the local Salvation Army operates a thrift store at a unique location, the site name might be “created” as Salvation Army Thrift Store. If it operates a couple of thrift stores, maybe the site names become Salvation Army Main Street Thrift Store and Salvation Army Broad Street Thrift Store.

Note that the site name is not necessarily the same as a ‘building name’ which is really part of a standard address format.

### **Preferred style examples**

Grey County Social Services Department – Youth Club  
 Lakeside Library (Riverfront Branch)  
 Mountainside Neighborhood Association – Satellite Office  
 Ocean Hospital Outpatient Clinic  
 Salvation Army Homeless Shelter  
 YMCA – Mary Street Child Care Service

## PROGRAM NAME

This refers to the specific name of a program. A program name is the approved name for a service or group of services that is specified by the agency, rather than a name created by the I&R service. And yes, the ‘program’ name might sometimes include the word ‘service’.

### **Preferred style examples of programs**

Employability  
Family Literacy Program  
Head Start  
Mental Health Assessment Services  
Substance Abuse Prevention Program  
Utility Assistance Program  
Vocational Training Services

## SERVICE NAME

If there is no formal program name, a service name may need to be formulated by a resource specialist based on the clearest expression of the activities provided. This same service name would then need to be applied consistently to all activities delivering essentially the same thing. Generally, the service name should relate closely to the relevant Taxonomy indexing term. And yes, the ‘service’ name might sometimes include the word ‘program’.

### **Preferred style examples of services**

Utility Assistance  
Food Pantry  
Adult Literacy Service  
Afterschool Program  
Parenting Class  
Vocational Training  
Bereavement Counseling

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>AKA (Also Known As) Name(s)</i>	Agency	Mandatory
	Site	Mandatory
	Service/Program	Recommended

An AKA (Also Known As) is another name by which an agency, site or program may be commonly known. An agency name, site name or program name may have an AKA which is an acronym,

former name, popular name, legal name or some other alternative. An AKA may also be any type of name under which the organization, site or program might reasonably be searched by a user (such as a variation in spelling conventions). For example, if the organization name is Saint Bartholomew’s Catholic Church, then St. Bartholomew’s Church and Saint Bart’s might be added as AKAs.

If an agency does not commonly use its full legal name, then that legal name should be included as an AKA with the designation (legal name) appended. Similarly, a former name should also be labelled, as not everyone might be aware of the name change.

The AKAs can sometimes also be used to “flip” preferred name “stylings” around if desired. For example, if a decision has been made to use YWCA Anytown as the preferred organization name, then Anytown YWCA could be used as an AKA.

**Preferred style examples**

- Anytown Recreation Division
- Anytown Big Brothers and Big Sisters
- Anytown YMCA
- Big Sisters Anytown
- EYS
- Northtown Home Care Association (former name)
- Jude’s Place
- Saint Judes Emergency Shelter
- St Jude’s Shelter
- Info Greentown
- Community Information Center of Greentown (legal name)
- St Vincent de Paul Society

Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Legal Status</i>	Agency	Mandatory

The legal status of an organization describes the type of organization or conditions under which the organization is operating. For example, a private, nonprofit corporation, a for-profit (commercial, proprietary) organization, a government (public) organization, or a grass roots entity such as a support group that is not incorporated and has no formal status as an organization.

**Preferred style examples**

- Nonprofit (Incorporated)
- Nonprofit (Unincorporated)
- Faith-based
- Coalition
- Cooperative
- Commercial [preferred to for-profit]

Government [the level of government is covered in the agency name]  
Special District  
School Board

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Federal Employer Identification Number</i>	Agency	Recommended

A Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), is a unique nine-digit number (xx-xxxxxxx) that the IRS (United States Internal Revenue Service) assigns to business entities. The IRS uses this number to identify taxpayers that are required to file various returns. FEINs are used by employers, sole proprietors, corporations, partnerships, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, certain individuals and other business entities.

The FEIN is also known as an Employer Identification Number (EIN), a Federal Tax Identification Number, and a Tax ID. Within an I&R database, it provides another option for matching records in merged databases to help eliminate duplicates.

**Preferred style example**

87-8573645

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>IRS Status</i>	Agency	Recommended

IRS Status refers to the particular section of the Internal Revenue Code that exempts the organization from the payment of federal income tax or designates it under an alternative status.

An agency can be a registered and incorporated nonprofit but might not have been granted charitable status at the Federal level. There may also be entities within an I&R database that do not have any IRS status (such as informal support groups). Much of the information gathered under Legal Status may be more relevant/useful than IRS Status.

**Preferred style examples**

501(a)

501(c)(3)  
Registered charity

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Licenses or Accreditations</i>	Agency	Recommended

If an agency operates either with or because of a license or accreditation secured through an external entity, then this should be recognized within the I&R database record. For example, a child care center of a certain size could only legally conduct business if it has a license, or a nursing home would require specific accreditation to operate.

When possible, it is helpful to provide the full name of the licensing body in order to provide users with the opportunity to confirm credentials.

It is best to use this field with discretion. For example, a school board would obviously only employ teachers who are licensed to teach. The emphasis should be on providing helpful information to users, particularly in service areas where perhaps some organizations are licensed but others are not (for example, within home help).

**Preferred style examples**

Home care provider licensed by Green State Human Services License Directorate  
Community health clinic accredited by Red State Hospitals Board

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Street/Physical Address(es)</i>	Site	Mandatory

The street address describes the physical address of the site(s) from which the agency operates. The components of a street address follow an accepted standard format for expressing addresses.

Some agencies may withhold their physical address for confidentiality reasons (for examples, shelters for women who have been abused). In these cases, enter “Address Confidential”

Note that there may be occasional examples of organizations that have no actual or relevant physical address. In these cases, leave the address information blank but make sure there is a clear indication that an agency is ‘Online only’ in its description field.

### PREADDRESS LINE

A preaddress line contains address information that may not always be “readable” for a geographic mapping program such as Google Maps (for example, MacDonald Building or Fawltly Towers).

### ADDRESS LINE 1

Address Line One is used for the actual street address.

### ADDRESS LINE 2

Address Line Two is reserved for an additional component such as the apartment, suite or unit number.

An address will generally consist of one of the following combinations:

1. Preaddress Line  
Address Line One  
Address Line Two
2. Address Line One  
Address Line Two
3. Address Line One

The following is an example of an address that uses all three lines:

Ethelred Towers  
17 Oak Drive  
Suite 17

However, “Line One” and “Line Two” may be entered as separate data fields but usually displayed in a traditional address format (that is, on one line):

Ethelred Towers  
17 Oak Drive, Suite 17

The Preaddress Line can also be used when another agency is acting as the host for a smaller organization (for example, a mental health clinic that serves as the “base” for an independent mutual support group):

c/o Anytown Mental Health Services  
876 Blackberry Boulevard, Unit 67

### Preferred style examples

100 Main Street, Suite 400  
City Hall, 100 Main Street West, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor  
14 Fir Crescent  
587 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
85 Acorn Boulevard  
9206 Willow Street NW, Unit 470  
9206 South Willow Street West, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Hawthorn Heights Building, 500 Orange Blossom Street, Unit 4  
Online only

### **Guiding information**

- ◆ Although there are standard abbreviations (for example, Ave) that will be read by geo-mapping programs and are officially approved by the postal service, if the software field permits the number of characters, use the full spelling (for example, Avenue) to remove any possibility of ambiguity.
- ◆ Some addresses will be provided by agencies in the style of “234-111 Cedar Street”. Although this is officially recognized, it is not intuitive for users so enter the address as “111 Cedar Street, Suite 234” to be clear. If you are unsure whether it is a “suite”, use the more flexible word “unit”.
- ◆ Do not use “#” as an introduction to a number. For example, change 16 Balsam Avenue, #24 to 16 Balsam Avenue, Unit 24.
- ◆ If the street name incorporates a “direction” (such as Young Street North or Old Avenue South), enter that in full. The exception is for cities that have addresses that reflect a larger grid, an abbreviation can be used if it is part of the established format (such as 453 Wood Road NW or 67 SE Stone Place). There may also be some other exceptions based on accepted local terms such as 678 MLK Boulevard.

### **CITY**

This is the part of the physical address that describes the major city or town from which the site operates. The name of the city follows the street address and precedes the state/province and ZIP/postal code in conventional postal service format.

Again, standard and full spellings should be used. The key is consistency. All agencies in a certain defined community need to have the same city address.

### **Preferred style examples**

Davistown  
Gillespieville  
Saint Paul  
Parkerton



## COUNTY

The I&R software may prompt ‘county’ at this stage. Although not a formal part of the address, this is a useful aid in being able to identify agencies *located* in a particular county (which of course, is not the same as agencies that may *serve* that county). However, software programs can usually auto-identify ‘county’ through either the city or the ZIP code.

