

Individual-Level Data Submission

Some of the performance measures data that Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) grantees submit come from surveys completed by participants at program entry and exit. Beginning in January 2024, the Administration for Children and Families' Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) asked grantees to start submitting de-identified survey data at the individual youth level. Before 2024, FYSB had grantees aggregate participants' responses to the entry and exit surveys at the program level and manually enter the aggregate data as part of their performance measures submission.

This document provides an overview of this change and addresses related questions from grantees.

Overview of the change to individual-level data submission

Benefits of this change

- ◆ Submitting individual-level survey responses through a file upload feature of the performance measures data submission portal is **a more streamlined process** that avoids the need to aggregate and manually enter survey responses.
- ◆ Submitting individual-level survey data also makes it possible to create **enhanced analysis and displays** of grantee performance measures data in the portal dashboard.

What's *not* changing

The change to individual-level data submission does not affect any of the following:

- ◆ The survey instruments or the data collection processes for participant entry and exit surveys
- ◆ Measures of structure, cost, and support for program implementation
- ◆ Measures of attendance, reach, and dosage

Two options for creating files to upload

Grantees have two options for uploading files containing individual-level participant entry and exit survey data to the portal:

1. Optional Excel tools, which are available to grantees on the PREP performance measures website. They are pre-formatted for uploading to the data submission portal, with one column for each of the necessary data elements and guidance on the valid values for each element. Grantees can record data directly in the tools.
2. Data extract created from an outside system, which conforms to the following guidelines:
 - One file should contain all data from participant entry surveys, and a separate file should contain all data from participant exit surveys.
 - Each file must contain one record per respondent.
 - The first row should contain variable names. We recommend using the variable names listed in Row 2 of the Excel tools.
 - The values for each element should follow the guidance in the Data Entry Codes worksheet of the Excel tools. Row 3 of the Participant Entry/Exit Survey tab also lists the valid values for the data element in each column.
 - Files must **not** include any personally identifying information (PII), such as student names.
 - Acceptable file formats include Excel (.xlsx) and comma separated values (.csv).

Questions and answers

Questions about preparing data files for upload

Q. Are only numeric values valid in the files for upload to the data submission portal?

A. The valid values differ by data element. The Data Entry Codes worksheet of the Excel tools provides guidance on the valid values, and Row 3 of the Participant Entry/Exit Survey tab lists the valid values for the data element in each column. For example, for age (Question 1 in both the entry and exit survey), valid responses are numeric values 10 through 21.

Q. Respondents sometimes list more than one home language; how should that be entered?

A. Each data file should include:

- One column (Column J in the optional Excel tool) to indicate whether respondents reported speaking any languages other than English or Spanish. The valid values for this data element are:
 - Y = yes, respondent reported speaking another language
 - N = no, respondent reported not speaking another language

- A separate column (Column K in the optional Excel tool) to indicate the other languages they reported. The data entered in this column should be exactly what the respondent reported.

Q. What should be entered in the file if a participant did not respond to a particular survey question? Is there a code to specify missing values?

A. Cells should be left blank to indicate missing data.

Q. Is there a process for checking that participant entry and exit survey data files will upload successfully?

A. There are validation checks built into both the optional Excel tools and the upload page of the data submission portal.

- The optional Excel tool will only allow entry of valid values in each column.
- The data submission portal will also conduct checks, including checks to ensure that all values fall within the range of relevant options for that survey item and that the grantee, provider, and program names in the file are spelled exactly as they are entered on other pages in the portal.

Q. What other data quality checks are recommended?

A. Grantees are responsible for reviewing their data files before upload to ensure they are complete and reflect the actual responses provided by participants completing the surveys. In addition to using the validation checks built into the optional Excel tools and data submission portal, we recommend that grantees conduct the following data quality checks (some of which the tools and portal cannot do):

- **Completeness checks.** Confirm all expected data are in the file, including data for all providers and programs that served youth during the reporting period, records for all youth participants who completed entry or exit surveys during the reporting period, and all expected data elements.
- **Reasonableness checks.** Confirm values are not dramatically different than expected, given the population served—for example, if a program operates in high schools, but the survey responses indicate participants are all younger. Unexpected results do not necessarily indicate data problems, but grantees should investigate if all or most values for a given variable seem unlikely.

To investigate any potential issues in the file:

Do	Do not
Contact providers or data collectors	Contact youth participants to resolve inconsistent or missing survey responses
Determine whether data missing from the file are available—for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On a hard-copy instrument<li>• In the data system used to create the file	Attempt to correct mistakes youth respondents made (such as inconsistent or out-of-range responses)
Compare the data file to hard-copy surveys or any other original version of responses to find errors in data entry	

Questions about training and technical assistance events

Q. Where can I find recordings of webinars that presented information about the shift to individual-level data submission?

A. Recordings of webinars held on November 16, 2023, December 14, 2023, and January 10, 2024, are available on the PREP performance measures website.

Additional information about the Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) performance measures is available at <https://prepeval.acf.hhs.gov/>. For further support, contact the Mathematica PREP Performance Measures technical assistance team at PREPPerformanceMeasures@mathematica-mpr.com, or call toll-free 1-855-267-6270.