Vendor File Briefing

Office of Financial Management

These are instructions to assist in searching the ADB for EIN/SSN's using the alpha and numeric search screens. If the vendor is not found, we have included additional instructions to assist you with your request.

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INTRODUCTION TO VENDOR FILE

The NIH Vendor file consists of approximately 130,000 Employer/Entity Identification Numbers (EIN's) and related information.

The vendor number is a 10- or 12-digit number that links a vendor to contracts and to the Office of Financial Management (OFM) so the vendor can be paid. A vendor may be either an organization or an individual. If the vendor is an organization, its vendor number is referred to as an EIN (Employer Identification Number) or Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN). If the vendor is an individual, then the vendor number will be their SSN (Social Security Number).

The vendor number consists of two or three parts:

- the first digit, or prefix, identifies the category of a vendor; US citizen, foreign organization, etc. 1 is for an organization, 2 is for an individual, 3 is for a foreign organization, 4 is for a foreign individual, and 5 is for an employee.

- the next nine digits are either an EIN (organization) or a SSN (individual). Foreign individuals or organizations without EINs or SSNs are assigned pseudo numbers by the Office of Financial Management (OFM).

- the last two digits, or suffix, applies only to organizations. The suffix identifies the number of billing addresses for that vendor. An alphabetic character in the suffix means the EIN is for negotiated contracts or grants, and is assigned by the Division of Payment Management (DPM). EIN for grants contain a pin number.

A vendor request is an action taken to establish or make changes to a Vendor in the NIH Vendor File. All organizations and individuals doing business with the NIH must be in the NIH Vendor File, in order to receive payments from the NIH. A vendor request should be made whenever:

1) A vendor does not have a vendor number on file in the NIH Vendor File.

2) An existing vendor moves from its previous location and a change of address needs to be made. In such cases, the company must submit a letter to OFM requesting the change.

3) Minor changes such as spelling corrections, etc. are necessary.

4) A vendor changes their EIN or TIN (Tax Identification Number), the company must submit a letter and a W-9 form to OFM to support the change to the Vendor File. (see procedure for making changes to existing vendor records, pg. 8)

Note: The OFM works directly with Purchasing Agents, Administrative Officers, and Contracting Officers to update and maintain the Vendor File. Normally, we do not contact outside vendors directly. All information received from vendors must be reported through these officials, not directly to OFM. Please do not refer vendors to this office.

REQUESTING AN EIN/TIN REGISTRATION IN THE VENDOR FILE

Before completing a Vendor Request you should first verify that the vendor is not on the NIH Vendor File. These checks can be carried out using the DELPRO System (Administrative Database).

You should check both the (1) vendor's name and (2) vendor's EIN or SSN.

PROCEDURE FOR SEARCHING A VENDOR BY NAME

For individuals:

1) Enter the Vendor Alpha Search (VAS) screen.

2) Type individual's last name and first initial, then ENTER.

3) If name appears place an X next to name, then ENTER.

4) If the first record is not the correct person, check the bottom of the screen for a message that reads:

PRESS PA1 FOR ADDITIONAL ADDRESSES

Press this key until the correct record is displayed or until all records have been displayed. The correct record is the one containing an address exactly like the one appearing on the procurement document. Or, an address as close as possible to the one appearing on the procurement document. If neither of these situations exist, a vendor request should be submitted to make a change to the NIH Vendor File, or requesting a new EIN. The request should be made, and confirmed, prior to submitting the procurement document to the OFM for obligation.

For Organizations:

1) Enter the VAS screen.

2) Type company name (Hint: type as little as possible), then ENTER.

3) If the name you want appears place an X next to it, then ENTER.

4) If the first record does not have the correct address, check the bottom of the screen for a message that reads:

PRESS PA1 FOR ADDITIONAL ADDRESSES

Press this key until the correct record is displayed or until all records have been displayed.

If the name of the individual or company does not appear, the next step is to search using the Social Security Number or Employer Identification Number or Tax Identification Number.

PROCEDURE FOR SEARCHING VENDORS BY NUMBER

For individuals:

1) Enter the Vendor Display (VEN) screen.

2) Type in prefix of 2 or 5 (other individual = 2, employees = 5) and the social security number (eg. SSN - 123456789 you enter 2123456789 or 5123456789. You should always check both prefixes and choose the correct one, if there are two or more listings/records.

For Organizations:

1) Enter VEN screen.