## STATE/PROVINCE

The designation of the state/province must be part of the site address of the organization. Use only the official two-letter code for all states, provinces and territories.

Do not use a period to denote the abbreviation (for example, use AK rather than AK.) and always use upper case (for example, AK rather than Ak).

### **Preferred style examples**

AZ  
DE  
MA  
PR

## ZIP/POSTAL CODE

The ZIP code and the postal code must be part of the site address. This element must use the fixed official structures used by the respective national postal services of the United States and Canada. A Canadian postal code consists of six characters – alternating upper-case alphabetical and numerical elements (ANA NAN) with a single space between the pairs of three characters. The ‘extended’ United States ZIP code contains five numeric digits along with a hyphen followed by four additional digits. However, the first five are the only ones required, and denote a wider area in which individuals place themselves (for example, “I live within the 40812 ZIP code”) and which are used for searching. Do not enter the additional four digits.

### **Preferred style examples**

40125  
68516  
V9Z 2T9

## COUNTRY

This is not usually required and may be a default (e.g. US or Canada) but some resource databases may require the need to list agencies based in other countries. For example, some border communities may decide to maintain a few records of organizations in the neighboring/neighbouring country.

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Mailing Address(es)</i>	Site	Mandatory

The mailing address describes the official postal address of the site(s) from which the organization operates when that address differs from the physical address (i.e. if there is no specific mailing address, then the physical address is the ‘official’ address and the only address required).

The mailing address is constructed from the same data components as the physical address in terms of address line, city, state/province, ZIP code. If there is no mailing address, do not enter any information under that field. The exception is if the field displays even if empty in which case simply enter ‘No separate mailing address’ (and most software prevents this happening). Note that only the United States Postal Service can deliver to a PO Box.

Generally, you cannot “go to” a mailing address but you should be able to “go to” a physical address. Avoid abbreviating the PO Box as P.O. Box., or General Delivery as GD or G.D.

Even if a resource is “Online only”, generally inclusion criteria should advocate for some type of mailing address to verify the accountability of the resource.

**Preferred style examples**

PO Box 45  
Ironton, MA 68573

General Delivery  
Leadhampton, ID 86352

General Delivery, Bag 3  
Copper Valley, KS 86934

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Phone Number(s) and Types</i>	Agency	Mandatory
	Site	Mandatory

	Service/Program	Recommended
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This details the phone (and now, text) number(s) used to reach a particular agency, site or service/program. In addition to the actual number including possible extensions, there may be contextual information that describes the type and/or function of the phone (e.g., toll-free, administration, intake, etc.).

A fax is usually entered as a separate data field and identified as a ‘fax number’, although the relevance of a fax number is diminishing. The logical assumption is that a call is going into a “normal” voice telephone unless indicated otherwise.

An agency might have several phone numbers for different purposes (e.g. after-hours, Spanish only, alternative number). Note that phone numbers for sites and/or services/programs are only included if they are different from the main agency phone numbers.

## PHONE NUMBERS

### Preferred style examples

(250) 467-9836  
 1-800-976-9760  
 1-800-435-7669 (1-800-HELP-NOW)  
 2-1-1  
 (123) 456-7890, ext 527  
 1-866-546-3652  
 211 787 (211 TXT) (Text only)  
 9-1-1  
 865-987 (Text only)  
 (777) 156-8635  
 No phone service available

### Guiding information

- ◆ The construction (250) 675-8615 is clearer for users than 250-675-8615 (although not all software may accommodate this preference).
- ◆ Even if all of the phone numbers in a database share the same area code, you still need to include it in each instance for the use of those contacting an agency from another region.
- ◆ Use hyphens on 9-1-1 and 3-1-1 to ensure the digits stand out clearly.
- ◆ Toll-free numbers should include the “1” to make sure that is clear. The words “Toll-free” should also be added in another area. Try to establish where the toll-free service is available.
- ◆ If there is a “named” number, such as 1-800-HELP Now, list the actual number of the service (for example, 1-800-435-7669) but try to transfer the 1-800-HELP-NOW reference into another data area).

- ◆ An extension should only be used if it is helpful (particularly where there is an automated switchboard and the extension saves a great deal of menu choices) and/or is recommended by the agency itself. In most cases, calls to agencies go to a main switchboard and are then diverted to the particular person.

## PHONE TYPES

This provides some contextual information about the type and/or purposes of a phone number.

### Preferred style examples

Administration (avoid using ‘Admin’)  
 After Hours  
 Text only  
 Fax  
 Answering Service  
 TTY  
 Alternative Number  
 Hotline/Helpline  
 Recorded Messages about Services  
 Intake  
 Voicemail messages only  
 Toll-Free  
 Toll-Free (English Only)  
 Toll-Free (Spanish Only)  
 Toll-Free within service area  
 Toll-free within state

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<b><i>Website URL(s) including Social Media</i></b>	Agency	Mandatory
	Site	Recommended
	Service/Program	Recommended

A URL (Universal or Uniform Resource Locator) is a way of specifying the location of a file or resource on the Internet. Also commonly known as a website or web address. In the resource database, the agency URL should be the official main website of the organization but can also include a database URL and links to various social media.

In most instances, the fixed structure should be along the lines of [www.orgname.org](http://www.orgname.org) ... in other instances, the URL may point to a specific file/resource within an organization’s website (for example, [www.airs.org/standards.asp](http://www.airs.org/standards.asp)).

Avoid using *http://www ...* (although there will be occasional websites that only use the *http://* designation).

The URL can be pointing to a social media address other than a website (for example, *www.twitter.com/ouragency*). Ideally, you can identify the different type of websites on the software display (for example, Twitter: *www.twitter.com/ouragency*).

A site or service/program URL should only be included if it is unique to either that particular location or service/program.

**Preferred style examples**

*www.airs.org*  
*www.arbitrary.com*  
*http://airs.org*  
*www.air.org/application.doc*  
Resource Database: *www.211ourtown/resourcedatabase*  
Twitter: *www.twitter.com/ouragency*  
Facebook: *www.facebook.com/ouragency*

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Email Address(es)</i>	Agency	Mandatory
	Site	Mandatory
	Service/Program	Recommended

Email refers to a mail address for online communication.

This should refer to the main email address of an agency (for example, *info@agency.org* rather than the email of an individual such as an Executive Director. The email address must be entered in the standard format of a valid email address (i.e. *x@x.yyy*).

**Preferred style examples**

*info@airs.org*  
*ymca@isp.net*  
*airs@info.org*  
*ourtowninfo@gmail.com*

Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Name and Title of Director/Manager</i>	Agency	Mandatory
	Site	Mandatory
	Service/Program	Recommended

At the agency level, this data element refers to the single person that heads the organization. This person is the individual who is ultimately accountable for its operation. It would not usually be someone who is directly contacted except when an issue such as a serious complaint is concerned.

There should always be an individual listed for every organization. When an organization has two or more sites, there may or may not be a single person who can be listed in the role of site manager.

At the program level, the individual is the contact for providing the service (for example, the Program Coordinator). This is only included when there seems to be a particular reason, and usually this level of detail is not required.

### CONTACT NAME

This information is generally broken down in a software program under two elements – (1) the title (for example, Mr, Ms, Captain, Dr), and (2) the name (first and last name with options for the use of initials).

Preferably both the first and last names should be entered in full. The preference is to omit Mr and Ms and most honorary titles unless the agency is persistent. A medical doctor is an exception in which case ‘Dr’ is all that is needed. Another exception might be if a first name could be applicable to both genders, in which case it is helpful to indicate (for example, Ms Jackie Wilson or Mr Jackie Wilson. Only use Mrs Jackie Wilson if the agency insists). Generally, omit credentials that come after a name (for example, MSW or PhD) unless insisted upon by the agency.

If an agency provides a formal expression of the main contact’s name (for example, Mrs N M Wilkinson), then that should be respected.

Occasionally, you may encounter an agency that describes itself as a Collective. In this case, it is best to simply ask for one name to serve as the “Office Contact”. If no name is provided, then omit but use a generic title such as “Director”.

### Preferred style examples

Mr Jean Lapierre  
Dr Jenny A Jenkins  
Jim Jameson  
Father John Seymour  
S. W. Rodriguez  
Hanif Mohammed

Anne Hughes-Simmons

### CONTACT TITLE

The contact title reflects the formal job position of the person. The contact title follows the contact name. Generally, titles are written in full (for example, Executive Director instead of ED).

#### **Preferred style examples**

President and Chief Executive Officer  
Chief Medical Officer  
Administrator  
Office Coordinator  
Parish Priest  
Director  
Director of Operations  
Coordinator

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Description</i>	Agency	Mandatory
	Site	Mandatory

### AGENCY DESCRIPTION

The agency description is a compact summary of the organization's prime nature and activities. Not all software systems may include this field/data element but it is a helpful way of understanding the broad nature of an agency if its name is not well known or its purpose is not very evident from its title.

