

Data Bank to Begin Enforcing SSN and ITIN Validation Rules



The Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) publish guidelines concerning valid number ranges for Social Security Numbers (SSNs) and Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs). Since May 27, 2014, the Data Bank now enforces these rules for reporting and querying to ensure data quality. **Enforcement of these rules**

may cause previously entered subject database practitioner entries to become invalid until action from your organization is taken.

Many organizations use the Data Bank's subject database as an easy method for entering or importing their practitioner records for storage and future use. Information such as address, date of birth, and licensure data are taken from the subject database to pre-populate input forms. If you have previously stored subject information with invalid SSN or ITIN information, you must correct the stored subject database record before using it for querying.

Check your subject database records to ensure query readiness:

1. Under Maintenance, select Maintain Subject Database.
2. Select the "Maintain Subject Database" option.
3. Select "Edit or Delete Individuals."
4. In the "Sort By" section, select the "Complete" button.
5. Look in the "Complete" column at the far right in the table of results. Incomplete records are marked with an "N" and must be corrected and/or completed before they can be used in a query.

Key Takeaways:

- ✓ The Data Bank has begun enforcing existing SSA and IRS rules for SSNs and ITINs.
- ✓ The subject database is an easy way to store and maintain practitioner information. Stored information will pre-populate input forms for you.

Prior to May 27, 2014, the Data Bank contacted organizations with subject database records that required correction to SSNs and/or ITINs. If you have questions regarding the validation rules for the SSN or ITIN fields, you may contact the NPDB [Customer Service Center](#). Additional information about the subject database is available at [Create and Maintain a Practitioner \(Subject\) Database](#).

Get Your Query Response More Quickly

When submitting a Data Bank query, it is important to complete as many data fields as possible in order to receive your query results promptly.



When you submit a Data Bank query, you may be inclined to fill in a limited number of data fields to save time. However, this may cause the query to take longer to process. Queries submitted with complete and accurate data are typically processed within minutes, while queries with missing or incorrect information may require manual processing and can take 1 or 2 business days.

Use these tips for completing the form to improve your query process:

- **Enter all license numbers held by the practitioner, even if the license is inactive.** List the current license first.
- **If the practitioner does not have a license number,** select “no license” and then select occupation/field of license the practitioner is applying for.
- **If the practitioner is a student who has not yet graduated, enter the current year for the graduation date.** Future dates are not accepted by the system.
- **Use the practitioner’s information when providing identification numbers,** such as the National Provider Identifier, Drug Enforcement Agency, and/or Social Security Number, rather than the organization’s identification numbers.

Using these strategies can speed up your credentialing process, saving you effort and time.

Use Public Information to Help Complete a Report



Providing accurate and complete information when submitting a report helps the Data Bank’s role in promoting health care quality and safety. Health care organizations should make every effort to compile the necessary information before submitting a report, increasing the likelihood that future queriers of your report’s subject will receive the report. Here are some strategies to collect the data required for accurate reporting:

- **Research records maintained by Federal and local governments.** This includes property records, vital records, political records, and corporate filings. The availability of public records varies by State.
- **Use U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission’s [online document database](#)** to identify the Federal Employee Identification Number for public companies.
- **Search court records for information on health care organizations or practitioners.** In certain situations, such as when a Federal or State court imposes a cease and desist order against a health care organization or practitioner, information may be available.

Ultimately, it is up to the submitting organization to ensure that all information provided during the reporting processes is accurate. Should you require additional assistance while submitting a report, please call the Customer Service Center at 1-800-767-6732.

Meet Krishna: a Data Bank Technology Specialist

Krishna is working with the Data Bank on a 13-month assignment as part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ ([HHS’s](#)) [Entrepreneurs](#) program, an agency-wide initiative that taps talented, innovative-thinking professionals from outside the government to improve government processes and systems.



What is your educational and professional background?

I am originally from Pittsburgh, PA, and earned a B.S. in Computer Engineering from Penn State while working as a paramedic. I then earned an Executive MBA from Rutgers University. I have served in many technology leadership roles, including positions at CitiGroup’s Rethink Innovation Lab, a major wireless Internet company, and a software startup called TLCengine. I have also worked as a patent examiner at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

What does your role entail at the Data Bank?

Specifically, I am focusing on geospatial data and visualization of summarized data used for research. I work with many staff across the entire Data Bank team, but especially with the Research Branch and the Operations and Administration Branch. An example of what I have been working on is a new address validation tool. As a new query or report is submitted, the system checks the address for accuracy and may suggest corrections.

How were you selected for this role?

In the summer of 2013, HHS announced it was seeking applications for the Entrepreneurs program. More than 200 entrepreneurs from across the nation applied. I was selected as one of only five to be hired. HHS’s Chief Technology Officer oversees this program.

How are you hoping to improve the Data Bank?

I hope to contribute by making summarized data more open and transparent to the public, and to bring new cloud technology solutions to the Data Bank. I also am introducing new methodologies that could help the Data Bank accelerate priority software changes.

What are the most challenging aspects of your job?

It is difficult to grasp the sheer complexity of the Data Bank system and business rules in a short period of time, while also looking for quick wins that can have an instant impact to users. Another major challenge is getting to the root cause of an issue. In these cases, I employ the “[Five Whys](#)” technique, first developed in the Toyota Production System. It is a way to get to the root cause of a problem and also can be used in understanding the process roadblocks. Determining the root cause is the first step toward streamlining the system screens.

What are your favorite things about the Data Bank?

I have been very impressed with the diversity of everyone’s backgrounds and skill sets, and the passion they have for the work.

Data Bank Fast Facts	What is the name of the Data Bank service that allows reporters to electronically send the required copy of a Data Bank report to the appropriate State board (assuming the State board has agreed to receive electronic notices of actions)?
	a. Report Forwarding b. Report Posting c. Report Sending <i>Answer: a. Report Forwarding</i>