2) Type in prefix of 1 and the Federal Tax ID number (also known as Employer Identification Number) and two (2) question marks at the end (eg. EIN - 123456789 you enter 1123456789??).

3) Press PA1 key until the correct record is displayed or until all records have been displayed. Press this key until the correct record is displayed or until all records have been displayed. The correct record is the one containing an address exactly like the one appearing on the procurement document. Or, an address as close as possible to the one appearing on the procurement document. If neither of these situations exist, a vendor request should be submitted to make a change to the NIH Vendor File, or requesting a new EIN. The request should be made, and confirmed, prior to submitting the procurement document to the OFM for obligation.

PROCEDURE FOR ENTERING A VENDOR REQUEST

If, AFTER A Vendor File search, the person or company is not found in the system, then you need to enter a request for a new person or company record. When requesting an EIN registration, be sure to complete all of the information on the Request Screen:

Requesting Office - This should contain information from the person requesting the EIN. Be sure to include your e-mail address.

Type of Action - Select appropriate category

Type of Vendor - Select appropriate category

Type of Use - Be sure to mark this category correctly. If you mark grant, contract, or SF-1099 incorrectly, you will not be able to use the requested EIN for a purchase order or record of call.

Vendor Number - Use the 9-digit Employer Identification Number (also known as the Federal Tax ID Number) or the SSN. We must have this number to process the request. If the person or organization is foreign type FOREIGN in this field. A pseudo number will be assigned by OFM.

Title - <u>This field is used only for grants or you may use this field for remarks.</u> Do not put a person's title (ie. Dr.) or additional address information (ie. Dept. of Psychology) in this field. Anything typed in this field will be removed (except for Grant requests) upon processing the request.

Name - Use the complete legal name of the organization or person. <u>Do not use initials</u>.

Address - The vendor file should reflect only the payment or remittance address. Ordering addresses should never be requested or entered in the NIH vendor file. Enter street address, post office box, etc. Abbreviate avenues, streets, suite number, etc. Do not use punctuation such as periods or commas.

City & State - Spell out city name and use 2-character Postal service state abbreviations. A comma should be used between the city and state. If the vendor has a foreign address, type the foreign code on the same line as the CITY/STATE.

Zip - Enter the 5-digit code unless the request is for a foreign address. Leave the zip code blank for foreign addresses.

An ACH form (SF 3881) must be mailed or faxed to OFM at (301) 402-4684 for new EIN requests.

We have identified the following as common problems when requesting EIN/SSN's:

1) Missing information on the request. Frequently, the EIN/SSN or zip code, and sometimes other required information, is not entered. Failure to complete all the information on the Request Screen will delay processing of your request. The notification of a rejected request will be by e-mail and the complete information set must be re-submitted.

2) ACH forms with portions not filled in correctly or no ACH form at all to accompany the request.

3) Entering requests for addresses already in the system. This slows down the processing of all requests.

4) Requesting changes to records without proper documentation. Changes to EIN/SSN, name, or remittance address require a letter or W-9 as stated above.

5) Using an incorrect Federal Taxpayer ID number for an organization. EIN's for organizations cannot begin with certain numbers (ie. 07). This problem occurs most frequently when a sole proprietorship uses the SSN of the owner. Ask the owner to apply for a TIN with the IRS (this process is usually same day). Or have the organization send OFM a W-9. Invalid beginning digits are: 00, 07, 08, 09, 10, 17, 18, 19, 20, 26, 28, 29, 30, 32, 40, 49, 50, 60, 65, 68, 69, 70, 78, 79, and 89.

Recommended Solutions:

1) Search the Vendor file before placing a request into the ADB. If there are any discrepancies, contact the person or company and get the necessary information and documentation for the change.

2) Mark all categories correctly under "Type of Action," "Type of Vendor," and "Type of Use". The categories determine the prefix and suffix assigned to a number.

3) When entering a request, be sure all information is correct. (Zip code, suite number, apartment number, city and state, spelling of the person's or company's name, and the

street address.) Abbreviate the words avenue, street, suite and apartment. The only punctuation that should be used is a comma between the city and state. Do not spell out the state or use Dr., Mrs., Ms., PhD., MD., etc.

4) Use proper company names, eg., International Business Machines (IBM is not the legal name). Initials may only be used when they are the legal name of the company.