If an agency has an affiliation or a relationship with other organizations that might not be obvious from their title, then this should be mentioned here (for example, Hamilton Youth Services might be formerly affiliated with the National Boys and Girls Clubs).

The description should be brief and not duplicate the more detailed service records.

#### **Preferred style examples**

Children's mental health clinic  
Comprehensive employment center  
Emergency shelter for assaulted women  
Federal government financial assistance program for income eligible older adults  
Food pantry and meal program  
Multiservice agency operating a variety of neighborhood programs, services and supports

Support services for assaulted women, including an emergency shelter  
 Resources for veterans (online only)  
 Social and recreational services for youth. Affiliated with Boys and Girls Clubs of America

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The site description is a brief statement of no more than 1-2 sentences that describes the primary activities that take place at the site. If the agency has a single site, then this is covered by the agency description. If the agency operates from more than one location, then a brief site description is required for each one. In some instances, in which the same services are available from each location, the site descriptions might all be identical.

**Preferred style examples**

- Mental health drop-in
- Training center
- Commercial child care center
- Emergency shelter for homeless men
- Federal government financial assistance program for income eligible older adults
- Food pantry and meal program
- Thrift store

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Days/Hours of Operation</i>	Site	Mandatory
	Service/Program	Mandatory

This refers to the days and times an individual can access either the administrative hours of a facility or the hours of a particular service/program.

In some I&R software programs, this information may be organized in a structured way as per the following table which can allow for filtered searches (e.g. Food Pantries and Friday).

Sunday	From:	To:
Monday	From:	To:
Tuesday	From:	To:
Wednesday	From:	To:
Thursday	From:	To:
Friday	From:	To:
Saturday	From:	To:

However, in most instances and even in the above situation, a string of text is required to provide the information. There are probably twenty different combinations of ways to enter days and hours



of service. Within the overall Standards, there is no ‘wrong’ way providing that way is used consistently.

However, a survey completed by more than 70 resources specialists offered five choices (and with a further eight variations offered as write-in suggestions, resulted in 40% selecting the method used below with no other choice accounting for more than 7% of responses.

If Live Chat is available, then this can be added here.

In some cases, a service/program may only be available on a seasonal basis in which case that information may also be entered in this area.

**Preferred style examples**

- Mon-Fri 9am-5pm
- Mon-Wed 8am-11:30am, Thu 2pm-8pm, Fri 8am-11:30pm
- Mon 12 noon-4:30pm, Tue-Wed 11am-11pm, Thu 6pm-12 midnight
- Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm (Also Live Chat available on main website Mon-Fri 10am-2pm)
- Irregular – call for details
- Mon-Fri 10am-5:30pm (Phone service only available Sat-Sun 10am-4pm)
- Mon-Fri 8:30am-4:30pm (Closed lunch 12 noon-1pm)
- Mon-Sun 24 hours
- Seasonal from October 8<sup>th</sup> to December 24<sup>th</sup>

**Guiding information**

Organize the information in terms of the order of the week (that is, start on Monday and end on the last day that service is available (usually Friday or Sunday).

To be certain of clarity, use 12 noon and 12 midnight instead of 12am and 12pm.

If a service is closed during lunchtime that information should be included.

Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Access for People with Disabilities</i>	Site	Recommended

This describes the factors that either help or hinder access to the site/location for persons with physical disabilities.

When surveying agencies on their accessibility, it is helpful to provide a specific list of options (such as some of the items listed as style examples) for the agency to select. An open-ended survey tends to produce broadly positive statements such as “Fully accessible” or “Partially accessible” without providing any details on what exactly that means.

Remember that access for persons with physical disabilities covers more issues than wheelchair access.

A standard phrase could be considered for all situations where an I&R Specialist is asked about physical access such as “Visitors with concerns about the level of access for specific physical conditions, are always recommended to contact the organization directly to obtain the best possible information about physical access.”

**Preferred style examples**

- Wheelchair access to main entrance via ramps
- Accessible washrooms
- No wheelchair access
- Accessible apartments including wheel-in shower
- Lowered elevator buttons
- Wheelchair-level button opens main doors
- Designated parking spaces
- Wheelchair access possible with appointment
- Braille elevators and signage
- Tone elevators
- Visual alert systems
- Wheelchair access – but call for details

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Travel Information</i>	Site	Recommended

This provides a variety of ways to include more detailed information to help clients identify a location and to get there as easily as possible. Again, the choices offered in this area by different software may vary. There is also a trend to reduce collecting this level of information as Google maps that read your standard address format can illustrate location, cross-streets, nearby landmarks and proximity to public transit routes.

**PHYSICAL LOCATION DESCRIPTION**

This can be helpful if a street address does not reflect a location that would otherwise be well known to a client (for example, a shopping mall or a government building). It is also useful when additional information is needed to easily find the actual location (for example, a food pantry may operate from a church but its actual entrance is through a side door down a small flight of steps off an adjoining street).

Only use this data element if it provides distinctive information. For example, “near bus stop” or “across from restaurant” or “next to convenience store” may be applicable to hundreds of locations and will not be particularly helpful to the client.

### **Preferred style examples**

Within Riverside Shopping Center  
In basement at City Hall  
Next to Lagoon Library  
Entrance at unmarked door off Harbor Street

### **CROSS STREET**

The major cross street nearest to where the site is located. As a general rule, intersections should be listed with the north-south street names first followed by the east-west street. It is best to be clear that this is generally the nearest *major* intersection, to avoid the client expecting to find it at the immediate junction. Note that as mapping programs are now frequently used, this becomes a less needed piece of information.

### **PUBLIC ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION**

This is generally set up within I&R software as a “Yes/No” option to denote whether or not a site is accessible by public transit.

In some cases, a “No” answer may be fairly obvious for a building in a rural area. In most cases, a “Yes” may always be a *possible* answer as virtually everything may be, to some degree, accessible to public transit. However, there is a difference between a building with a bus stop directly opposite and one that might be a mile (or a 20-minute walk) away – which is accessible for some individuals but not for others. Similarly, a building may be accessible Monday to Friday in the mornings but impossible to reach on evenings and weekends because of local transit service restrictions.

When asked, agencies tend to answer that they are accessible to public transit. Researching exactly what that means may prove very time-consuming. For example, should “Yes” be an answer to a specific question such as “Is there a bus stop within 200 yards?” A question to which there is no single answer as it would differ between different individuals. The preference is to be able to provide meaningful context to clients (for example, “close” could be translated into ‘within one city block’).

### **BUS SERVICE ACCESS**

This allows an agency to provide additional textual information about specific public transit access to locations. For the purpose of this data element, “bus” also applies to streetcars, subways and other forms of fixed-route public transport. While this may be helpful, it still requires that clients check for themselves (for example, they may be told that the 65 Bus will take them to a location, only to find that bus only runs once every three hours). In this instance, no information is better than unintentionally misleading information that can cause a huge inconvenience for clients.

This is a field that requires a great deal of effort to properly maintain, and if it can't be properly maintained, an agency should consider opting not to collect it. As in the subsection above on public transportation, there is also a need for clarity regarding what "close" to a bus route actually means. As mentioned at the top of this section, Google mapping increasingly includes transportation routes.

**Preferred style examples**

- Bus Route 61
- Bus Route 20B
- Bathurst Subway
- Fern Junction on "B" and Red Line
- Desire Streetcar
- Bus Routes 16, 25, 26, 27C, 70 Express, 84

Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Service Group Name</i>	Service/Program	Recommended

The Service Group Name is a generic name for a group of services created by the I&R service rather than by the agency. It is used as a label which encompasses all services contained within the service group.

Service Group Name is a 'construct' in so far as it is not a piece of information about an organization but a method to relate that organization to similar entities for ease of retrieval and to better ensure consistency of data entry. It is a device that resource specialists have found helpful to follow over the years and this continues to be the case.

Service group names should be indicative of all of the services within the cluster, should be "user friendly" (i.e., avoid jargon or terminology not easily understood by the general public), should be unique within the agency entry and should not duplicate the program name if one exists. Some Service Groups may be limited to a single service while others may represent a number of related services.

(Note that this data element is not within the AIRS Standards)

**Preferred style examples**

- Family Counseling
- Income Support Services
- Rehabilitation
- Addiction Services
- Child Development Services

Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Description</i>	Service/Program	Mandatory

A service description provides an opportunity to more fully describe the nature of a service in order to help someone make an informed decision on a referral.

In many ways, it is the most important field and the one that requires the most skill in terms of deciding the content and then delivering that content with concision and clarity.

