

Instructions for completing the RIF Specifications Worksheet

This document: All Research Identifiable File (RIF) requests must include a completed RIF Specifications Worksheet. This form collects detailed Requester information, study/project data extract details, shipping information, and method of payment. It also includes a Part D Event justification tab that is required for all requests that include Part D data.

The Specifications Worksheet is used by the data distributor to confirm that the requested data are available and to generate a cost estimate or invoice. The Specifications Worksheet is the only place where the exact directions for completing the data extraction are found.

General Instructions

- 1. This is an Excel document with 6 tabs.
- 2. Carefully watch row numbers and make sure that you start each tab at row 1.
- 3. Do not alter the layout or content of the document.
- 4. The contents of the RIF Specification Worksheet must be consistent with the information contained in your RIF application. Carefully check to make sure the documents are aligned and let ResDAC know if you make changes to any document so they can help confirm that nothing else needs to be adjusted.
- 5. The <u>version number</u> can be found in row 2 of every tab. Before entering anything into the document, confirm that the version you are working with matches the current version listed on the <u>ResDAC RIF Specifications Worksheet page</u>.

CMS Data Request Specifications

Current Version: V20.1-6/2022

Screenshot from the RIF Specifications Worksheet

Document Version: 06/2022 - V20.1

Format: Microsoft Excel

DOWNLOAD FORM
Screenshot from the ResDAC website

Tabs

Tab 1: **VRDC Data Requests** - This tab is only completed if you are requesting to receive data through the <u>Virtual Research Data Center (VRDC)</u>.

Tab 2: **Physical Data Requests** - This tab is only completed if you are requesting to receive data through physical shipment or reusing data received through physical shipment.

Tab 3: **Custom Cohort** - This tab is only completed if you are requesting a cohort selected based on specific criteria (e.g., identifiers or diagnosis codes).

Tab4: **Annual Extract Summary** - This tab is completed if you are requesting to receive annual data extracts.

Tab 5: Quarterly Extract Summary - This tab is only completed if you are requesting to receive quarterly data.

Tab 6: **PDE Variables** - This tab is only completed if you selected Medicare Part D Event (pharmacy) data in the Annual Extract Summary tab.

Everyone must complete tab 1 or tab 2, or both if appropriate.

Specific Instructions: **Tab 1: VRDC Data Requests**

This tab is only completed if you are requesting to receive data through the VRDC. Do not enter any information in this tab if you are only requesting to receive data through physical shipment.

Row 5: Enter the Requester name and organization. The Requester is the individual authorized to sign agreements on behalf of the requesting organization. This person is named on the Data Use Agreement (DUA) and Attachment A: RIF Application. **The content you enter will autofill this information in the rest of the tabs.**

5 P				
5 Requester Name/Organization:	<u> </u>			
Rows 6-7: Do not enter an	ny information. These f	fields are for ResI	DAC internal use.	
6 ResDAC Ticket ID:			Date:	
7 ResDAC TA:				
Row 8: Enter the project/s	tudy name evactly as y	ou entered it on	the DLIA and DIE annli	cation
Now o. Litter the project/s	tudy fiamle exactly as y	ou entereu it on	the DOA and Kir appli	Cation.
Project/Study Name:				
0				
Rows 10-14: Check one	box only. If you check t	he box in row 12	(Amendment to DUA)	, enter the DUA information in
the second box on row 12. C	heck the box in row 14	if your request is	for a cost invoice (est	imate) for a grant proposal.
10 DUA Request:		New DUA Request		
11			-	
12		Amendment to DUA	Enter DUA #	
14		Grant Proposal		
Dow 17: In diasta whatland	the DIIA is a wassewales			daval a sau accusa t
Row 17: Indicate whether For-profit organizations show				
Requesters who are federal a				check the researcher box.
requesters who are reactat t	agencies should check	the reactat agen	cy box.	
17	DUA Type	Researcher	Innovator	Federal Agency
Dow 20: La di cata ifali a una				
ROW 20. Indicate if the req	luest is related to a nev	v project, an upd	ate to an existing proj	ect or annual project renewal.
20	Project Type	New Project	Existing Project	Annual Project Renewal
D 00				
Row 23: Indicate whether		•	l VRDC.	
Note: All seats on a single DI	JA nave to be the same	e access types.		
23	Access Type	SAS Only	Full VRDC (Includ	es Databricks)

