



# **National Information Exchange Model**

**Human Services Domain  
Operations & Maintenance Plan**

June 15, 2012



# Table of Contents

- 1 Introduction..... 4
  - 1.1 Overview..... 4
  - 1.2 Scope ..... 4
  - 1.3 Intended Audience ..... 4
- 2 Domain Governance and Participation ..... 4
- 3 Domain Activity Processes and Procedures..... 6
  - 3.1 Data Model Management..... 6
    - 3.1.1 Data Model Maintenance ..... 6
    - 3.1.2 Domain Release Lifecycle Planning..... 7
    - 3.1.3 Cross-Domain Coordination ..... 7
  - 3.2 Operations..... 7
    - 3.2.1 Domain Charter Maintenance ..... 7
    - 3.2.2 Domain Resource Management ..... 8
    - 3.2.3 Point of Contact for Domain-related issues..... 8
    - 3.2.4 Issue and Requirement Management..... 8
    - 3.2.5 IEPD Development and Implementation Support ..... 8
  - 3.3 Participant Engagement..... 11
    - 3.3.1 Domain Community of Interest Management ..... 11
    - 3.3.2 Communications and Outreach..... 11
    - 3.3.3 Feedback ..... 11
    - 3.3.4 NIEM PMO and NIEM Governance Committee Involvement..... 11
- 4 New Domain Member Engagement ..... 12
- 5 Examples of Human Services Data Exchanges..... 12
- 6 Acronyms and Abbreviations..... 13
- 7 References ..... 14
- 8 Approvals..... 14

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Overview

The National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) Human Services (HS) Domain was officially established by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and recognized by the NIEM Executive Steering Council in March 2012 to support information sharing and promote interoperability between and beyond Human Service organizations and federal, state, local and tribal agencies. This Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plan describes how day-to-day domain activities are conducted and managed.

## 1.2 Scope

The NIEM HS Domain O&M Plan describes the processes and procedures for managing and executing domain activities. Additionally, the plan addresses the infrastructure and tools that are used to support these activities. The O&M plan should be referenced alongside the NIEM HS Domain Charter, which describes the domain mission and governance structure.

## 1.3 Intended Audience

The intended audience for this document is the NIEM HS Domain's stakeholders and governance groups as defined in the HS Domain Charter who will carry out the processes and procedures described within the document. The potential audience includes program managers and government sponsors from human service agencies including, but not limited to, the Administration for Children and Families, other federal government agencies, local and state government agency representatives, tribal agencies, and any participants wanting to use the NIEM HS Domain.

The NIEM Business Architecture Committee (NBAC) and NIEM Program management Office (PMO) may also refer to this document to understand the domain's operating model.

# 2 Domain Governance and Participation

The NIEM HS Domain Governance's structure, committees, participants, roles, responsibilities, and activities are described in detail in the NIEM HS Domain Charter document. Membership will be a combination of federal, state, local, and tribal representatives. These representatives will be chosen to provide a combination of programmatic, policy, business and technical expertise in creating standardized data exchanges in an acceptable format.

The governance for the NIEM Human Services workgroup will consist of federal, state, local, and tribal representation. HHS/ACF will head the group. Decisions will be made through consensus from group membership. Participants include the following individuals governance groups, and work groups. Additional detail of the roles and responsibilities is provided in the NIEM HS Domain Project Charter.

**HHS Office of the Chief Information Officer (HHS/OCIO)** - provides oversight to the HS Domain project and assists in coordination with the NIEM Health Domain governance board. The Chief Information Officer (CIO) at OCIO will review and approve this HS Domain Project Charter and the Operations and Maintenance Plan. The CIO has delegated federal review and approval of specific workproducts developed by the NIEM HS Domain workgroups to the Interoperability Workgroup Steering Committee at the Administration for Children and Families (ACF).

**Project Sponsor** - ACF Office of the Assistant Secretary.

**Project Executive** - ACF Office of the Assistant Secretary.

**Domain Steward** – Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) Division of State and Tribal Systems.

**NIEM HS Domain Governance Group** – Membership will be a combination of federal, state, local, and tribal representatives. These representatives will be chosen to provide a combination of programmatic, policy, business and technical expertise in creating standardized data exchanges in an acceptable format. Recommended membership is listed below.