The service description is the place to provide contextual information (for example, on secondary and ancillary services). It is also a place where other data elements (such as appropriate licensing information or affiliations) can be added if there are no specific fields for those elements and their inclusion would be helpful. Where relevant it can also be the place to provide additional information.

The description should be written in specific enough terms to enable I&R specialists and the general public to determine whether this resource is an appropriate referral.

The description must reference and describe all of the services indexed using the Taxonomy.

**Preferred style examples**

- ◆ Mutual support group for alcoholics. Regular meetings at a variety of times and locations throughout Rockland County.
- ◆ Licensed child care center for toddlers and preschool children.
- ◆ Works with Green State Department of Labor to secure placements, part-time and full-time employment for Grey County Community College students and alumni.
- ◆ Support for day laborers within the Spanish-speaking communities providing a safe place for workers to wait to be picked up for daily jobs. Light breakfast available and referrals to ESL programs.
- ◆ Classes, workshops and conference offered multiple times throughout year for unpaid caregivers who are looking after an adult family member or friend. Classes and events include Powerful Tools for Caregivers, Caring for Your Loved One at Home, Yoga for Caregivers and annual caregiver workshops. Respite may be available with early registration. Website includes calendar on upcoming events.
- ◆ Local branch of national organization. One-to-one meetings to assist patients and families with free advice to help solve problems related to finances, insurance, employment and costs resulting from a cancer diagnosis.

- ◆ Online support service for caregivers, includes live chat support.
- ◆ Health care services provided in-home for illness or injury. Includes wound care for pressure sores or surgical wounds, patient and caregiver education, intravenous or nutrition therapy, injections monitoring serious illness and unstable health status.
- ◆ Alternative to court system for resolving civil and minor criminal disputes such as tenant/landlord problems, neighborhood disputes, small claims and family conflicts. (Note that this is not appropriate for disputes associated with domestic violence).
- ◆ Supports young volunteers in programs geared towards environmental quality and awareness. Individuals can commit 675 hours of service year round or 300 hours over the summer. Living stipend is provided and a monetary educational reward is given upon completion of service hours.
- ◆ Promotes healthy lifestyles, good nutrition and home budgeting to food stamp recipients/applicants. Classes and home visits from dietitians and home economists.

### **Guiding information**

- ◆ Service descriptions should be precise but also meaningful. They should anticipate any questions that a client might reasonably ask that have not been addressed in other fields. However, it should not include every conceivable piece of detail – these issues are best addressed by the client contacting the program directly.
- ◆ Avoid using full sentences such as “This program provides peer counseling within a supportive environment ...” if “Peer counseling available” gets to the point quicker and is easier for the I&R Specialist to read.
- ◆ Avoid over-elaborate phrases (usually supplied by the agencies themselves in their completed surveys) such as “Provides a family-focused model based on empowerment and individualized expression ...” Ask yourself, “What are they actually doing and what would a potential client really want to know?”
- ◆ Construct the narrative in the same way as a traditional newspaper report with the most important information coming first and the least crucial piece of information listed last. Even if there is a separate eligibility field, some of that key information can also be included in the service description.
- ◆ As a general rule, adjectives and adverbs can be eliminated.
- ◆ When creating a list use commas and not semi-colons.
- ◆ Write in third person.
- ◆ Do not abbreviate days or months.
- ◆ One space following a comma, semi-colon, colon or period.

- ◆ Avoid abbreviations such as e.g. or i.e. if possible. Use “for example” and “that is” or “that means”.
- ◆ Avoid subjective language (such as “highly qualified staff) and social service jargon.
- ◆ Prefixes and hyphens: The common sense rule is only to use a hyphen if the word looks strange without it. Generally, if the prefix and the word that follows it are both vowels, then a hyphen may be needed (for example, pre-empt rather than preempt). Some words, however, are well established enough to not require a hyphen (for example, coordinate and cooperate).
- ◆ Within your own database, try and standardize your descriptions for identical services as much as possible. For example, all services describing utility payment assistance programs should be written in a similar fashion.
- ◆ Use active verbs and clear language.
- ◆ Omit minor details that would be hard to consistently update and that can be left to the client to discover when contacting the program.

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Eligibility</i>	Service/Program	Mandatory

These are the guidelines that illustrate who may apply for a particular service/program. Essentially, eligibility outlines the general target population for that service.

Eligibility is preferably expressed in terms of requirements, for example, “Single parents only”, although occasionally some exclusions may be included such as “Previous participants are not eligible”.

The actual determination of final eligibility is according to the discretion/policies/decisions of the service provider. The role of the I&R is to accurately document who is eligible to apply for the service/program.

In some I&R software, there might not be a separate field for eligibility and so this information may need to be included within the first or second sentence of the service description.

In order to facilitate searching by eligibility, some I&R software may structure selected eligibility criteria (e.g. age and gender) in a format that supports the ability to filter searches (for example, ‘females’ ’65 years and over’.

This data element should be focused on those circumstances where the eligibility is specific and not obvious by the nature of the service/program or the organization providing it. For example, a food pantry is for individuals who need food. This fact probably does not need to be re-stated. However,

there might be some specific information that needs to be included such as “Only individuals living in Longton may apply”. Similarly, an employment center is for someone looking for a job or training to get a job. And a library is for people wanting to borrow books (although if a library has a reading program for children of a particular age range, then that needs to be stated in the eligibility area for that particular program).

It is often a judgment decision but which once made, needs to be consistently applied to all similar records.

Another variation is whether this field displays when it contains no information. If it does, then having a field saying “Eligibility” with nothing entered in it, might be confusing for users. In which case, some information needs to be included for every service/program record, and for instances where the service is essentially ‘open to everyone who needs it’, the default statement should be “Open to all”.

### **Preferred style examples**

Open to all  
Medicaid recipients age 21 years or older  
Youth from 16 to 18 years, individuals up to 21 years may occasionally be considered  
Individuals living with AIDS/HIV and their caregivers  
Older adults of Tangerine County who are age 65 years or older  
Children from 4 years to 12 years  
Individuals with compulsive eating disorders  
Older adults 55 years and up, residing in Melon Township  
Apple County residents at risk of eviction  
Veterans and their dependents  
Children at risk of abuse  
Pear City parents on low incomes with children from six weeks to 14 years  
Individuals in acute mental health crisis  
Employees with injuries or illnesses connected to their employment  
Individuals with physical disabilities or recovering from or living with illness/injury

### **Guiding information**

- ◆ Eligibility can be based on a number of factors such as age, gender, geography, physical and/or mental health, language, cultural background, income and geographic location.
- ◆ Geographic eligibility can often be handled more precisely within the Area Served field. However, a clear textual expression of eligibility is always helpful if it narrows the target group to a particular area.
- ◆ For this field and in other areas, the general policy should be to try and handle information in a positive fashion (i.e. who a service/program is for rather than who it is not for).
- ◆ Generally, use ‘individuals’ or ‘persons’ rather than ‘people’, ‘everyone’ or ‘anyone’.



- ◆ Use “person first” language. For example, “Individuals with physical disabilities” rather than “Disabled persons”.
- ◆ Also try to avoid labeling language, even if sometimes it seems a little contrived. For example, “Individuals who are in correctional facilities” rather than “Persons in jail”.
- ◆ Use numerals for ages as it is easier to read. The exception is to use “birth” rather than “0”. For example, “From birth to 3 years”.

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Geographic Area Served</i>	Service/Program	Mandatory

Geographic area served refers to the physical boundaries in which a service is available and by definition, not available to clients outside of those boundaries. The concept of “area served” is different from “location” as a service may be located in one area but serve several definable areas or only serve parts of the one area.

This geographic “boundary” can be national, statewide, regional, countywide, citywide, a school district, comprise a single or several ZIP codes or be restricted to a narrow neighborhood.

Geographic area served should be described in narrative form in the eligibility or description fields and represented in a structured form that facilitates the searcher’s ability to filter data. Within the software, a service covering Carzola County would be found by a search for services in that county or for all the ZIP codes that are included in that county. For example, if area served is included as structured information, users are able to search for a home delivered meal program for a woman who lives in the ZIP code 60656, and the system will filter out services that are unable to serve her ZIP code.

Within a single local database, there may seem no need to state for every single service that it is designed for individuals in that region – but this becomes important to enter if the information is ever incorporated into a larger database, and also ensures clarity for users from outside the region who would be less informed about the boundaries.

**Preferred style examples**

- Jones County
- Metropolitan Smithville
- Southern Brownchester from below 4<sup>th</sup> Street and west of Williamsboro Highway  
43204, 43207 and 43311 ZIP codes
- Blue State
- National
- Berry, Greenville, and Peach Counties

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Languages Available</i>	Service/Program	Recommended

The specific languages (other than English) which are consistently available in a particular service/program.