Specific Instructions: Tab 1: VRDC Data Requests (continued)

Rows 25-48:

New DUA requests: For each seat holder, enter their name, organization, business address and business email and select new user in column K, even if the seat holder has an existing seat on another DUA. If a seat holder is not yet identified, the information can be noted as TBD but will need to be completed before the seat can be activated. CMS will not accept a PO box or foreign address. CMS will not accept personal email addresses (e.g., gmail.com or hotmail.com). All seat holders must be affiliated with the primary organization or a collaborating organization. For each user, indicate in column M if the seat requires a Stata license.

Amendment requests: Only list the seat holders that need changes to their access. Note seat holders as follows:

- Seat Addition: Enter the seat holder's name, organization, business address and business email. Check the box in column K.
- Seat Transfer: Enter the new seat holder's name, organization, business address and business email. Check the box in column K. In row 58 'Comments' section, indicate the current seat holder and the name of the new seat holder.
- Seat Renewal: Enter the seat holder's name, organization, business address and business email. Check the box in column L.

Stata license requests:

• For all request types, indicate in column M if the seat requires a new or renewed Stata license.

4	Α	В	С	D	E	F	G	Н	T	J	K	L	М
1		10				CM	S Data Re	quest Spe	cifications				
25		VRDC Sea	atholder(s) (users tl	nat will obta	nin a CCW User	ID and work	within the V	RDC)		New User Request	Seat Renewal Request	Stata License Request*
26		Seatholde	r Name:										
27		Organizat	ion:										
28		Street Add	lress:			38	479		24 1				
29		City:		5		State:			ZIP Code:				
30		Business I	mail:										
31				_									
32		Seatholde	r Name:										
33		Organizat	ion:										
34		Street Add	lress:										
35		City:				State:			ZIP Code:				
36		Business I	mail:										41
37		W.											
38		Seatholde	r Name:								2		
39		Organizat	ion:										
40		Street Add	lress:										
41		City:				State:			ZIP Code:				
42		Business I	Email:										

Specific Instructions: Tab 1: VRDC Data Requests (continued)

Rows 50-53: Identify a project contact who will be responsible for answering questions about this request. This person does not need to be one of the seat holders. CMS will not accept personal email addresses (e.g., gmail.com or hotmail.com).

¥.	Project Contact (person who wi	ll be responsible for answering questions about the VRDC request)
	Project Contact Name:	
	Organization:	
	Business Email:	

Rows 55-60: Indicate each <u>add-on item</u> that is requested. If no additional add-on items are needed, the section can be left blank.

55	Additional Add On Items	
56	Quarterly data pulls for a DUA	
57	Additional Databricks credits (2,000 credits at the DUA level)	
58	Additional space (1 TB blocks at the DUA level)	
59	Additional output reviews (3 reviews per week up to 1 GB at the DUA level)	
60	Additional data extract for an existing DUA (e.g., data needed for changes in cohort or additional requested files)	

Rows 62-64: Select the option that describes how the data fees will be paid. Federal grant recipients whose data fees will be paid directly to CMS by the agency should check the IAA box in row 64.

62	Method of Payment (Researcher will be contacted for payment after request is approved)			
63	Pay.gov			
64	Interagency Agreement Number (federal agencies only)			

Row 66: Do not enter anything in this row. It is for internal use only.

	Comments:
66	

Rows 68-69: Enter a 3-4 sentence study description in the box provided. The description should be consistent with the information provided in the RIF application.

68	Study Description Briefly describe the study aims and objectives
69	

Specific Instructions: Tab 2: Physical Data Requests

This tab is only completed if you are requesting to receive data through physical shipment. Do not enter any information in this tab if you are only requesting to receive data through the VRDC.

