

FY 2024 PLS Data Collection: Data Element Changes, Import File Specifications, and Edit Check Specifications

Date: November 28, 2023
To: Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and State Data Coordinators (SDCs)
From: American Institutes for Research (AIR)

This memo is an update to the version posted to the SDC Forum on October 31, 2023. **Updates made since the release of the October memo were primarily in Section 3, Edit Check Specifications. The FY 2024 Edit Check Specifications file has also been posted to the SDC Forum.**

As a reminder this memo and the referenced files are meant to help you and your libraries prepare for the FY 2024 PLS data submission in 2025, this memo provides an overview of the following information:

1. Data element changes,
2. Import file specifications, and
3. Edit check specifications **NEW!**

The two specification files referenced in Section 2 and 3, as well as this memo are available on the IMLS Group Site. AIR is distributing these documents directly to Counting Opinions and Baker & Taylor; if you use one of these vendors, please confirm the implementation of these specifications as they relate to your state's survey.

1. Data Element Changes

This section presents the details of data element changes for the FY 2024 PLS. The following subsections relay the details of the following:

- A. Revisions: 7 data elements
- B. Deletions: 11 data elements
- C. Additions: 24 data elements

1.1. Revised Data Elements

Seven data elements were revised for FY 2024. A summary is below, and full updates are shown in **Table 1**.

- Definitions were modified for Electronic Content Expenditures (ELMATEXP), Other Physical Materials Expenditures (OTHMATEX), Reference Transactions (REFERENC), Total Number of Asynchronous Program Presentations (TOTPRES), and Total Views of Asynchronous Program Presentations within 30 Days (TOTVIEWS).
- Data element names for Electronic Content Expenditures (ELMATEXP) and Other Physical Materials Expenditures (OTHMATEX) were modified, but their variables names remain the same.
- Total Circulation of Materials (TOTCIR) and Use of Electronic Material (ELMATCIR) will become calculated sums in the Web Portal (like Hours Open (HRS_OPEN)).

Table 1. Revised Data Elements for FY 2024 PLS

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition	Revision Affects
354	Electronic Content Expenditures (ELMATEXP)	<p>Report all operating expenditures for electronic (digital) content. Include expenditures for electronic content for which the library has acquired permanent or temporary access rights. Include fees paid to platforms that provide licensed content.</p> <p>Electronic content can be accessed online from an electronic device. Types of electronic content include electronic materials (e-books, e-serials, e-audio, e-video), research databases, online learning platforms, reference tools, scores, maps, and pictures in electronic or digital format.</p> <p>Note: Expenditures for computer software used to support library operations or to link to external networks, including the Internet, are reported under Other Operating Expenditures (data element #357).</p>	Name, definition, and Edit Checks
355	Other Physical Materials Expenditures (OTHMATEX)	Report all operating expenditures for other materials, such as microform, audio and video physical units, DVD, circulating portable electronic devices, and materials in new formats	Name, definition, and Edit Checks
502	Reference Transactions (REFERENC)	<p>Reference Transactions are information consultations in which library staff recommend, interpret, evaluate, and/or use information resources to help others to meet particular information needs.</p> <p>Reference transactions do not include formal instruction or exchanges that provide assistance with</p>	Definition only

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition	Revision Affects
		locations, schedules, equipment, supplies, or policy statements.	
		<u>NOTES:</u>	
		(1) A reference transaction includes information and referral service, scheduled and unscheduled individual instruction and assistance in using information sources (including websites and computer-assisted instruction).	
		(2) Count Readers Advisory questions as reference transactions.	
		(3) Information sources include (a) printed and nonprinted material; (b) machine-readable databases (including computer-assisted instruction); (c) the library's own catalogs and other holdings records; (d) other libraries and institutions through communication or referral; and (e) persons both inside and outside the library.	
		(4) When a staff member uses information gained from previous use of information sources to answer a question, the transaction is reported as a reference transaction even if the source is not consulted again.	
		(5) If a contact includes both reference and directional services, it should be reported as one reference transaction.	
		(6) Duration should not be an element in determining whether a transaction is a reference transaction.	
		(7) Do not include transactions that include only a directional service, such as instruction for locating staff, library users, or physical features within the library. Examples of directional transactions include, "Where is the reference librarian? Where is Susan Smith? Where is the rest room? Where are the 600s? Can you help me make a photocopy?"	
		<u>Annual Count vs. Annual Estimate</u>	
		If an annual count of reference transactions is unavailable, count reference transactions during a typical week or weeks, and multiply the count to represent an annual estimate.	