In order to facilitate searching by language availability, some I&R services structure language information in a format that supports the ability to filter data. Users are then able to search for a particular type of service in Spanish and the system will filter in those that match the criterion.

Agencies often tend to exaggerate language available. Try to only list languages that are regularly and consistently available. There is a difference between a program that provides Spanish services as part of its mandate and one that has a part-time volunteer who speaks Vietnamese.

If the software does not display an empty field and the service is only available in English, leave the field blank.

If the field still displays when it contains no information, then having a field saying “Languages” with nothing entered, might be confusing for users. In which case, information needs to be included for every service/program record and in these cases the default statement should be “English only”.

If a number of languages are available include English (if it is one of those languages) and list it first, with the other languages being listed in alphabetical order.

**Preferred style examples**

- English only
- English and Spanish
- Spanish only
- English, Arabic, Farsi, Pashto, and Urdu
- English, Chinese (Cantonese), Chinese (Mandarin), and Korean
- English, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Application/Intake Process</i>	Service/Program	Mandatory

The application process provides clients with information on the “next steps” to take to access a particular program/service.

In many cases, the directions are fairly obvious in the sense of “Call or walk in for service” but many agencies have very specific requirements (for example, walk-ins will not be accepted, individuals must call first ... or there must be a professional referral).

Ideally, in this and similar fields, the I&R software should have a dropdown box to make data entry easier, eliminate typos and ensure consistency. However, there always needs to be an ‘other’ option to allow for the inevitable variations.

**Preferred style examples**

- Appointment required
- Call to apply
- Walk in for service
- Physician referral required
- Call or walk in for service
- Referral required
- Online only
- Intake conducted Mon-Fri 9am-2pm; Phone Mon 9am-5pm for an appointment.

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Documents Required</i>	Service/Program	Mandatory

Documents that will be needed by the client when following up with the referrals provided (that is, material/information that needs to be taken to the agency in order to access the service).

If the software does not display an empty field and no documents are required, leave the field blank.

However, if the field still displays when it contains no information, then having a field saying “Documents Required” with nothing entered, might be confusing for users. In which case, information needs to be included for every service/program record and in these cases the default statement should be “No documents required”.

Ideally, in this and similar fields, the I&R software should have a dropdown box to make data entry easier, eliminate typos and ensure consistency. However, in addition to an ‘other’ option to allow for the inevitable variations, this area should allow for the selection of multiple options as one service might require Picture ID and Income verification. while another might need Proof of address and Two forms of picture ID.

**Preferred style examples**

- No documents required
- Call for details
- Picture ID
- Two forms of picture ID
- Driver’s license
- Proof of address
- Proof of age
- Social Security card
- Physician order required
- Income verification
- Birth certificate

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Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Fee/Payment Options</i>	Service/Program	Recommended

The fee/payment options detail the cost of receiving a service. It can also include information about how a particular service can be paid for (e.g. if it might be covered by certain benefit programs).

Most services within an I&R database are ‘free’, although ‘no fee’ is a better way to describe that fact as there is always a ‘cost’ to provide a service. Clients need to know if there is a fee and, if so, approximately how much it is and/or how it is calculated.

Typical phrases include “sliding scale” and “no charge” or “fixed fee.” Specific dollar amounts are generally omitted. It is helpful to provide clients with some idea of fees when they are applicable but it is difficult to effectively maintain that information.

As in previous examples, if the software does not display an empty field and the service is free, leave the field blank.

If the field still displays when it contains no information, then having a field saying “Fees” with nothing entered, might be confusing for users. In which case, information needs to be included for every service/program record and in these cases the default statement should be “No fees”.

**Preferred style examples**

- No fees
- Sliding Scale
- Medicaid
- Medicare or other third-party payment accepted
- Call for details
- Sliding scale. Call for details

Suggested donations  
 Nominal cost  
 Membership fee  
 Fees vary by program. Call for details  
 Medicare, private insurance and private payment accepted  
 Sliding scale if no insurance  
 Sliding scale if no insurance but no one refused service  
 Private insurance and/or private payment only  
 Private payment only

---

Data Element	Level	AIRS Standards Status
<i>Taxonomy Term(s) for Services/Targets</i>	Service/Program	Mandatory

This refers to the indexing service term (and sometimes accompanying target term) and associated code(s) drawn from the [AIRS/211 LA County Taxonomy](#) whose definition most closely matches the service being defined.

Every distinct service should be indexed with the appropriate Taxonomy term.

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### Summary of Record Administration Data Elements

<i>AIRS Data Elements: Record Administration</i>	
<i>Unique ID Number</i>	Mandatory

<i>Record Ownership Code</i>	Mandatory
<i>Date of Last Formal Verification</i>	Mandatory
<i>Contact for Formal Verification</i>	Mandatory
<i>Date of Last Interim Change</i>	Mandatory
<i>Contact for Last Change</i>	Mandatory
<i>Resource Specialist for Last Change</i>	Mandatory
<i>Record Status (Active/Inactive)</i>	Mandatory
<i>Record Inclusion (e.g. displayed online, in specific portals, directories, etc.)</i>	Mandatory

### UNIQUE ID NUMBER

The record ID number is a unique numerical code that is affixed to every single agency record within a resource database. Although the organization’s name might change, its unique number will remain the same.

Most I&R software systems automatically generate a new number for every newly created database record. There is no “official” limit to the number of digits that can be used (although five should be more than sufficient).

### RECORD OWNERSHIP CODE

This is a code that identifies the I&R program that maintains (otherwise known as ‘owns’, ‘curates’ or ‘stewards’) the database record. In I&R resource databases, the record ownership code is usually automatically generated by the I&R software to combine with the Unique ID Number to create one distinct code that identifies both the I&R program and the individual organization record (for example, ABC2247 or LA007924).

This code is particularly helpful within collaborative databases that might contain the merged database records of two or more I&R agencies, as otherwise two agencies are almost certain to maintain different records with the same record ID number (for example, 00829 and 00829). Agencies operating within a consolidated system need to ensure that no two participating agencies share the same record ownership code.

In the future, national collaborative resource databases may emerge, in which case there would be a benefit to establish a universal system for curated I&R data that consisted of a code that used two characters to match the state abbreviation for the record owner’s location (that is, the record itself could be concerning another state, but the “ownership” code is for the agency maintaining the record), followed by a four to eight-character string (possibly identifying their city).

### Preferred style examples

33ABC  
NYMINN  
NDFARGO  
NDFARGO2

### DATE OF LAST FORMAL VERIFICATION

This is the date on which an agency record was last formally verified as part of a scheduled annual update as described in the AIRS Standards. This occurs when the agency was contacted and all of its information was completely verified. In some instances, no actual changes might be made but the record is still 'updated' (i.e. there was a positive verification that no changes were needed).

All of these data elements are primarily administrative fields, although the date of last formal verification is a field that could be publicly displayed as it demonstrates accountability.

### CONTACT FOR FORMAL VERIFICATION

This is the individual at the agency/organization who is the prime contact for verifying the accuracy of information in the database record. The contact information should follow the same structure as for directors/managers (i.e. name, title, email, etc.)

### DATE OF LAST INTERIM CHANGE

The AIRS Standards refer to an interim change or partial update/modification as a piece of agency information that has been changed and verified by the agency in between the annual formal verification.

### CONTACT FOR LAST CHANGE

This is the individual at the agency/organization who provided and/or verified the information at the time of the last data record change (whether it was the formal verification or the last interim change). It will usually be the Contact for Formal Verification (see above) but this might not always be the case. The contact information should follow the same structure as for directors/managers (i.e. name, title, email, etc.)

### RESOURCE SPECIALIST FOR LAST CHANGE

This element names the resource specialist responsible for the last change to the agency record. In this and in some other administrative areas, if the information does not have a direct placeholder in the I&R software, there might be other ways to maintain these types of details.

### RECORD STATUS (Active/Inactive)

Record Status indicates whether or not an organizational record is or is not included as part of the overall the resource database – essentially it is a Yes/No designation on whether it is Active or Inactive. A record may be made Inactive for various reasons, for example, it is still under research, it is a seasonal resource that is only available for certain parts of the year, it cannot be formally verified, or the agency has asked not to be included because of its own lack of resources.

#### RECORD INCLUSION (e.g. displayed online, in specific portals, etc.)

Record Inclusion details whether or not an active organizational record is or is not included in specific views and/or outputs of the resource database. Examples: a new record may be accessible for resource specialists while research is underway but not viewable by I&R Specialists; a record may be included for I&R Specialists but not for the general public on the online version; a record may be included in various specialized views/sets of the resource database such as an online portal on employment issues or a directory on re-entry programs.