Row 5: Enter the Requester name and organization. The Requester is the individual authorized to sign agreements on behalf of the requesting organization. This person is named on the DUA and RIF application. **The content you enter will autofill this information in the rest of the tabs.**

5	Requester Name/Organization:	
Ro	ows 6-7: Do not enter a	ny information. These fields are for ResDAC internal use.
	ResDAC Ticket ID:	Date:
1	ResDAC TA:	
Ro	ow 8: Enter the project/s	study name exactly as you entered it on the DUA and RIF application.
8	Project/Study Name:	
		box only. If you check the box in row 11 (Amendment to DUA), enter the DUA information in
	e second box on row 11.	Check the box in row 12 if your request is for a cost invoice (estimate) for a grant proposal.
	DUA Request:	New DUA Request Amendment to DUA Grant Proposal
10 11 12	DUA Request: OWS 14-17: Identify a	New DUA Request Amendment to DUA Enter DUA #
10 11 12 R (wi	DUA Request: DWS 14-17: Identify a ll not accept personal em Project Contact (person who will)	New DUA Request Amendment to DUA Grant Proposal project contact who will be responsible for answering questions about this request. CMS
10 11 12 R (wi 14 15	DUA Request: OWS 14-17: Identify a ll not accept personal em Project Contact (person who will) Name:	New DUA Request Amendment to DUA Grant Proposal project contact who will be responsible for answering questions about this request. CMS rail addresses (e.g., gmail.com or hotmail.com).
10 11 12 R (wi 14 15 16	DUA Request: DWS 14-17: Identify a ll not accept personal em Project Contact (person who will)	New DUA Request Amendment to DUA Grant Proposal project contact who will be responsible for answering questions about this request. CMS rail addresses (e.g., gmail.com or hotmail.com).

Rows 18-24: Provide the contact information for the Data Recipient if they are different than the Data Custodian. The Data Custodian is the primary contact for the <u>Data Management Plan Self-Attestation Questionnaire (DMP SAQ)</u> and is identified on the DUA. CMS will only deliver data to a physical address and will not accept a PO box or foreign address. The Data Recipient must sign for the shipment.

18	Data Recipient (if different from	ı the data custodian)		
19	Name:			
20	Organization:			
21	Street Address:			
22				
23	City:	State:	ZIP Code:	
	199		Business	
24	Telephone:		Email:	

Specific Instructions: Tab 2: Physical Data Requests (continued)

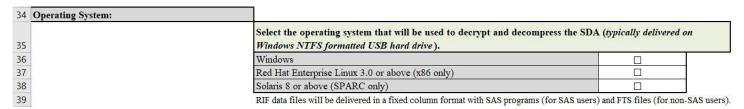
Rows 25-31: Provide the contact information for the Data Custodian. The Data Custodian is the primary contact for the Data Management Plan Self-Attestation Questionnaire (DMP SAQ). They are the individual that will be responsible for ensuring that the environment in which the CMS data is stored complies with all applicable CMS data security requirements, including the establishment and maintenance of security arrangements to prevent unauthorized use. This must match the name and contact information for the Data Custodian on the DUA.

25	Custodian (person who is prima	ry contact for the Data Management Plan)		- 11
26	Name:			
27	Organization:			
28	Street Address:			
29				
30	City:	State:	ZIP Code:	
			Business	
31	Telephone:		Email:	

Row 32: Check this box if the data are to be shipped to the Data Recipient rather than the Data Custodian. By checking this box, the Requester acknowledges that the data is being shipped to an individual other than the Data Custodian and understands that the Data Recipient is aware that the data are being shipped to them and that the recipient accepts the responsibility to keep the data secure until they are delivered to the Data Custodian.

☐ I'm requesting that the data be sent to the data recipient named above.	32
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Rows 34-39: Check the box in rows 36-38 that describes the local operating system that will be used to decrypt and decompress the data.



Rows 41-44: Select the option in rows 43-44 that describes how the data fees will be paid. Federal grant recipients whose data fees will be paid directly to CMS by the agency should check the IAA box in row 44.

