

REDE Start-Up Package

Appendix 7A

In support of EBT implementation, the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) determined that an automated process was required to notify the EBT Processors, contracted by each state (and possibly by each county), of any changes to the data for the Food Stamp Program (FSP) retailers to which they provide service.

FNS has established requirements that the automated process will:

- A. **Provide Detailed State Retailer Data for State EBT Processors.** FNS will provide a file of data for each retailer within a state to EBT processors. An EBT processor may request a file for multiple states. Changes to this retailer file, which contains additions and deletions of retailers, as well as changes to the basic information, will be provided on a daily basis, Monday through Friday. A full file of the retailer data for each state will be provided on a monthly basis. This full file will allow the EBT processor to verify that no retailer changes have been missed.
- B. **Process the Confirmation of Changes from State EBT Processors.** The EBT processor will provide a confirmation file on a weekly basis as an audit trail showing the retailer data additions, deletions, and changes that were received and implemented by the processor. The file will also serve as a means for the EBT processor to provide retailer data to FNS that is in addition to the data stored in the Store Tracking, Authorization and Redemption Subsystem (STARS) database. This data will include such information as the EBT processor's identification code for the retailer and the number of point-of-sale (POS) devices installed. A future enhancement will allow the EBT processors to report feedback on any appropriate retailer information that they may discover from a source other than FNS.
- C. **Monitor the Compliance of EBT Processors.** A method of monitoring the EBT processors' compliance with the actions of implementing or removing a participating retailer needs to be developed. The method will involve verifying that the confirmation dates submitted by the EBT processors for these actions are within the required time period from the notification date. The user groups that have access to this monitoring function will consist of the personnel from the field offices, regional offices, FNS headquarters and state agencies.
- D. **Provide National Retailer Data for Interoperability Between States.** FNS will initially provide, to each EBT processor, a file of limited data for each authorized retailer in the FSP. This file will be used to allow for the inter-operability between states and EBT processors for the EBT redemption process. Changes to

REDE Start-up Package

this file (additions and deletions of retailers) will be provided on a daily basis, Monday through Friday. A complete file of the limited retailer data for the entire FSP will be provided on a monthly basis. The complete file will allow the EBT processor to verify that no retailer changes have been missed.

The REDE Subsystem, a software application in the Information Technology System 2000 (ITS2000) Program, was developed by ALTA Systems, Inc. under contract task to FNS. REDE facilitates the exchange of retailer data between FNS and the EBT processors. REDE replaces the manual process which required a field office to fax the changes for a store to the EBT processor. It should also help to reduce the EBT processors' submission of incorrect authorization numbers with redemption data which must then be manually researched by FNS staff at the Benefit Redemption Systems Branch (BRSB), and at FNS regional offices and field offices.

The REDE Subsystem facilitates the exchange of retailer data between FNS and the EBT processors. The most critical exchange is FNS' notification of EBT processors concerning newly authorized EBT retailers and EBT retailers who have been withdrawn or disqualified as participants in the FSP. The EBT processor is responsible for setting up a newly authorized EBT retailer to participate in the EBT redemption process within 15 to 30 days of notification from FNS and generally completes the setup within 2 weeks of this notification. The EBT processor is also responsible for removing a withdrawn or disqualified retailer from the EBT redemption process within 2 days of notification from FNS. The EBT processor must be notified initially of newly authorized retailers and must be updated continually concerning any changes to the data for the retailers, such as location, mailing address, telephone number, hours of operation, and/or business type. The REDE Subsystem's first phase, which this package addresses, provides the mechanism for notifying the EBT processors of any changes to retailers authorized for EBT processing. The second phase of implementation will enable FNS to monitor the redemption activity of retailers and assess whether the state and/or EBT processor may have failed to act within the time frame established by regulations and could be considered liable for the unauthorized redemption amounts. As a final note, the REDE Subsystem is not intended to replace the EBT I through IV reports that are provided prior to the implementation of the EBT system in a state, but is intended to facilitate the post-implementation exchange of retailer data for an operational EBT state.

The REDE Subsystem supports interoperability, which allows a Food Stamp Benefit recipient from one state's (or county's) program to make EBT purchases in another state (or county). Interoperability is supported through the notification of all EBT processors concerning changes in any FSP retailer's authorization status. The REDE Subsystem provides this data not only to the state and/or county EBT processors, but also to organizations that may provide Gateway services to multiple EBT processors and/or to any other FNS-approved organizations. The data provided on each store authorized to accept FSP EBT transactions is limited to only that data which allows the basic identification of the store as an authorized retailer.