- Federal Agencies: OCSE, Children’s Bureau, Office of Family Assistance (TANF), Child Care, USDA FNS/SNAP, CMS, Head Start.
- State and local: We expect 1-3 states to be invited per agency as data exchanges are identified for inclusion in the HS Domain, 15- 20 states total.

**Business and Technology Team** – spearheads the review and creation of NIEM workproducts and other artifacts and will be comprised of members from the Governance Group described above. In addition, “Tiger Teams” may be created on a temporary basis to develop specific data exchange workproducts.

**Tiger Teams** – established to develop specific work products. A Tiger team will be established by the business and technology team using federal, state, and local subject matter experts to focus on a particular data exchange. For example a Tiger team may be established to develop a data exchange for sharing participant data between child support and child welfare agencies using federal, state, and local child support and child welfare experts. The Tiger Team will report to the Business and Technology Team.

**Outreach & Communications Team** – undertakes an internal and external campaign to increase knowledge and understanding of NIEM in general on Human Services domain workproducts in particular within the human services community.

**Community of Interest** – The wider range of stakeholders at the federal, state, and local level beyond the workgroup membership. For example, the workgroup membership may consist of approximately 15 states. The community of interest expands to all 54 states and territories.

**NIEM Project Management Office (PMO)** – This office currently resides in the Department of Homeland Security. The NIEM PMO is responsible for the day-to-day operations of NIEM.

### 3 Domain Activity Processes and Procedures

The NIEM HS Domain's activities can be grouped into three categories: data model management, operations, and community of interest engagement.

#### 3.1 Data Model Management

The NIEM HS Domain's processes and procedures for managing and maintaining the domain data model are described below.

##### 3.1.1 Data Model Maintenance

The responsibility for proposing, reviewing, and approving changes to the NIEM HS Domain Data Model fall within the Technical Committee's purview. During the process of creating a new Information Exchange Package Document (IEPD) in the NIEM HS Domain, the IEPD's Tiger Team will be responsible for aligning the IEPD's schema to the NIEM HS Domain Data Model, the NIEM Core Data Model, and relevant data models from external data standards. Where correlations exist between the HS Domain and other NIEM domain models, it will be the responsibility of the Business and Technology Team and associated Tiger Team to point out the relationships. The NIEM Technical Committee's review of the Tiger Team's candidate IEPD will also include a specific review of the completeness of this standards analysis.

When the IEPD is completed and accepted by the DSM for inclusion in the NIEM HS Domain, the Technical Committee will review the data elements identified by that IEPD's Tiger Team and not already present either in the NIEM HS Domain Data Model or the NIEM Core Data Model. These elements will then be considered as candidates for inclusion in the NIEM HS Domain. Twice yearly, the NIEM HS Domain Data Model will be reviewed by the Technical Committee. At these meetings, all candidate data elements will be reviewed. On a majority vote, these elements will then be incorporated into the NIEM HS Domain Data Model.

The NIEM HS Domain will follow NIEM High-Level Version Architecture (HLVA) version control approach and processes to execute and publish domain updates.

### **3.1.2 Domain Release Lifecycle Planning**

NIEM HS Domain release lifecycle will use the NIEM PMO Plan of Action and Milestones (POAM) to document the HS Domain release lifecycles. The lifecycle will be reviewed and updated annually. NIEM HS Domain Technical Committee will be responsible for developing and updating the NIEM HS Domain release lifecycle. Out-of-cycle updates to the release lifecycle will be treated on a case-by-case basis, and will have to be approved by the NIEM HS Domain Governance Group.

### **3.1.3 Cross-Domain Coordination**

The NIEM HS Domain Governance Group will work closely with the HHS Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (HHS/ONC) to establish and maintain communication and coordination between the Health Domain and HS Domain. In addition, the NIEM HS Domain Steward will assign a representative to participate in meetings of the Children, Youth and Family Services Domain, which establishes data exchanges between courts and human services agencies. Data exchanges included in the HS Domain will be defined and prioritized by the NIEM Human Services Governance bodies. The Domain Steward will ensure that organizations developing standards within HHS and other pertinent agencies have a voice in the direction and development of the domain.