41	Payment and Shipping:		
42		Method of Payment (Researcher will be contacted for payment after re	equest is approved)
43		Pay.gov	
44		Interagency Agreement Number (federal agencies only)	

Specific Instructions: Tab 2: Physical Data Requests (continued)

Rows 46-55: Encrypted drives must be shipped using a delivery service with tracking and signature release requirements. Researchers can either have CCW create a shipping label or supply one. It is the Data Custodian's responsibility to make sure this information is correct or delivery of data may be delayed. **Misplaced or mis-delivered data is considered a breach and requires reporting to CMS.**

Rows 46-48: If you wish for CCW to create the shipping label, enter the delivery service name in row 47 and a valid delivery service account number in row 48. Delivery services must have the ability to track shipments and require signature releases. Examples are FedEx, UPS or USPS. The delivery will be sent to the person you designated to receive the shipment (either a Data Recipient or the Data Custodian).

46	Shipping In	formation (Provide Shipping I	nformation or Provide Prepaid Label)	
47	Ship via Deli	very Service:	Delivery Service Name:	
48		\rightarrow	Delivery Account Number:	

Row 50: If you wish to supply a shipping label, check the box in row 50. The information on the label must match the information provided in rows 25-31 if shipping to the Data Custodian or rows 18-24 if shipping to a different Data Recipient.

50	Prepaid Label will be Provided:	
Dow E2: 5-1	and all the above able to a conclusion of the all the able to an	

Row 53: Enter any special instructions related to shipping.

52	Special Shipping Instructions:
53	
54	
55	

Rows 57-58: Enter a 3-4 sentence study description in the box provided. The description should be consistent with the information provided in the RIF application.

57	Study Description Briefly describe the study aims and objectives	
58		

Rows 60-62: If you are linking this data to data from another DUA through reuse, enter up to four DUA numbers in columns D, G, J and M. If you are not linking to data from another DUA, leave this row blank.

4	A B	1	С		D	Е	F		G	Н	1		J		K	L	N	1	N
1	CMS Data Request Specifications																		
60	Linkage To Another DUA Requested:																		
61	Each data request is uniquely encrypted. If you are linking this request to data received from a different DUA, please provide the DUA number.																		
62	Enter DUA #(s)											97.50	S-100					

Specific Instructions: Tab 2: Physical Data Requests (continued)

Rows 64-71: If you are reusing data from another DUA, note in column A the DUA you are reusing from, in column D, the files being reused and column J, the years being reused. Use as many rows as needed. This table should contain new information only and not reuse that has previously been approved.

-4	А	В	C		D	Е		F	G	Н	1	J		K	L	M		N	
1	CMS Data Request Specifications																		
64	Requests Involving Reuse of Data:																		
65	If your study also includes reusing data from an existing DUA, please complete the section below																		
66	DUA	Number		,				File	Names				Y	Years Being Reused					
67				- 0				1 1				8							
68																			
69				- 0								8							
70																			
71		·					· ·	· ·	·		·				·	·			

Specific Instructions: Tab 3: Custom Cohort

This tab is only completed if you are requesting a cohort selected based on specific criteria (e.g., identifiers or diagnosis codes). The custom cohort will be indicated in Tab 4. Annual Extract Summary and/or Tab 5. Quarterly Extract Summary in column N.

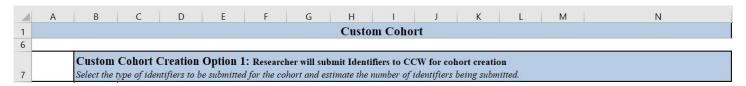
Row 4: Do not enter anything in this row. It will autofill from either the VRDC Data Requests tab or the Physical Data Requests tab. If corrections are needed, make them in row 5 of that tab.

4	Requester Name/Organization:	

The custom cohort creation tab is used to note selection criteria other than a standard sample percentage selection (5%, 20%, 100%). If you did not select the custom option in columns J or L on either the Annual Extract Summary or the Quarterly Extract Summary tabs, this tab is not required. If you are not sure whether you need to complete this tab, please contact ResDAC.