5) Please request only the remittance address of the company**.**

6) Individuals can have only one address and their address can only be changed once within a 30 day period. Do not put in false addresses just to process travel or other orders since the address will not be changed for 30 days and payments will be held or sent to the wrong address.

OFM makes every attempt to process vendor requests within 24 to 48 hours of receipt of the request and the ACH form. Requests are processed in the order received. Whenever a problem is encountered with the processing of a request, a description of the problem is e-mailed back to the requestor. Be sure to check for an e-mail if your request does not appear in the file after 24 to 48 hours. Please remember to check the system using the name and the EIN/SSN before calling.

PROCEDURE FOR MAKING CHANGES TO EXISTING VENDOR FILE RECORDS

OFM requires a letter or an IRS Form W-9 from the company or person to change the name or EIN/SSN. This letter must contain the old name and new name, the old EIN/SSN and the new EIN/SSN, and the address. The letter must also be signed by a company official or person, if for an individual. Please request this information of them and forward a copy to OFM by mail or fax to 402-4684. A request must also be entered in the ADB. OFM also requires a letter from the company when they have a change in their remittance address. All letters must contain the above information.

If the current EIN reads, "ACH DATA IS REQUIRED", then the ACH form must be submitted to OFM before the change can be processed.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUESTING EIN'S FOR GRANTS THROUGH THE ADB.

Type of Action - New Vendor (usually)
Type of Vendor - Organization
Type of Use - Grant

Vendor Number: 9-digit Employer Identification Number (EIN) assigned to the organization by the Internal Revenue Service. We must have this number to process the request. Social Security Numbers (SSN's) are used only for Chairman Grants. Foreign organizations will be assigned a "pseudo" number by Central Registry (PMS).

Title: Title of Corporate Official. Do not use an individual's name or the title of the application. Example, President, Chairman, Vice President.

Name: Complete legal name of the organization (applicant organization). Do not abbreviate names or use acronyms.

Multi-Use Line: May be used to complete either name or address when designated line is not adequate.

Address: Enter street address, post office box, etc.

City & State: Spell out city name and use 2-character Postal Service state abbreviations.

Zip: Enter five-digit code.

EIN REQUESTS THROUGH THE ADB FOR GRANTS

1. Check application face page:

   Make sure the EIN number requested does not match the Social Security Number of the PI.

   Check that the EIN number requested looks like a tax ID number (23-4567899) rather than a social security number (234-56-7899).

   Check that the address (block 15 for SBIR, Block 16 for 398) looks like a complete address and is similar to the other addresses.

2. Check for EIN and institution name in DELPRO:

   Logon to the Administrative Database system and choose DELPRO from the menu. Logon with your own initials, ID and keyword, and type DEL for the CODE and press the ENTER key. Type VEN for the code from the next menu. In the EIN field, type a 1, the 9-digit number being requested, and two question marks, for example: 1234567899??

   If there is already an existing EIN number with a matching institution name and a 4 digit PIN number (located underneath the EIN number on the screen) there is no need to enter a request. If there is no matching number or if there is one with a 01 extension only, you must enter a request.

   Go back to the previous menu and type VAS for the CODE. Type the institution name at the prompt which reads “Start at names like:” (try many combinations) to make sure it does not already have an EIN number.

3. Enter the new EIN number:

   Return to the previous menu and type EIN for CODE and press ENTER.

   Note: From this point on use the tab key to move from item to item, do not use the ENTER key until all information is verified and request is ready to be sent.

   Fill in the requesting office information, including your name and email address.

Next, select one item number for each of the three groups - Type Action, Type-Vendor and Type-Use, as follows:

Select 1 (New) for Type-Action
Select 3 (Organization) for Type-Vendor
Select 1 (Grant) for Type-Use.

Enter the 9 digit tax ID number, do not include dashes or spaces and do not add a prefix or suffix.

Example: 234567899

Press the TAB key three (3) times to get past the prefix and suffix fields.

Type in the title, institution name and address from block 15 (SBIR) or block 16 (398) on the face page.

Proofread the information on the screen and make any corrections necessary.

“Print Screen” to get a copy to keep of what you entered.

Press ENTER to send the request, you will see a message at the bottom of the screen that says your request has been submitted.

Provisions of the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996

The Debt Collection Improvement Act (DCIA) of 1996 requires that recipients (payees) provide their Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) along with other necessary information in order for agencies to make EFT payment.

For further information on the DCIA the following website is available:

http://www.fms.treas.gov/debt/dcia.html