The NIEM HS Domain Governance Group will participate in the NIEM Business Architecture Committee (NBAC) to aid in the coordination with other NIEM domains.

## **3.2 Operations**

Processes and procedures for carrying out activities to support day-to-day NIEM HS Domain operations and promote NIEM conformant Information Exchange Package Documentation (IEPD) development and implementation within the domain are described below.

### **3.2.1 Domain Charter Maintenance**

The NIEM HS Domain Charter is reviewed annually for alignment with current domain governance approach. The NIEM HS Domain Governance Group is responsible for reviewing and obtaining approval from the NIEM HS Domain Steward to update the charter when needed.

### **3.2.2 Domain Resource Management**

The NIEM HS Domain Governance Group is responsible for assessing and determining the resource requirements for the Business and Technology Team, Communication and Outreach Team, and associated Tiger Teams. Resource needs are assessed in a quarterly and as-needed basis.

### **3.2.3 Point of Contact for Domain-related issues**

The Domain Steward will assign a point of contact for questions or comments related to the NIEM HS Domain. Contact information will be posted on the domain web site.

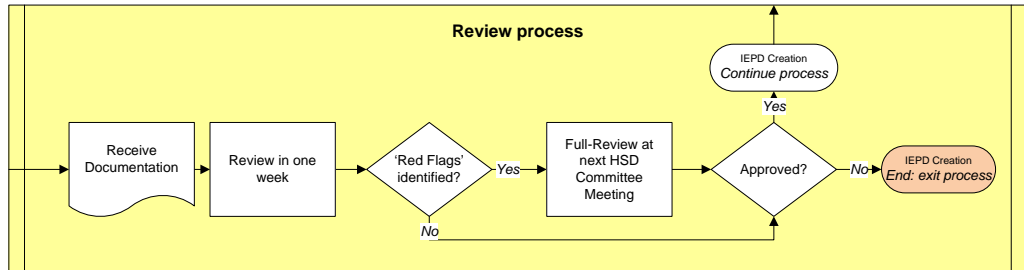
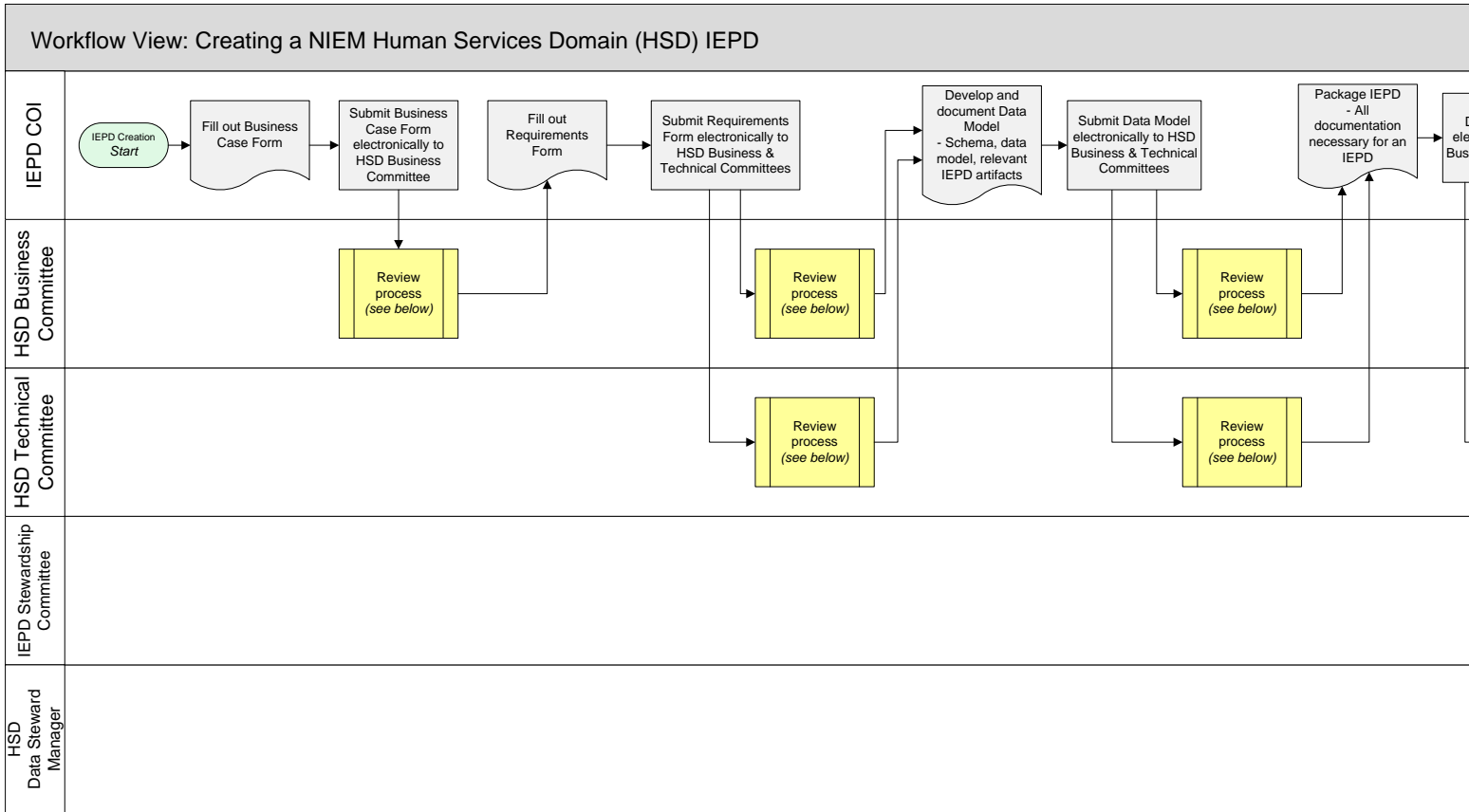
### **3.2.4 Issue and Requirement Management**