The Custom Cohort tab divides custom cohorts into two types—(Option 1) a finder file of identifiers submitted by the Requester and (Option 2) a set criteria to be searched within the data to select the cohort of interest.

Row 7: If you are identifying individuals and will be submitting a finder file, check column A.



Rows 8-16: Next, select the option that describes the type of identifiers you will use. If you are using Medicare IDs as identifiers, you must note whether the IDs are HICs, MBIs, or both and mark the appropriate ID type(s).

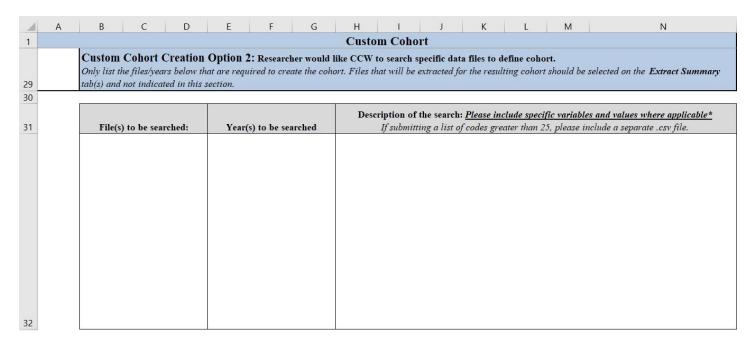
8	CCW Bene ID
9	HIC Numbers
10	MBI Numbers
11	Full SSN Numbers
12	MSIS ID + State ID (Medicaid)
13	Partial SSN* *Must also include a minimum of two additional variables from DOB, Gender, ZIP Code
14	Assessment Res ID + State ID (MDS, OASIS, IRF-PAI, Swing Bed)
15	
16	Other: Enter text

Row 21: Enter the number of beneficiaries in your finder file. This information must be complete and correct at the cost invoice stage. Changes to the cohort size at the time of data processing could result in additional review or change in project cost.

Number of beneficiaries in the finder file: Enter text

Specific Instructions: Tab 3: Custom Cohort Tab (continued)

Rows 29-32: The second type of finders selects cohorts based on information from one or more variables. If you are requesting a cohort to be selected based on information from CMS variables, check row 29, column A. In row 32, column B, enter the file name or names that contain the variables to be searched. In column E, enter the years of each file to be searched and in column H, describe the search—noting which variables and values should be used to identify the cohort. If you are requesting multiple cohorts, clearly identify each cohort. Expand row 32 as needed. **Note:** Only list the files to be searched for the cohort identification. Files to be delivered based on the cohort identified are listed in another tab.



Row 36: Enter the estimated number of people you expect will be identified by the search.

36	Expected Cohort Size:	Enter text

Row 41: For both option 1 and option 2, enter a detailed description of the extract methodology. Carefully describe both inclusion and exclusion criteria, data years, files and other methods that are necessary to correctly provide the data you wish to receive.

40	Overview of Extract Methodology Please provide instructions for your data extract.
40	
41	

Specific Instructions: Tab 4: Annual Extract Summary Tab

This tab is completed if you are requesting to receive annual data extracts.

Row 4: Do not enter anything in this row. It will autofill from either the VRDC Data Requests tab or the Physical Data Requests tab. If corrections are needed, make them in row 5 of that tab.

4	Requester Name/Organization:	

Every new data file other than reuse and quarterly data files must be noted in this tab. Files are organized in groups by data type.

Rows 9+: Check the box in column A (or B as appropriate) if you wish to receive this file. In column J, enter the years of data you wish to receive. Years should be typed out in the YYYY format. Multiple years should be separated by a comma (YYYY, YYYY). Ranges should be entered with a hyphen between the start and end date (YYYY-YYYY). Do not include data already in your possession or data you are approved to access under your DUA. Mark column K if you wish to receive a 5% sample, column L if you wish to receive a 20% sample and column M if you wish to receive 100% of the data. Mark column N if you are requesting a custom cohort and complete Tab 3. Custom Cohort. If you are requesting multiple cohorts, you can indicate which files are for each by indicating cohort 1, cohort 2 and ensuring that the description matches the 'Overview of Extract Methodology' section on the Custom Extract tab. If there is no dark gray box under a specific option, the file is not available in that format.