Operations

REDE processing includes standard (regularly scheduled) nightly and monthly operations and ad hoc operations. Both types of REDE operations are performed at the Benefit Redemption Systems Branch (BRSB) in Minneapolis, MN using the IBM 9221 central processing facility. The standard nightly operations are performed nightly, Monday through Friday, and create the state and national retailer data update files. The standard monthly operations are performed monthly (on the first Saturday of the calendar month) and create the full state and national retailer data files. The state retailer data update files are used to update the Retailer EBT Data Exchange (REDE) database. Ad hoc operations are performed as requested when a State Agency and/or EBT processor requests a start-up copy of a state or national retailer update file.

Standard Operations

The REDE Subsystem will create state retailer data update files and a national retailer data update file on a nightly basis, Monday through Friday. The exceptions to this are federal holidays that fall on a weekday. A full state retailer data file and national data file, which contain authorized stores, will be created on a monthly basis during the first full weekend of a calendar month. These files will be readied for transmission to authorized recipients of each state's file and the national file who will be given the choice of accessing these files using either a mainframe-to-mainframe (via ConnectDirect) solution or a personal computer (PC)-to- NT server(Dial-up to BRSB NT Server) solution.

Creation of State Retailer Data Update Files

Each night, the REDE Subsystem will utilize the current and prior night's Retailer Extract File to create the state retailer data update files for those states that the State Agencies and/or EBT processors have included in a file of requested states. The state retailer data update files contain the retailer data update transactions for each state's retailers. These transactions identify when a retailer has been added to, removed from, or re-activated into the Food Stamp Program and identify if certain key retailer data has changed. If a state incurs no changes to its retailers' data, a file will still be created for that state and will contain a header record and trailer record which identify that no detail records were included in the file. The creation of a file for each of the requested states will improve security and integrity as the authorized data files recipients from each state will always get a file, even when it does not contain any updates.

REDE Start-up Package

Creation of National Retailer Data Update Files

The national retailer data update files are also created by REDE on a nightly basis and will be readied for access in the same manner as the state retailer data update files. Each file will identify if a retailer has been removed from, or added to, the set of retailers authorized to perform EBT processing for the FSP. While additions and deletions are the primary types of transactions, there is also a modify transaction that identifies whether the first ten characters of the retailer name have changed, or whether the state within which the retailer resides, has been changed or whether the business type has been changed. Ideally, the state change should occur only if someone miskeys the information into the primary retailer database and then later corrects it. The national retailer update file may be sent to entities other than the state EBT processors; for example, it may also be provided to some independent processors that support a national EBT retailer database for the state EBT processors. As with the state file, if there are no changes to any retailers in the nation, a file containing a header record and a trailer record will be created which identify that no detail records were included in the file. This will ensure that all authorized recipients are aware that there were no changes to the nation's retailers for that period.

Creation of Full State and National Retailer Data Files

On a monthly basis, the REDE Subsystem will create a full file of all of the state retailer data files and the national retailer data file using the most current Retailer Extract File. These files will be readied for access in the same manner as the update files. The primary purpose of these files is to ensure that updates have not been missed and that all updates were received by the authorized recipients of each file.

Standard Operations

As a new state starts up under EBT and only upon request by a State Agency or EBT processor, the REDE Subsystem will create a Full State Retailer Data File for that state and/or a National Retailer Data File of authorized stores. These files will be readied for transmission to the requesting State Agency or EBT processor who will be given the choice of accessing these files using either a mainframe-to-mainframe (via ConnectDirect) solution or a personal computer (PC)-to- NT server (Dial-up to BRSB NT Server) solution.

Creation of Start-up State and National Retailer Data Files

When requested by a newly implemented EBT state or that state's EBT processor, the REDE Subsystem will create a set of start-up files consisting of a full state retailer data file and/or full national retailer data file. The files will be created using the most current Retailer Extract File and will be readied for access in the same manner as the standard monthly files. These start-up files are provided for a state and an EBT processor to use when the state's EBT implementation does not coincide with the creation and transmission of the standard monthly Full State Retailer Data Files and National Retailer Data File.

REDE and FNS Conversion to STARS II

The Retailer Electronic Data Exchange (REDE) program functions as an interface between State and EBT processor entities needing Food Stamp Program authorized retailer and meal services information, and the Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) computerized retailer Store Tracking And Redemption System (STARS). The format of REDE files has not changed since its inception and is not being changed at this time (July 2004). However, the current FNS mainframe STARS System will be replaced by a new web based system. While the format of REDE is not being changed, the conversion process and the information in the data fields are changing in some instances. The purpose of this message is to provide information regarding the impact of the conversion on the REDE interface.