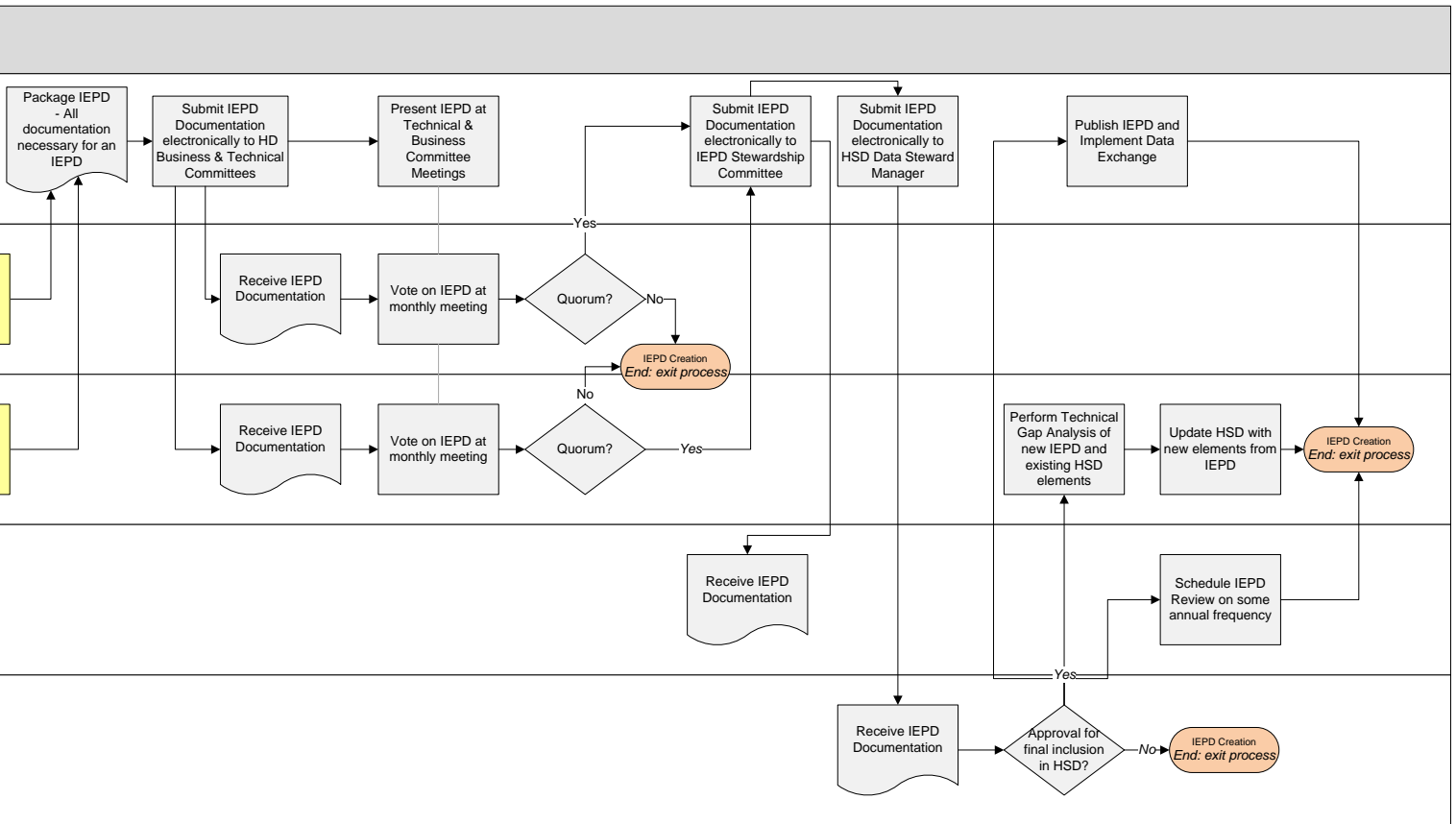
A standardized system will be developed and used to log technical issues and business requirements submitted by the HS Domain Community of Interest (COI). Once submitted, the Business and Technical Committee will review, track and resolve the issues and address the business requirements. This Operations and Maintenance Plan will be updated when the standardized issue and requirements management system and its use are defined.