A	A B C D	E F	G I	Н	Ì	J	K	L	М	N		
1				Extract Sum	11 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1							
2	Current Version: V20.1-6/2022 For instructions on how to complete this form, please visit: https://resdac.org/request-form/rif-specifications-worksheet											
	For instructions on how to complete this form, please	se visit: <u>https://resdac.or</u>	rg/request-form/	rif-specifications-	worksheet							
	Requester Name/Organization:											
	Please consult the ResDAC availability table to se				NEO.	https://www.resda	-					
6	Refer to the CCW website to ensure the files you are requesting have the data elements you need for your study: https://www.ccwdata.org/web/guest/data-dictionaries											
7						YEAR(S) REQUESTED	5%* *Assumes enhanced sample	20%* *Assumes enhanced sample	100%	COHORT SPECIFIC		
8		EN	ROLLMEN	NT / SUMMA	RY FIL	ES		T				
9	Master Beneficiary Summary File											
10	Segments:					752						
11	Base Beneficiary Sur	mmary File A/B/C/D		(MBSF)							
12	27 Chronic Condition	ons (available 1999-2021)		(MBSF)			i i				
13	30 Chronic Condition	ons (2017 forward)		(MBSF)							
14	Cost & Utilization			(MBSF)			j i				
15	Other Chronic or Po	otentially Disabling Condi	itions	(MBSF)							
16	National Death Inde	x** (Available File Yrs. Medica	re: 1999-2016)	(NDI)								
17	** Available in the V	RDC ONLY - no physical sl	hipments									
18							P.					
19	Plan Characteristics Files			(PLAN	CF)		2					
20												
21	Vital Status File (Includes living an	d deceased beneficiaries)		(VSTA	T)							
22												
23	Medicare/Medicaid Linked En		ce (MMLEAD	S) (MML)	D)							
24	Beneficiary Summar	y File (2016 forward)		(MML)	D)							
25	Cost and Use Summ	ary File (2016 forward)		(MML)	D)							

Specific Instructions: Tab 5: Quarterly Extract Summary Tab

This tab is only completed if you are requesting to receive quarterly data.

Row 4: Do not enter anything in this row. It will autofill from either the VRDC Data Requests tab or the Physical Data Requests tab. If corrections are needed, make them in row 5 of that tab.

4	Requester Name/Organization:	

Rows 11+: Check the box in column A (or B as appropriate) if you wish to receive this file. In column J, enter the quarters and years of data you wish to receive. Quarters should be entered as year followed by quarter (YYYY Q1). Multiple quarters in the same year should be separated by a comma (YYYY Q1, Q2). Ranges should be entered with a hyphen between the start and the end date (YYYY Q1-Q4). Do not include data already in your possession. Mark column K if you wish to receive a 5% sample, column L if you wish to receive a 20% sample and column M if you wish to receive 100% of the data. Mark column N if you are requesting a custom cohort and complete Tab 3. Custom Cohort. If you are combining two cohort selection methods, use the 'cohort 2' option to differentiate the two selection methods.

4	A B C D E F G H I J K L	L M	N		
1	1 Quarterly Extract Summary		m s		
2	2 Current Version: V20.1-6/2022				
3	3 For instructions on how to complete this form, please visit: https://resdac.org/request-form/rif-specifications-worksheet				
4	4 Requester Name/Organization:				
5	5 Please consult the ResDAC availability table to see which years of data are available for request: https://www.resdac.org/file-availability				
	Refer to the CCW website to ensure the files you are requesting have the data elements you need for your https://www.ccwdata.org/web/guest/data	ta-dictionaries			
6	6 study:				
_	YEAR(S) enhanced enha	numes 100%	COHORT SPECIFIC		
7	sample sample				
8					
9					
10		Ť	Ti Ti		
12					
3,1110					
13					
14					
16			9		
17			<u> </u>		
18			di di		
19			<u> </u>		
20					
21					
	22 ANNUAL REFRESH: Quarterly claims are available 4 months after the quarter end. Maturity information can be found at				
	22 ANYOAL KETKESH: Quarterly claims are available 4 months after the quarter end. Maturity information can be found at https://www2.ccwdata.org/web/guest/ccw-medicare-data-white-papers. Annual refreshes are available 14 months after year end				
	and are 100% mature and complete.				

