



**PROFICIENCY TESTING PROGRAM
FIELDS OF PROFICIENCY TESTING DATABASE
ELECTRONIC DATA DELIVERABLE SPECIFICATION v0.2b**

Summary PT study statistical data is to be submitted via electronic data deliverable (EDD) to the Proficiency Testing Program Fields of Proficiency Testing Database (the Database), a website operated by The NELAC Institute (TNI). This document provides a detailed description of the EDD and submission guidelines.

EDD DESCRIPTION

The EDD is an ASCII text file that follows a comma-separated-value (CSV) structure. In a CSV structure, data are reported as a series of records, one analytical result per record, and a series of fields, with many fields per record. Each field is separated from another by a comma.

Each field may also be enclosed in double quotation marks, although this is only required if a field itself contains a comma. For example, an analyte name such as “1,2,3-Trichloroethene” must be enclosed in quotation marks because it contains a comma.

COLUMN HEADERS (FIELD IDs)

Column headers may be included in the EDD in row position #1, at the discretion of the PT Provider.

OPTIONAL FIELDS

While most fields are required to be populated, some are optional. Optional fields, if not submitted, must be represented by a placeholder comma, so that the total number of fields per record remains constant.

Example:

ContactName,Phone,Email

John Smith,555-123-3212,jsmith@acme.com ← all three fields populated

Mary Jones,,mjones@acme.com ← phone # is not entered, so a comma placeholder is used instead

FILENAMES

Files may be named at the discretion of the PT Provider.

KEY FIELDS

To maintain database integrity, each record in the database must be uniquely identifiable. This is done by using “key fields,” which are fields that, taken together, identify a record as belonging to a specific PT sample statistic. In this EDD format, the following are key fields:

- Study Number
- Opening Date
- Study Matrix
- TNI Analyte Code
- Analyte Name

This means that in the Database, there will be only one record that has a given combination of values as key fields. If two records were to be submitted with identical key field values, the database will identify the second record as a duplicate and flag the row with an error during upload.

Added 2-23-2021: If the key fields identified above do not provide sufficient granularity due to your organization having multiple product offerings, you may append a unique value (at your discretion) to the Study Number field so that your data may be uploaded without being interpreted as duplicate values.

DATE VALUES

Date fields must be formatted as follows:

Field Type	Format	Example
Date	yyyy-mm-dd	2020-05-21

VALID VALUES

Some fields are validated against a defined set of values, assigned by TNI. Submissions that contain invalid values will be rejected. Fields that require adherence to published valid value lists (VVLs) are indicated in the EDD Schema (Table 1). Current VVLs may be downloaded from the [Laboratory Accreditation Management System \(LAMS\) website](#).

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

EDD submission requires a valid user ID and password to the PT Database website. Every PT Provider user can create a new user account for their organization following these steps:

1. Go to the PT Database website at <https://pt.nelac-institute.org>.
2. Click the "Login" link and login using your user ID and password.
3. Under PT Providers, click on "User Admin." General contact information and all of the PT Provider's current users will be displayed.
4. To add an employee, click the "Add Employee" button. A new employee block will be added.
5. Type the user's name, e-mail address, and phone number into the spaces provided in the new employee block.
6. Click the "Send Activation Email" link in the new employee block. The employee will receive an e-mail with a link to complete the registration and allow login.
7. Click "Save."

With a valid User ID and password in hand, submit an EDD following these steps:

1. Go to the PT Database website at <https://pt.nelac-institute.org>.
2. Click the "Login" link and login using your user ID and password.
3. Under PT Providers, click on "Upload Data."
4. On the Upload Data screen, designate the EDD format to upload by clicking on either the "Standard Format" button or the "Special Format" button. Note that the "Special Format" is only used to submit files directly to TNI for manual processing due to a special request. In most cases, the Standard Format will be used.
5. Click the "Select File" button. A file-open dialog will appear. Find the CSV file you want to upload, and click OK.
6. Click the "Process File" button. The EDD will be processed. Upon completion, a summary of rows successfully uploaded will be shown. A list of rows that could not be uploaded due to an error (e.g., invalid values, invalid format, or a duplicate record was submitted) will also be provided.

HELP/SUPPORT/QUESTIONS

Questions from Providers regarding the EDD, valid values, the upload process, or data submissions may be submitted to william.daystrom@nelac-institute.org.

Table 1: EDD Schema – Standard Format

Field ID	Type	Req'd?	Format or Length	Description
PT Provider Name	text	Y	255	
PT Provider TNI Code	text	Y*	8	Must be the PT Provider Code assigned by TNI, listed at https://nelac-institute.org/content/NEPTP/ptproviders.php
Study Number	text	Y	45	Unique PT study number, assigned by the PT Provider
Study Matrix	text	Y*	5	Must be one of the matrix codes listed at https://lams.nelac-institute.org/Matrices
Analyte Name	text	Y	255	Analyte Name
TNI Analyte Code	number	Y*	integer	TNI Analyte Code
Technology ID	text	N*	integer	Must be one of the technology names listed at https://lams.nelac-institute.org/Technologies
Assigned Value	number	Y	double	Assigned value, to 3 significant figures
Study Mean	number	Y	double	Study Mean, to 3 significant figures
Lab Participants	number	Y	integer	Number of labs evaluated by PT Provider for the analyte in the study
Study Std Dev	number	Y	double	Study Standard Deviation, to 3 significant figures
Opening Date	date	Y	yyyy-mm-dd	Opening date of the PT study
Concentration Units	text	Y	45	Units
Data Points	number	Y	integer	Number of measurements of an analyte reported to PT Provider for the study
Failures	number	Y	integer	Number of data points scored as Not Acceptable

* Valid value required