### **3.2.5 IEPD Development and Implementation Support**

The following workflow depicts how an IEPD is developed within the NIEM HS Domain.







### **3.3 Participant Engagement**

The participant engagement processes described below will enable the NIEM HS Domain to build a sense of community among participants, engage participants in domain activities, and solicit input.

#### **3.3.1 Domain Community of Interest Management**

The NIEM HS Domain will provide resources to track and log the COI membership. The membership log will be updated quarterly or when new COI members join the HS Domain. Working with the NIEM HS Domain Steward Manager, the governance group will identify all relevant potential participants that should be represented in the domain COI across federal, state, local, tribal and industry levels.

#### **3.3.2 Communications and Outreach**

The NIEM HS Domain workgroup will meet via conference call at least quarterly. The Business and Technology Team and the Communications and Outreach Team will meet at least monthly. Tiger Teams and other special project teams will meet on an as-needed basis. Also, funding permitted; ACF will host an annual “in-person” meeting of key team membership.

The NIEM HS Domain will provide resources to present communication and outreach plans to potential COI participants in public events to promote NIEM HS Domain adoption. These resources are also responsible for facilitating interaction between the various COI members, developing and publishing outreach materials, and maintaining the HS Domain’s space on the NIEM.gov website.

#### **3.3.3 Feedback**

The NIEM HS Domain will use public events, regular meetings, emails, and NIEM.gov collaboration forums to enable COI participants and candidate participants to give feedback, establish new requirements, voice concerns and provide input to the HS Domain. The DSM will assign resources to be responsible for maintaining the feedback channels and ensuring that feedback is addressed.

#### **3.3.4 NIEM PMO and NIEM Governance Committee Involvement**

The DSM will serve as the official liaison and representative for the NIEM HS Domain in all matters when dealing with the NIEM PMO leadership, NIEM governance committees, and executive sponsors. The Domain Steward Manager will work with the NIEM HS Domain Governance Group to respond to NIEM PMO and NBAC requests for information or input or feedback.

## 4 New Domain Member Engagement

Participants looking to use the NIEM HS Domain data model and IEPD's can apply to become NIEM HS Domain members by submitting a business case to the domain governance group. The NIEM HS Domain Outreach and Communications Team will develop templates for business case documentation, which consists of business scenarios, scope, expected outcomes and sustainability models. The HS Domain Governance Group will vote on membership requests at the quarterly governance group conference calls.