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## Appendix A: Preferred Written Usages

### Gender-Neutral Language

- ◆ Strive to eliminate casual use of “man”, (for example, man-made disaster, mankind: use disaster of human origin, humanity, people).
- ◆ Occupations: firefighters, not firemen; police officers, not policemen and police women, chair, chairperson or presiding officer, not chairman.
- ◆ Pronouns: 1) Recast sentences in the plural: help individuals meet their needs, not help the individual meet his or her needs. 2) Reword sentences to eliminate gender reference altogether: the average person is worried about income, not the average person is worried about his income. 3) Indefinite pronouns: In all but strictly formal uses, plural pronouns have become acceptable substitutes for the masculine singular. Example: “Anyone who wants to go to the game should bring their money”, rather than “Anyone who wants to go to the game should bring his or her money”.
- ◆ Although “girls” is appropriate for adolescent and younger females, “women” should be used when referring to adults.

### Respectful Language

- ◆ Avoid language about persons with disabilities that is demeaning (for example, afflicted, invalid, suffering from).
- ◆ Persons with disabilities; not handicapped persons, disabled persons or the disabled.
- ◆ Persons who are homeless; not homeless persons or the homeless.
- ◆ Persons who are blind, persons who are deaf; not deaf persons, blind persons, the deaf, the blind
- ◆ Persons who have epilepsy, not epileptics.
- ◆ Persons with dyslexia; not learning disabled.
- ◆ Uses a wheelchair, not wheelchair-bound.
- ◆ Accessible bathroom stall, accessible parking space; not handicapped bathroom stall, disabled bathroom stall, handicapped parking space, disabled parking space.
- ◆ Most disabilities are not a disease. Do not call a person with a disability a "patient" unless referring to a hospital setting. In a human services context, "client" is preferred.
- ◆ Some diseases, by legal definition, are considered disabilities. Victimization imagery ("AIDS victims") or defining the person by the disease ("she is a diabetic") is inappropriate. Use "person with diabetes" or "persons living with AIDS."

- ◆ "Blind" refers to total loss of eyesight; low vision or visual disability is more accurate for individuals who have some degree of sight.
- ◆ For persons with speech disabilities, avoid mute or speech impediment.
- ◆ Avoid deformed, deformity and birth defect. A person may be "born without arms" or "has a congenital disability," but is probably not defective.
- ◆ Down syndrome is a chromosomal condition that causes developmental disability. Use "person with Down syndrome."
- ◆ Mental disabilities include cognitive, psychiatric and learning disabilities and physical head trauma. Avoid "mentally retarded," "insane," "slow learner," "learning disabled" and "brain damaged."
- ◆ A seizure is an episode caused by a sudden disturbance in the brain. If seizures are recurrent, it is called a seizure disorder. Use "person with epilepsy" or "child with a seizure disorder." Avoid "epileptic," either as a noun or adjective.
- ◆ Avoid "dwarf" or "midget." Most groups prefer "Little People," although "persons of short stature" is an alternative.
- ◆ Quadriplegia is a substantial loss of function in all four extremities. Paraplegia is a substantial loss of function in the lower part of the body. Use "person with paraplegia". Avoid "paraplegic" or "quadriplegic" as either a noun or adjective.
- ◆ Native American, rather than Indian or American Indian.
- ◆ African American, rather than Black unless that is the preference of a particular agency.
- ◆ Hispanic, rather than Latino or Latina unless that is the preference of a particular agency.
- ◆ Sexual orientation, rather than sexual preference.
- ◆ Transgender, rather than transsexual or transgendered.

## **Numerals**

- ◆ Use figures rather than words when the number refers to a date, the time of day, an age, a percentage or money.
- ◆ Use figures when there is a range of numbers (for example, children age 8 to 15).
- ◆ In all other cases, spell out numbers one through nine and use figures for 10 and above.
- ◆ Never begin a sentence with a figure unless it is a year.
- ◆ Hyphenate the adjectival form (for example, the 10-year old boy; it was a five-day course).

- ◆ In a series, follow the above rules: They had 10 dogs, six cats and 97 hamsters; They had four four-room houses, 10 three-room houses and 12 10-room houses.
- ◆ When using the ordinal form of the number, spell out first through ninth and use figures starting with 10<sup>th</sup> (for example, "first", "third", "11th", "20th").

### **Punctuation**

- ◆ In a series, use commas to separate words in the series including for the final "and" ("the dinner includes soup, a main course, and dessert"). The only exception is if the final pair of words are a natural conjunction in which case the comma would be confusing.
- ◆ Be aware of compound sentence punctuation and wording. Use "and" or the appropriate equivalent word and a comma or semi-colon between the two parts of a compound sentence when the first part of the sentence contains several elements that are connected with "and" or an equivalent. Examples: "Program provides food and shelter, and assists individuals who need health referrals." OR "Program provides food, shelter and clothing; and assists individuals who need health, family planning and employment referrals." NOT "Program provides food, shelter and assists individuals who need health referrals."
- ◆ Hyphenation Rule: generally speaking, hyphenate two words when two words are used as one and the compound word is an adjective.

## Appendix B: Preferred Spellings

Aboriginal [always capitalize]  
adult day program [not adult day care]  
African American  
after school [someone may stay after school but after-school program]  
aftercare  
also known as [avoid 'aka' in descriptive text]  
Alzheimer's Disease  
American Indian [use Native American]  
American Sign Language [initial caps]  
analyze  
and/or [but try to avoid using]  
anti-racism  
Asian American  
assistive devices [assistive technology equipment in the Taxonomy; preference is assistive technology]  
audiovisual

babysitter  
backup  
barrier free [the home is barrier free but barrier-free home]  
biannual  
Bible [use for the book only, capitalized]  
biblical [lower case]  
bicultural  
bilingual  
birth weight  
birthrate  
bisexual  
Braille  
breastfeed  
build up [verb] but build-up [noun and adjective]  
bylaws  
byproduct

cannot [always one word]  
cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) [use phrase with acronym, as above]  
caregiver  
case-by-case [as adjective]  
child care  
childbirth  
classroom  
clean up [verb]  
clean-up [noun]  
clearinghouse

co-directors  
coeducational  
co-op but cooperative  
co-owner  
co-pay  
co-payment  
co-signer  
co-sponsor  
community-based  
consumer/survivor  
Convention refugees  
cooperation  
coordinate  
countywide  
co-workers  
crosscultural

database  
day care [refers to older adults or similar situations. This is not a synonym for child care]  
daytime  
deaf-blind  
decision-making  
dependent  
detoxification  
dietitian [not dietician]  
door-to-door service but go door to door  
downtown  
drop in to apply [verb]  
drop-in center [noun]  
dropdown  
drop out [verb]  
dropout [noun]

Elders [as in Native Elders]  
elderly [use older adults]  
email  
ensure [preferred to insure when meaning a guarantee; insure for insurance]  
ex-inmates [rule: use hyphen when ex means former; use no hyphen when ex means out of]  
ex-offenders  
ex-residents  
eyeglasses  
eye to eye [see eye to eye]  
eye-to-eye [eye-to-eye confrontation]  
eyewitness

face to face [face-to-face should be like door-to-door on both, use hyphens when used as a modifier: face-to-face meeting but meeting face to face]

family oriented

farther [refers to physical distance whereas further is an extension in time or degree]

fee-for-service

firsthand

focused

for-profit

follow-up [noun]

follow up [verb]

francophone [do not capitalize]

free of charge

full-time job [works full time but full-time job]

fundraiser

fundraising

gender [rather than sex]

geographic [not geographical]

group home

hair care

half-hour

half time [works half time but half-time job, same with part time]

halfway

halfway house

hands-on [hands-on work but prefers to work hands on, same with hands-off, hands off]

health care

helpline

high school

Hispanic [generally preferred over Latino]

historic [important, stands out in history]

historical [happened in the past]

