

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE ACCESS AND INFORMATION
CALIFORNIA EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT AND
AMBULATORY SURGERY PATIENT DATA REPORTING MANUAL, FIFTH EDITION**

PATIENT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

Section 97256

The patient’s social security number is to be reported as a 9-digit number. If the patient’s social security number is not recorded in the patient’s medical record, the social security number shall be reported as “not in medical record,” by reporting the social security number as “000000001.” The number to be reported is to be the patient’s social security number, not the social security number of some other person, such as the mother of a newborn or the insurance beneficiary under whose account the hospital’s bill is to be submitted.

DISCUSSION

Specifications for reporting this data element with the Record Entry Form for online web entry of individual records or online data file transmission:

PATIENT'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER								
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<i>Report 000 00 0001 if the SSN is Unknown</i>								

Reporting Requirements

- Fill from the left-most position and do not skip fields.
- Use the full 9-digit social security number (SSN) including zeros
- Do not use hyphens
- Enter 000000001 as “unknown” if the patient’s SSN is not recorded in the medical record

Only Use Patient’s SSN:

- Mother’s SSN is not the newborn’s SSN
- Parent’s SSN is not a child’s SSN
- Husband’s SSN is not a wife’s SSN
- Medicare issued numbers are not used as a patient’s SSN

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Non-US Numbers: Even if a non-US number resembles a SSN, do not report it to HCAI.

Valid/Invalid SSNs: SSNs consist of nine digits divided into three parts. The first three digits denote the area (or state) where the application was filed. The middle two digits denote a group number ranging from 01 to 99. The last four digits are the serial number. Because of the way the SSN is constructed, it is possible to say that a particular SSN is invalid if it starts with three digits not approved by the Social Security Administration for use as an area identifier or if it has 00 in the group number area. On a semi-annual basis, HCAI updates the SSN ranges to the most current. Please refer to the ED and AS Edit Flag Description Guide for a list of invalid SSN ranges.

Medicare Numbers: The Medicare program is a federal health insurance program for individuals 65 years and older and certain disabled individuals. The number issued for Medicare coverage is a Health Insurance Benefit/Claim (HIB/HIC) number. The HIB/HIC number usually has nine digits and one or two letters, and there may also be another number after the letter(s). There are no dashes or spaces in the HIB/HIC number. SSNs and HIB/HIC numbers are not interchangeable. The first nine digits of the HIB/HIC number may be, but are not always, the same as the nine digits of the SSN.

Confidentiality: The SSN is confidential and is encrypted into a nine-digit alphanumeric number referred to as the Record Linkage Number (RLN). The RLN is used to link episodes of care over time and across facilities in order to support research addressing the quality of medical care in California healthcare facilities. HCAI continues to consider the protection of individually identifiable medical information as the crux of its legislative mandate. By law, the patient's right of confidentiality shall not be violated, and no one reporting data shall be liable for damages in any action based on the use or misuse of this data. See Sections 128736 (ED) and 128737 (AS) of the Health and Safety Code for patient confidentiality requirements.