## 5 Examples of Human Services Data Exchanges

The initial scope of the NIEM HS Domain will be determined by the HS Domain Governance Group. Examples of data exchanges to be considered by this governance group include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **New York City HHS Connect:** A network of NYC agency exchanges that serve over 3 million people with a wide range of needs from applying for standard benefits to the more complex needs of socio-economically disadvantaged New Yorkers
- **Child Support Required Data Exchanges:** State child support agency computer systems are required to support automated interfaces with various health and human services agencies within the state. The minimum data elements for data exchange for these interfaces are defined at the federal level. These data elements can be utilized to develop baseline data exchanges for interagency exchanges at the state level.
- **Criminal and Child Abuse to Child Care and Foster Parent Licensure Agencies Exchange:** Obtaining background checks for prospective foster parents is time consuming and, in many states, only yields criminal background or abuse and neglect data for that one state. There are similar issues with the hiring of staff to provide childcare services at state or county-run childcare centers. An exchange that expedites the sharing of information between the providers and a national criminal and child abuse and neglect database would allow appropriate foster parents and childcare providers to be licensed and would reduce the number of inappropriate licenses issued, better protecting children from potentially harmful situations.
- **Vulnerable Populations Emergency Locator Exchange:** A hurricane or other natural disaster affects a state or region. Through the electronic transmission of human service information and Global Positioning System tracking, emergency personnel can more quickly reach the individuals who are most vulnerable. When persons involved with HS agencies (foster care, preventive services, food

and nutrition services, etc.) cross county or state lines, their case information could be transmitted to other states to insure the continuation of needed services.

- **Child Welfare to Homeless Services Exchange:** A family involved with the child welfare system in a given jurisdiction enters the homeless service system. Upon entry, workers in both systems would be alerted and could maintain family services and ensure the safety and well-being of the involved children.
- **Income Verification Exchange and Assistance Eligibility Exchange:** A single mother loses her job which, she believes, makes her eligible for some local, state, and/or federal benefits. She doesn't know which. Rather than visiting each office individually in-person (food and nutrition services, housing assistance, cash assistance, heating/energy assistance, child care, etc.), she can now go to one central location and, through an income verification and other exchanges, receive real-time information about and apply for the benefits to which she and her family are eligible.
- **PARIS (Public Assistance Reporting Information System):** A repository of data transmitted by states to the PARIS for various purposes within the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families program.

## 6 Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ACF</b>	Administration for Children and Families
<b>CIO</b>	Chief Information Officer
<b>COI</b>	Community of Interest
<b>DSM</b>	Domain Steward Manager
<b>HHS</b>	Department of Health and Human Services
<b>HLVA</b>	High-Level Version Architecture
<b>HS</b>	Human Services
<b>IEPD</b>	Information Exchange Package Documentation
<b>NBAC</b>	NIEM Business Architecture Committee
<b>NIEM</b>	National Information Exchange Model
<b>O&amp;M</b>	Operations and Maintenance
<b>ONC</b>	Office of the National Coordinator
<b>PMO</b>	Program Management Office

## 7 References

- Administration for Children and Families, Human Services Interoperability Initiative, Project Charter and Project Management Plan, Version 2.0, dated April 2012.
- National Information Exchange Model Human Services Domain Charter, Version 1.1, dated April 10, 2012
- Establishing Domain Governance: Making Self-Service a Reality, NBAC, February 2009, v. 1.0.
- NIEM High-Level Version Architecture, NTAC, July 31, 2008, v. 1.0, Available from <http://hsxml.nhsdc.org/files/niem-version-architecture>
- National Information Exchange Model (NIEM) Naming and Design Rules, NTAC, October 31, 2008, v.1.3. Available from <https://www.niem.gov/documentsdb/Documents/Technical/NIEM-NDR-1-3.pdf>.

## 8 Approvals

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ACF, NIEM HS Domain Steward

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**Date**

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**Melissa Jaacks**  
ACF, Chief of Staff

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**Date**

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**Frank Baitman**  
HHS, Chief Information Officer

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**Date**