Specific Instructions: Tab 6: PDE Variables Tab

This tab is only completed if you selected Medicare Part D Event (pharmacy) data in the Annual Extract Summary tab.

Row 4: Do not enter anything in this row. It will autofill from either the VRDC Data Requests tab or the Physical Data Requests tab. If corrections are needed, make them in row 5 of that tab.

4 Requester Name/Organization:	

Rows 7-9: No edits are needed. These variables are automatically included in all PDE requests.

7	General Variables				
8	X (Automatically included with PDE data)	Encrypted Part D Event ID	Unique key for each Part D event	Not applicable	Needed to link to the Drug characteristics file
9	X (Automatically included with PDE data)	Encrypted CCW Beneficiary ID	Need for linking	Not applicable	Needed for linking to other files

Rows 10-59: For each Part D variable, mark in column A if you wish to receive the variable. Leave column A blank if you do not wish to receive the variable.

Enter in column E the reason you need the information. Be specific about how the variable will be used. If you are not requesting the variable, column E should be left blank. Enter in column H the risk to appropriate inference or ability to complete study aims that would come from not receiving the data. If you are not requesting the variable, column H should be left blank. You do not need to enter anything into column K.

10	Phase 1 and Demographic Variables				
	Patient Date of Birth (DOB)			Not edited - Recommend using Beneficiary Summary file	
11	Patient Gender			Not edited - Recommend using Beneficiary Summary file	
2	RX Service Date				
13					
	Quantity Dispensed				
4				C14 PH 77	
	Product/Service Identifier			This is the 11 digit NDC code.	
15					
	Days Supply				
6					
	Patient Pay Amount				
17					
	Gross Drug Cost (sum of Ingredient Cost Paid, Dispensing Fee Paid, Total Amount Attributed to Sales Tax)				
18					
19	Patient Residence Code			New variable for 2013 PDE extracts and forward.	
3	Submission Clarification Code			New variable for 2013 PDE extracts and	
:0				forward.	
	Drug Coverage Status Code				
21					
12	The Brand-Generic Code reported by the submitting plan			New variable for 2012 PDE extracts and forward.	

Specific Instructions: **Tab 6: PDE Variables Tab (continued)**

Rows 51-59: If you are requesting characteristics linkage variables but not the corresponding characteristics file, (such as pharmacy IDs but not the pharmacy characteristics file), be sure to explain how the variables will be used in your study without the characteristics file. The variable justification must be specific to the combination of data being requested.

51		Characteristics Linkage V	ariables .	
	CCW Pharmacy ID / NCPDP ID	•		Needed to link to the CCW Pharmacy characteristics file. The Pharmacy linking variable switched from CCW Pharmacy ID to NCPDP ID in 2014.
52	CCW Prescriber ID / Prescriber ID			A CCW prescriber identification number that is used to link Prescribers on the PDE data to the Prescriber Characteristics File.
	PDE Prescriber ID Format			A code that describes if the Prescriber ID on the PDE is in a general NPI, DEA or UPIN format (it does not necessarily imply the code itself is valid) based on the length of the Prescriber ID and the combination of alpha and numeric characters. Values are: 'N'=NPI; 'D'=DEA; 'U'=UPIN; 'X'=None;
54	Prescriber ID Qualifier Code			Prescriber identification variable newly released for 2013 and are available historically to 2006. Delivered together with Prescriber ID.
55	Formulary ID			ID assigned to each newly created formulary. Needed to link to the
56	CCW Formulary RX ID			Formulary file A CCW identifier for a drug product found in a Part D prescription drug plan formulary. Needed to link to the
58	Plan Contract ID			Needed to link to the Plan characteristics file
59	Plan Benefit Package ID			Needed to link to the Plan characteristics file