The conversion process is to be done over the course of 11 days. The current STARS system will be shut down October 7, 2004 with the standard REDE update file being available the next day. Until the new system is up and running, transaction-less REDE files (Header and Trailer only) will be posted so that processor systems are not interrupted while looking for files that are not there. The new system, STARS II, will start-up October 18, 2004. There will be no additions, deletions or modifications to the store records during the intervening time.

The first REDE file that will be produced and made available on October 19th will be the Full Monthly file of all authorized stores and meal services in STARS. It will be followed immediately with the first daily Update file and made available at the same time. It is expected that there will be a long list of stores showing up as modified in the REDE files due to the changeover process. The largest number of "modifications" is expected in the owner field. There is also the possibility of some minor name changes resulting from the conversion process. Both of these are explained in greater detail below.

Changes to Store Names: The current Store Name fields are 33 characters long with the frequent practice of including any store unit number in the name field. STARS II will have a 60 character field as well as a separate field for Store Numbers. STARS store data will be converted from one to two fields. REDE, in reading the two STARS II fields, will convert the data back to one data field. There will be some incidental changes in spaces or numbers that will be listed as a modification.

Changes to Owners: Currently, REDE provides a current owner from the STARS database but does not have any way of listing the most relevant owner for EBT purposes. With STARS II, REDE will seek to select the most relevant owner or corporation designee. In STARS II, FNS field office staff will be able to designate an individual as the "REDE Contact." If no such designation is made, the program will look for the first current owner entered into the system. This is generally the owner most actively engaged in the daily operation of the business. Alternatively, on corporations, the program will look for the first officer or, at a minimum, provide the corporation name. Meal services and Group Homes will have the first sponsoring person or organization listed in the system.

REDE Start-up Package

These changes will result in significant percentage of stores appearing in the first STARS II REDE file as having ownership modifications. The Agency will use test results in September to email an advance estimate to REDE users the number of “modifications” to expect.

Other Changes: The REDE file format (6 pages) and code explanation tables (3 pages) are attached for your information. These include new tables for the added status and reason codes. The attached document includes tables that identify types of firms by a two character alpha code. There has been consolidation and change to the meal service designation as well as “SS” for superstores (large combination department/supermarket stores) and “WR” for a co-located wholesaler/retailer.

There are added authorization and withdrawal status codes as well as reason codes. None of the current status and reason codes have been changed. The status code of 07 (permanent disqualification) and status code 10 (Permanent Withdrawal) are new. It should be noted that both of these codes will be “D” transaction records as being removed from an authorized status.

The tables shown on the following pages list the file layouts and data elements for retailer information currently available via download to the State Agencies and/or EBT processors.

State Retailer File Header Record

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
Transaction Type Code	Char	1	1	Blank
State Code	Char	2	2 - 3	Alphabetic state code where stores are located
Date Range				Date range for effective dates of retailer update transactions
Beginning Date	Char	8	4 - 11	For the daily update file, the beginning date of the date range in CCYMMDD format. For the monthly file, the date the file is produced.
Ending Date	Char	8	12 - 19	For the daily file, the ending date of the date range in CCYMMDD format. For the monthly file, the date the file is produced.
Transaction Count	Num	7	20 - 26	Count of detail records in the file
Filler	Char	54	27 - 80	Blanks

State Retailer File Trailer Record

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
Transaction Type Code	Char	1	1	'T' - Trailer record
State Code	Char	2	2 - 3	Alphabetic state code where stores are located
Date Range				Date range for effective dates of retailer update transactions
Beginning Date	Char	8	4 - 11	For the daily update file, the beginning date of the date range in CCYYMMDD format. For the monthly file, the date the file is produced.
Ending Date	Char	8	12 - 19	For the daily file, the ending date of the date range in CCYYMMDD format. For the monthly file, the date the file is produced.
Transaction Count	Num	7	20 - 26	Count of detail records in the file
Add Transaction Record Count	Num	7	27 - 33	Count of "add" transaction records in the file
Delete Transaction Record Count	Num	7	34 - 40	Count of "delete" transaction records in the file
Modify Transaction Record Count	Num	7	41 - 47	Count of "modify" transaction records in the file
Re-activate Transaction Record Count	Num	7	48 - 54	Count of "re-activate" transaction records in the file
Hash Count	Num	8	55 - 62	Numeric hash count for backwards compatibility
Filler	Char	18	63 - 80	Blanks