HIV/AIDS

HIV test

home-based

home care

home help

home page

home sharing

homebound [prefer: persons with limited ability to leave home. Avoid shut-ins]

homelike

homemaker service

homemaking

honorarium

honorary

honor

hosteling

hotel style [hotel-style if a modifier]

hotline

household

in-depth [in-depth conversation but talking in depth]

in-home

in-house

in-service

inpatient

inquiry [never enquiry]

interagency

intercity

Internet [capitalize]

interstate

intervenors

intranet

job-ready

job seekers

kick off [verb]

kickoff [noun]

know-how [noun]

laid off

laid-off workers

Latino/Latina [generally use Hispanic unless agency has preference]

layoff

life skills

lifelong

live-in staff

login

logoff

logon

long distance [go a long distance]

long-distance [long-distance calls]

long range

long-term housing

low cost [meals at a low cost but low-cost housing]

low-income

lunchtime

meals on wheels

Midwest

more than [rather than over]

multidisciplinary

multicultural

multilanguage

multilingual

multiservice

nationwide  
Native American  
non... [use hyphen if a vowel follows,  
otherwise treat as one word]  
noncustodial  
nondenominational  
nongovernmental  
nonmedical  
non-offending  
nonperishable  
nonprofit  
nonresidential  
nonsectarian  
North American Native  
northeast  
northwest [unless “the Northwest”]  
  
odd jobs  
off peak  
off-site facilities [but: facilities off site]  
on hand  
on premises  
on-site facilities [but: facilities on site]  
on-the-job-training  
one bedroom [house has one bedroom but  
one-bedroom house]  
one-on-one  
one-time  
one-to-one  
ongoing  
online  
orthopedic  
orthotic  
out of town [going out of town but out-  
of-town newspaper]  
outpatient  
overall  
overeaters  
override  
  
pain relieving drugs  
paperwork  
parent-teacher associations  
part time [works part time]  
part-time job  
pediatric  
percent  
physiotherapy [never physio]  
postcoronary  
postgraduate  
postnatal  
postoperation  
postpartum

postsecondary  
postwar  
preadmission  
precondition  
pre-employment  
premarital  
prenatal  
pre-operative  
preplanning  
prerelease  
preretirement  
preschool  
pretrial  
preventive  
private home  
pro-business  
pro-labor  
pro-life  
programing  
provide services for [rather than provide services to]  
psychogeriatric  
psychosocial  
  
reapply  
recognize  
recur  
recurring  
redevelopment  
re-entering  
re-establishment  
reintegration  
relocate  
resume [not resumé or résumé]  
retraining  
right-to-life  
right-to-work  
  
school-age children  
school-based  
self care  
self contained  
self-defense  
self-government  
self help group [use mutual support group]  
self improvement  
self managed  
self referral  
seniors [use older adults]  
sexual assault [not rape]  
set up [verb]  
setup [noun]  
sexually transmitted diseases  
short-range  
short-term

shut-ins [try to avoid... alternative:  
persons with limited ability to leave  
home]  
shut off [verb]  
shut-off notice  
sick room  
sign interpreters  
sign up [verb]  
sign-up sheet  
sizable [not sizeable]  
skill training  
65 years and older [not *and up* or *and  
over* or *and above*]; also age 18 and  
younger [not *and under* or *and below*]  
social service agencies  
software  
sole support  
southeast  
southwest [unless “the Southwest”]  
spinal cord injury  
spring [never capitalize]  
staff are [not staff is]  
stand out [verb]  
standout [noun]  
start-up  
stepfather  
stepmother  
stepparent  
subcommittee  
summer

12-step  
tax-exempt  
toll-free line [but call toll free]  
toward [not towards]  
tradesperson  
transgender  
24-hour emergency service

underemployed  
unemployed  
United States

Vice President  
voicemail  
volunteer-based

walk in to register  
walk-in medical clinic  
website  
well-being  
weekdays  
weekend  
wheelchair accessible

wheel-in shower  
widespread  
workplace  
workplan  
work-related organizations  
workshop  
worksite  
worldwide

x-ray

year-round activities [but: operates year round]

ZIP code [capitalize ZIP, lowercase code; ZIP stands  
for Zone Improvement Program]

## Appendix C: Preferred Language Spellings and Choices

The following list of languages is intended as a helpful guide and although very extensive, does not pretend to be a definitive resource. However, it is intended to encourage consistency across I&R resource databases (for example, opting for Filipino as opposed to Pilipino or Tagalog). Particularly with regard to some of the languages that are less spoken in North America, there are often alternative spellings and dialect issues that cannot be resolved here. We encourage you to verify other languages through [www.wikipedia.org](http://www.wikipedia.org). Please alert us to languages that should be added to this list.

**Adangme** (spoken in *west Africa*)

**Adaptive American Sign Language** (*used by persons who are deaf-blind*)

**Afar** (*official literary language in Ethiopia, close to but distinct from Saho*)

Afghan see **Pashto**

**Afrikaans**

**Akan** (*spoken in west Africa*)

**Albanian**

**American Sign Language** see also **Signed English**

**Amharic** (*spoken in Ethiopia*)

**Arabic**

**Armenian**

**Assamese** (*spoken in India*)

**Assyrian** (*related to Aramaic, spoken by Christians in Iran, Iraq, Syria, Turkey*)

**Awngi** (*spoken in Ethiopia*)

**Azerbaijani** (*spoken in northern Iran and Azerbaijan; the people are known as Azeris*)

Azeri see **Azerbaijani**

Bahasa see **Indonesian**

Bajuni see **Swahili**

**Baluchi** (*variant spelling: Balochi*)

**Bambara** (*spoken in west Africa*)

**Bana** (*spoken in Cameroon*)

Bangla see **Bengali**

**Bari** (*spoken in Sudan*)

**Belarusian**

**Bemba** (*spoken in Zambia*)

**Bengali** (*spoken in Bangladesh and India*)

Bini see **Edo**

**Bliss Symbols**

**Bosnian**

**Braille**

Brava see **Swahili (Brava)**

**Bulgarian**

**Burmese**

**Cajun French**

Cambodian see **Khmer**

Cantonese see **Chinese (Cantonese)**



Caribbean dialects see **French Creole, Spanish Creole, West Indian dialects**

**Cebuano** (*spoken in the Philippines*)

**Cheyenne** (*North American Aboriginal*)

Chaldean see **Assyrian**

**Cham** (*spoken in Vietnam and Cambodia*)

**Chamorro** (*spoken in Guam and Northern Mariana Islands*)

**Chinese** (put dialects in brackets; for example Chinese (Mandarin). Written Chinese is just “Chinese” – dialects are orally distinct)

**Cantonese**

**Hakka** (*also known as Kan-Hakka*)

**Mandarin** (*official spoken language of People’s Republic of China*)

**Mien** (*spoken in China and Vietnam*)

**Shanghainese**

**Taishan** (*variant spellings: Toisan, Toishan, Toishanese*)

**Taiwanese**

**Wu**

**Choctaw** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Chipeywan** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Cree** (*North American Aboriginal*)