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition	Revision Affects
		<p>A “typical week” is a time that is neither unusually busy nor unusually slow. Avoid holiday times, vacation periods for key staff, or days when unusual events are taking place in the community or in the library. Choose a week in which the library is open its regular hours.</p> <p>Example: If there are four weeks sampled, multiply the totals for those four weeks by 13 to get an estimate for the full year. If the sample is done twice a year (one week at each time, two weeks total) multiply the count by 26 to get the estimated annual count.</p>	
550	Total Circulation of Materials (TOTCIR)	This is the sum of Use of Electronic Material and Physical Item Circulation (data elements #552 and #553).	Will become a calculated sum in Web Portal
552	Use of Electronic Material (ELMATCIR)	This is the sum of E-book Circulation, E-serial Circulation, E-audio Circulation, and E-video Circulation (data elements #545, #546, #547, and #548).	Will become a calculated sum in Web Portal
620	Total Number of Asynchronous Program Presentations (TOTPRES)	Asynchronous program presentations are recorded videos or audio of program content that are posted online for downloading or on-demand viewing (rather than livestreaming). Only include program presentations posted during the reporting period. Include live program sessions that are recorded and posted online. Count each unique video or audio recording only once regardless of the number of platforms on which it is posted. Do not duplicate numbers at each branch; count only at the administrative entity level.	Definition only
630	Total Views of Asynchronous Program Presentations within 30 Days (TOTVIEWS)	Report the count of views or plays of asynchronous program presentations for a period of thirty (30) days after the presentation was posted, even if that period extends beyond the survey reporting period (or fiscal year). For program presentations made available via Facebook, count unique 1-minute views of each video. For other platforms, count unique views or plays of each video or audio recording.	Definition only

1.2. Deleted Data Elements

The following 11 data elements have been deleted from the FY 2024 PLS data collection:

- Data Element 451, Electronic Books (EBOOK)
- Data Element 453, Audio - Downloadable Units (AUDIO_DL)
- Data Element 455, Video - Downloadable Units (VIDEO_DL)
- Data Element 456, Local/Other Cooperative Agreements (EC_LO_OT)
- Data Element 457, State (state government or state library) (EC_ST)
- Data Element 458, Total Electronic Collections (ELECCOLL)
- Data Element 551, Circulation of Children's Materials (KIDCIRCL)
- Data Element 554, Successful Retrieval of Electronic Information (ELINFO)
- Data Element 555, Electronic Content Use (ELCONT)
- Data Element 556, Total Collection Use (TOTCOLL)
- Data Element 653, Website Visits (WEBVISIT)

1.3. Added Data Elements

The FY 2024 PLS data collection will include 24 new data elements (see **Table 2**). The first year in the life cycle of a new PLS data element is a trial collection year to allow states adequate time to add the elements to their state surveys and train their libraries on how to collect the new data elements.

How to report unknown or missing values for the following new data elements.

- For the Yes/No data elements, report M
- For the numeric data elements, report -1

Table 2: Data Elements Additions for FY 2024 PLS

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition
505	Automatic Renewal of Physical Materials (AUTORENEW)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did your library offer automatic renewal for any physical materials during the reporting period?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing. NOTE: Patrons do not have to take any action for automatic renewals. The Integrated Library System [ILS] rules determine how/when automatic renewals occur.