State Retailer Detail Records

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
Transaction Type Code	Char	1	1	'A' if a new store was added, "R" if a previously authorized store was reinstated (Auth Status 01, Reason Code 02) or 'M' if an existing store was modified or 'D' if an existing store was removed from the program. .
State Abbreviation	Char	2	2-3	Alphabetic State Code
Store Number	Num	7	4 - 10	STARS Authorization Number
Store Name	Char	33	11 - 43	Full name of store
Telephone Number	Num	10	44 - 53	Full telephone number with area code
Open 24 Hours Indicator	Char	1	54	'Y' if open 24 hours; otherwise 'N'
Registers Count	Num	5	55 - 59	Total number of check-out registers in store
County Code	Char	3	60 - 62	Code indicating county within state where store resides
Business Type Code	Char	2	63 - 64	Code indicating type of store - see Figure 1
Address Number	Char	8	65 - 72	Address number on street where store is located
Street Name	Char	25	73 - 97	Full name of street where store is located
City Name	Char	15	98 - 112	Full name of city where store is located
State Code	Char	2	113 - 114	Alphabetic state code where store is located
Zip Code	Num	5	115 - 119	5 digit zip code where store is located
Zip 4 Code	Num	4	120 - 123	4 digit zip code suffix where

REDE Start-up Package

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
				store is located
Authorization Status Code	Char	2	124 - 125	Code indicating current authorization status of store - see Figure 2 (Note Changes)
Authorization Status Date	Num	8	126 - 133	Effective date of current authorization status in CCYYMMDD format
Authorization Withdrawal Reason Code	Char	2	134 - 135	Reason for authorization or withdrawal- see Figure 3 (Note added Reasons)
Re-certification Status Date	Num	8	136 - 143	Date in CCYYMMDD format the store was re-certified (re-authorized) as authorized under FNS regulations based on updated data supplied by the retailer.
Ownership Type Code	Char	1	144	'1' if sole proprietorship or '2' if partnership or '3' if privately-held corporation or '4' if publicly owned corporation or '5' if cooperative or '6' if government or '7' if limited liability company or '8' if limited liability partnership (Note C and P no longer in use—See Table for new business types)
Owner's Name Format	Char	1	145	'1' if a person's name or '2' if an organization's name (corporation, company, government, etc.)
Owner's Name	Char	33	146 - 178	Organization or primary person that owns the retailer (if person's name, the first 13 characters contain the first name and middle name or initial, and the last 20 characters contain the last name)
Mailing Address Number	Char	8	179 - 186	Address number on street on store mailing address

REDE Start-up Package

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
Mailing Street Name	Char	25	187 - 211	Full name of street on store mailing address
Mailing City Name	Char	15	212 - 226	Full name of city on store mailing address
Mailing State Code	Char	2	227 - 228	Alphabetic state code on store mailing address
Mailing Zip Code	Num	5	229 - 233	5 digit zip code on store mailing address
Mailing Zip 4 Code	Num	4	234 - 237	4 digit zip code extension on store mailing address
Filler	Char	43	238 - 280	Blanks

NATIONAL RETAILER FILE

National Retailer File Header Record

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
Transaction Type Code	Char	1	1	Blank
Creation Date	Char	8	2 - 9	Date this file was created in CCYYMMDD format.
File Type	Char	1	10 - 10	File type indicator where "D" = daily change file, "F" = full replacement file.
Transaction Count	Num	7	11 - 17	Count of detail records in the file
Filler	Char	18	18 - 35	Blanks

National Retailer File Trailer Record

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
Transaction Type Code	Char	1	1	"T" - Trailer record
Creation Date	Char	8	2 - 9	Date this file was created in CCYYMMDD format.
File Type	Char	1	10 - 10	File type indicator where "D" = daily change file, "F" = full replacement file.
Add Transaction Count	Num	7	11 - 17	Count of "add" detail records in the file
Delete Transaction Count	Num	7	18 - 24	Count of "delete" detail records in the file
Modify Transaction Count	Num	7	25 - 31	Count of "modify" detail records in the file
Filler	Char	4	32 - 35	Blanks