Creole see **French Creole, Krio, Spanish Creole, West Indian dialects**

Creole Arabic see **Juba Arabic**

**Croatian** (*same language as Serbian, but written in Roman alphabet*)

**Czech**

Czechoslovakian see **Czech, Slovak**

**Danish**

**Dari** (*a distinct dialect of Farsi spoken in Afghanistan*)

**Dinka** (*spoken in Sudan*)

**Dogrib** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Dutch**

**Edo** (*spoken in Nigeria*)

**Efik** (*spoken in Nigeria*)

Egyptian Arabic see **Arabic**

**English**

Eritrean see **Tigre** or **Tigrinya**

**Esperanto**

**Estonian**

Ethiopian languages see **Afar, Amharic, Harari, Nuer**

**Ewe** (*spoken in west Africa*)

**Facilitated Communication**

**Fanti** (*spoken in Ghana; dialect of Akan*)

**Farsi** (*spoken in Iran*)

**Fijian**

**Filipino** (*spoken in the Philippines; incorporates dialects including Tagalog*)

**Finger Spelling** (*used by persons who are deaf-blind*)

**Finnish**

Flemish see **Dutch**

**French**

**French Creole**

**French Sign Language**

Fujian see **Chinese (Fujian)**

Fukien see **Chinese (Fujian)**

**Ga** (*spoken in west Africa*)

**Gaelic** (*use for Scots Gaelic; for Irish Gaelic use **Irish***)

Galla see **Oromo**

**Ganda** (*spoken in Tanzania and Uganda*)

**Georgian** (*spoken in Georgia*)

**German**

**Gikuyu** (*spoken in east Africa*)

**Greek**

**Gujarati** (*spoken in India; variant spelling is **Gujurati***)

**Gwich'in** (*North American Aboriginal*)

Hakka see **Chinese (Hakka)**

**Hand over Hand Sign Language** (*used by persons who are deaf-blind*)

**Harari** (*spoken in Ethiopia*)

**Hausa** (*spoken in west Africa*)

**Hawaiian**

**Hebrew**

**Herero** (*spoken in southern Africa*)

**Hindi** (*spoken in India*)

**Hindko** (*spoken in Pakistan*)

Hokkien see **Chinese (Fujian)**

Hottentot see **Nama**

**Hmong**

**Hungarian**

**Ibo** (*spoken in west Africa*)

**Icelandic**

Igbo see **Ibo**

**Ilocano** (*spoken in the Philippines*)

**Indonesian** (*national language of Indonesia*)

**Innu** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Inuinnaqtun** (Inuit language)

Inuit see **Inuktitut**

**Inuktitut** (Inuit language)

Inupiak see **Inuktitut**

**Inuvialuktun** (Inuit language)

Iranian see **Farsi, Kurdish, Pashto**

Iraqi Arabic see **Arabic**

**Irish** (*use for Gaelic Irish*)

**Isoko** (*spoken in Nigeria*)

**Italian**

**Japanese**

Jewish – *do not use*, see **Hebrew, Yiddish**

**Juba Arabic** (*spoken in Sudan*)

**Kachchi** (*South Asian language*)

Kanarese see **Kannada**

**Kannada** (*spoken in India*)

**Kapampangan** (*spoken in the Philippines*)

**Kashmiri** (*spoken in India and Pakistan*)

Kerala see **Malayalam**

**Khmer** (*spoken in Vietnam, Cambodia*)

**Khmu** (*spoken in Laos*)

Kikuyu see **Gikuyu**

**Kinyarwanda** (*spoken in Zaire and Rwanda*)

Kirundi see **Rundi**

Kiswahili see **Swahili**

**Konkani** (*spoken in India*)

**Korean**

Kmhmu see **Khmu**

**Krio** (*spoken in Sierra Leone*)

**Kurdish** (*spoken in parts of Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Afghanistan, Russia, Syria*)

Kutchi see **Kachchi**

**Ladino** (*spoken in Israel*)

Lao see **Laotian**

**Laotian**

**Latvian**

Lebanese Arabic see **Arabic**

**Lenje** (*spoken in Zambia*)

**Lingala** (*spoken in central Africa*)

**Lithuanian**

**Luba-Kasai** (*spoken in central Africa*)

**Luba-Shaba** (*spoken in central Africa*)

Luganda see **Ganda**

**Luo** (*spoken in Kenya*)

Maay see **Somali (May May)**

**Macedonian**

**Malay** (*spoken in Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore*)

**Malayalam** (*spoken in India*)

**Maltese**

Mandarin see **Chinese (Mandarin)**

**Mandingo** (*spoken in Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Senegal*)

Mandinka see **Mandingo**

Maninka see **Mandingo**

Manya see **Mandingo**

**Marathi** (*spoken in India*)

Matabele see **Ndebele**

May-May (*a dialect of Somali*) see **Somali (May May)**

**Mende** (*spoken in Liberia and Sierra Leone*)

Micmac see **Mi'kmaq**

**Mi'kmaq** (*North American Aboriginal*)

Min see **Chinese (Fujian)**

**Mohawk** (*North American Aboriginal*)

Mong see **Hmong**

**Mongolian**

**Navajo** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Ndebele** (*spoken in southern Africa; dialect of Zulu*)

Neo-Syriac see **Assyrian**

Nepalese see **Nepali**

**Nepali** (*spoken in Bhutan, India, Nepal*)

Nigerian languages see **Hausa, Ibo, Yoruba**

**North Slavey** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Norwegian**

**Nuer** (*spoken in Sudan and Ethiopia*)

**Odawa** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Oji-Cree** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Ojibway** (*North American Aboriginal – also known as Ojibwe, Ojibwa*)

**Oneida** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Oriya** (*spoken in India*)

Oromiffa see **Oromo**

**Oromo** (*spoken in Ethiopia and Kenya; formerly called Galla*)

Oromonia see **Oromo**

Orya see **Oriya**

Ouolof see **Wolof**

Pampangan see **Kapampangan**

**Pangasinan** (*spoken in the Philippines*)

Panjabi see **Punjabi**

**Pashto** (*official language of Afghanistan*)

Pashtu see **Pashto**

Pasthun see **Pashto**

Patois see **West Indian dialects**

Persian see **Farsi**

**Picture Boards**

Pilipino see **Filipino**

**Polish**

**Portuguese**

**Portuguese Creole**

**Powhatan** (*North American Aboriginal*)

**Punjabi** (*spoken in Pakistan and India*)

Pushto see **Pashto**

**Quechua** (*spoken in South America*)

**Quiché** (*spoken in Guatemala, main Mayan language*)

**Romani** (*language of the Roma*)  
**Romanian** (*variant spelling: Rumanian*)  
**Romansch** (*one of Switzerland's four official languages*)  
 Romany see **Romani**  
 Ruanda see **Kinyarwanda**  
**Rundi** (*national language of Burundi*)  
**Russian**

**Saho** (*spoken in Eritrea, close to but distinct from Afar*)  
**Samoan**  
 Scots Gaelic see **Gaelic**  
**Serbian** (*same as Croatian, but written in Cyrillic alphabet*)  
 Serbo-Croatian see **Croatian, Serbian**  
 Setswana see **Tswana**  
**Shona** (*spoken in Africa; in Bantu family*)  
 Sign Language see **American Sign Language, French Sign Language**  
**Signed English** (*used by deaf students in the Canadian education system*)  
**Sindhi** (*spoken in Pakistan and India*)  
**Sinhala** (*spoken in Singapore and Sri Lanka*)  
 Sinhalese see **Sinhala**  
**Slovak**  
 Slovene see **Slovenian**  
**Slovenian**  
**Somali**  
**Somali (May May)**  
**Sotho** (*spoken in southern Africa*)  
 South Pacific Pidgin see **Tok Pisin**  
**South Slavey** (*North American Aboriginal*)  
**Spanish**  
**Spanish Creole**  
 Sri Lankan see **Sinhala, Tamil**  
**Swahili** (*spoken in east Africa*)  
**Swahili (Brava)**  
**Swedish**

**Tactile Signage** (*used by persons who are deaf-blind*)  
 Tagalog see **Filipino**  
 Tai Shan see **Chinese (Taishan)**  
 Taiwanese see **Chinese (Taiwanese)**  
**Tamil** (*spoken in India and Sri Lanka*)  
**Telugu** (*spoken in India*)  
**Temne** (*spoken in Sierra Leone, Africa*)  
**Thai**  
**Tibetan**  
 Tien-chow see **Chinese (Tieuchow)**  
 Tieuchow see **Chinese (Tieuchow)**  
**Tigre** (*spoken in Eritrea, distinct from Tigrinya*)  
 Tigrigna see **Tigrinya**

**Tigrinya** (*official language of Eritrea, distinct from Tigre – also known as Tigrigna, Tigrinia*)

Tlicho see Gwich'in

Toisan see **Chinese (Taishan)**

**Tok Pisin** (*also known as South Pacific Pidgin; official language of Papua New Guinea*)

**Tongan**

**Touch-Hand Language** (*used by persons who are deaf-blind*)

**Tswana** (*spoken in southern Africa*)

**Tulu** (*spoken in India*)

**Turkish**

**Twi** (*spoken in Africa; dialect of Akan*)

**Two-Hand Manual**

**Ukrainian**

**Urdu** (*official language of Pakistan; also spoken in India*)

**Urhobo** (*spoken in west Africa*)

**Vietnamese**

**Welsh**

**West Indian dialects** see also **French Creole, Spanish Creole** (*use for English dialects*)

**Wolof** (*spoken in Senegal*)

Wu see **Chinese (Wu)**

**Xhosa** (*spoken in southern Africa*)

**Yiddish**

**Yoruba** (*spoken in west Africa*)

Yugoslavian see **Bosnian, Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian, Slovenian**

**Zulu** (*spoken in southern Africa*)

## Appendix D: Official Post Office Abbreviations

### States and Territories

AK Alaska  
AL Alabama  
AR Arkansas  
AS American Samoa  
AZ Arizona  
CA California  
CO Colorado  
CT Connecticut  
DC District of Columbia  
DE Delaware  
FL Florida  
FM Federated States of Micronesia  
GA Georgia  
GU Guam  
HI Hawaii  
IA Iowa  
ID Idaho  
IL Illinois  
IN Indiana  
KS Kansas  
KY Kentucky  
LA Louisiana  
MA Massachusetts  
MD Maryland  
ME Maine  
MH Marshall Islands  
MI Michigan  
MN Minnesota  
MO Missouri  
MP Northern Mariana Islands  
MS Mississippi  
MT Montana  
NC North Carolina  
ND North Dakota  
NE Nebraska  
NH New Hampshire  
NJ New Jersey

NM New Mexico  
NV Nevada  
NY New York  
OH Ohio  
OK Oklahoma  
OR Oregon  
PA Pennsylvania  
PR Puerto Rico  
PW Palau  
RI Rhode Island  
SC South Carolina  
SD South Dakota  
TN Tennessee  
TX Texas  
UT Utah  
VA Virginia  
VI United States Virgin Islands  
VT Vermont  
WA Washington  
WI Wisconsin  
WV West Virginia  
WY Wyoming

### Canadian Provinces and Territories

AB Alberta  
BC British Columbia  
MB Manitoba  
NB New Brunswick  
NL Newfoundland and Labrador  
NS Nova Scotia  
NT Northwest Territories  
NU Nunavut  
ON Ontario  
PE Prince Edward Island  
QC Quebec  
SK Saskatchewan  
YT Yukon

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