National Retailer File Detail Record

FIELD DESCRIPTION	FIELD TYPE	FIELD WIDTH	FIELD POSITION	COMMENTS
Transaction Type Code	Char	1	1	'A' if store was added or 'D' if store was deleted or 'M' if state code, first ten characters of store name or business type code were modified
Store Identification	Num	7	2 - 8	STARS Authorization Number
State Code	Char	2	9 - 10	Alphabetic state code where store is located
Store Name	Char	10	11 - 20	First ten characters of the store name
Business Type Code	Char	2	21 - 22	Code indicating type of store (See Table for added Types)
Filler	Char	13	23 - 35	Blanks

Code Definitions For Business Type and Authorization Status

The values for the Business Type Authorization Status Code and Reason and Withdrawal and Disqualification Codes and Reasons used in the record layouts are listed in the Figures 1, 2 and 3 below:

Business Type Code XX

STARS II Store/Meal Service Types (new codes bolded)

AD Drug and/or Alcohol Treatment Program	meal service
BC Nonprofit Food Buying Coop	store
BR Bread Route	store
BW Shelter for Battered Women and Children	meal service
CB Combination Grocery/Bar	store
CD Communal Dining Facility	meal service
CG Combination Grocery/Gas	store
CM Comb. Grocery/Merchandise	store
CO Other Combination	store
CR Comb. Grocery/Restaurant	store
CS Convenience Store	store
DS Drug Store	store
FM Multistall Farmers' Market	store
GL Group Living Arrangement	meal service
GS Small/Medium Grocery	store
HF Health/Natural Food	store
HP Homeless Meal Provider	meal service
MC Military Commissary	store
MD Meal Delivery Service	meal service
MR Milk Route	store
OF Other Firm	store
OR Other Route	store
PR Produce Route	store
PS Produce Stand	store
RE Private Restaurant/Meal Delivery	meal service
SC Senior Citizens' Center/Residential Building	meal service
SF Specialty Food	store
SM Supermarket	store
SS Superstore	store
WH Wholesaler	store
WR Co-located Wholesaler/retailer	store

Figure 1. Business Type Code List

Authorization Status Code: XX

- 01 Authorized
- 03 Withdrawn
- 04 Disqualified
- 07 Permanent Disqualification
- 10 Permanently Withdrawn

Figure 2. Authorization Status Code List

Status Reason Code for "Authorized": 01

- 01 Initial Authorization
- 02 Reinstated

Status Reason Code for "Withdrawn": 03

- 01 Voluntary Withdrawal
- 02 Involuntary - Other
- 03 Involuntary - Withdrawn
- 04 Involuntary Withdrawal - Does not meet Criteria A or Criteria B
- 05 Involuntary – Not a Retail Food Store
- 06 Involuntary - Failure to Cooperate
- 07 Involuntary - Failure to Pay
- 08 Involuntary-Business Integrity
- 09 Involuntary – Non-Redeemer

Status Reason Code for "Disqualified": 04

- 01 Food Stamp Program Violation
- 02 WIC Program Violation
- 03 Failure to Pay

Status Reason Code for "Permanently Disqualified": 07

- 01 Food Stamp Program Violation
- 02 WIC Program Violation
- 03 Failure to Pay

Status Reason Code for "Permanently Withdrawn": 10

- 01 Business Integrity

Figure 3. Status Reason Code List

Additional Information for State Retailer File

1. A modify transaction will contain all of the current data for a retailer. It does not **just** identify the elements that have changed.
2. The Zip 4 Code field will contain zeroes if the zip code is unknown.
3. If the retailer's mailing address is the same as the location address, the mailing address's character type fields will contain spaces and its numeric type fields will contain zeros. There are some retailers in the file, however, where the same information is reflected in both fields.
4. The initial file, which will be sent at start up, will contain one add transaction for each authorized retailer within the state that is in the STARS database. An authorized retailer will have an authorization status code of "01" (Authorized). A de-authorized retailer would have an authorization status code of "03" (Withdrawn) or "04" (Disqualified) or "07" (Permanently Disqualified) or "10" (Permanently Withdrawn).
5. There are a few retailers that do not have a street address. This is a valid situation in certain cases. For instance, it is possible that the store is not on a street. Such as on an Indian Reservation.
6. Retailers that are involuntarily removed from the Food Stamp Program will be given a five-day grace period after the removal date prior to the notification of the EBT processor. This grace period potentially allows for any appeals of the removal. The exception to this grace period is for permanent disqualifications (an authorization status code of "07") where there is no suspension of the disqualification pending the outcome of an appeal.
7. Retailers that have been added to STARS as a new retailer, with an open date some time in the future, **will be** sent in the daily State Update File as soon as they are entered into STARS. However, these future dated stores **will not be** included in the daily National Update File **until 3 days prior to the entered open date.**