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition
Electronic Books		
E-books are the digital equivalent of printed books that may be accessed online from an electronic device. E-books also include e-comics. Do not consider resources available for free in the public domain when answering the following questions.		
525	E-Books via AE (EBOOK_AE)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-books purchased solely by the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
526	E-Books via Collective (EBOOK_CO)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-books purchased via a consortium, cooperative, or other similar group at the local, regional, or state level?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
527	E-Books via State (EBOOK_SL)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-books provided by the state library agency or another state agency at no or minimal cost to the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
Electronic Serials		
E-serials are periodic digital publications equivalent to printed newspapers, magazines, and similar media that are viewed as entire issues rather than as single articles returned from a research query. Do not consider resources available for free in the public domain when answering the following questions.		
528	E-Serials via AE (ESERIAL_AE)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-serials purchased solely by the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
529	E-Serials via Collective (ESERIAL_CO)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-serials purchased via a consortium, cooperative, or other similar group at the local, regional, or state level?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
530	E-Serials via State (ESERIAL_SL)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-serials provided by the state library agency or another state agency at no or minimal cost to the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition
Electronic Audio		
E-audio are digital files of sound only (e.g., audiobooks, music) that may be accessed online from an electronic device. Do not consider resources available for free in the public domain when answering the following questions.		
531	E-Audio via AE (EAUDIO_AE)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-audio purchased solely by the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
532	E-Audio via Collective (EAUDIO_CO)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-audio purchased via a consortium, cooperative, or other similar group at the local, regional, or state level?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
533	E-Audio via State (EAUDIO_SL)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-audio provided by the state library agency or another state agency at no or minimal cost to the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
Electronic Video		
E-videos are digital files of moving visual images with or without sound (e.g., movies, television shows) that may be accessed online from an electronic device. Do not consider resources available for free in the public domain when answering the following questions.		
534	E-Video via AE (EVIDEO_AE)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-videos purchased solely by the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
535	E-Video via Collective (EVIDEO_CO)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-videos purchased via a consortium, cooperative, or other similar group at the local, regional, or state level?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
536	E-Video via State (EVIDEO_SL)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to e-videos provided by the state library agency or another state agency at no or minimal cost to the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition
Research Databases		
Research databases are organized collections of electronic data or records (e.g., facts, abstracts, articles, bibliographic data, texts, photographs) that can be searched to retrieve information. Do not consider resources available for free when answering the following questions.		
537	Research Databases via AE (RESDB_AE)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to research databases purchased solely by the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
538	Research Databases via Collective (RESDB_CO)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to research databases purchased via a consortium, cooperative, or other similar group at the local, regional, or state level?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
539	Research Databases via State (RESDB_SL)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to research databases provided by the state library or another entity at no or minimal cost to the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
Online Learning Platforms		
Online learning platforms primarily provide instruction, tools, and resources to enhance education, lifelong learning, and skill building. Platforms may offer homework assistance, language learning, test preparation, professional development, resume assistance, hobby instruction, etc. Do not consider resources available for free when answering the following questions.		
540	Online Learning Platforms via AE (OLP_AE)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to online learning platforms purchased solely by the administrative entity?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.
541	Online Learning Platforms via Collective (OLP_CO)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: <i>“Did the administrative entity provide access to online learning platforms purchased via a consortium, cooperative, or other similar group at the local, regional, or state level?”</i> If unknown, report <M>issing.

Data Element #	Data Element (Variable Name)	Data Element Definition
542	Online Learning Platforms via State (OLP_SL)	Answer <Y>es or <N>o to the following question: “ <i>Did the administrative entity provide access to online learning platforms provided by the state library or another entity at no or minimal cost to the administrative entity?</i> ” If unknown, report <M>issing.
E-Material Circulation		
Electronic (digital) materials can be accessed online from an electronic device. Types of electronic materials include e-books, e-serials, e-audio, and e-video. Only count items that require user authentication and have a limited period of use. Count all checkouts, including renewals.		
545	E-book Circulation (EBOOK_CIR)	The total circulation of e-books during the reporting period. E-books are the digital equivalent of printed books that may be accessed online from an electronic device. E-books also include e-comics. If unknown, report <-1>.
546	E-serial Circulation (ESERIAL_CIR)	The total circulation of e-serials during the reporting period. E-serials are periodic digital publications equivalent to printed newspapers, magazines, and similar media that are viewed as entire issues rather than as single articles returned from a research query. If unknown, report <-1>.
547	E-audio Circulation (EAUDIO_CIR)	The total circulation of e-audio during the reporting period. E-audio are digital files of sound only (e.g., audiobooks, music) that may be accessed online from an electronic device. If unknown, report <-1>.
548	E-video Circulation (EVIDEO_CIR)	The total circulation of e-videos during the reporting period. E-videos are digital files of moving visual images (e.g., movies, television shows) with or without sound that may be accessed online from an electronic device. If unknown, report <-1>.
549	Circulation of Children’s Physical Material (KIDPHYSCIR)	The total annual circulation of all children’s materials in all physical formats to all users, including renewals. Include circulation of other physical items for children (e.g., kits, games, technology). If possible, do not include materials for teens/young adults. If unknown, report <-1>.

2. Import File Specifications

(File: FY 2024 PLS Import Specs_FINAL.xlsx)

The FY 2024 import file specifications reflect all changes listed in detail above. All deletions from the import file layout are highlighted in red and crossed out. All new or revised items are highlighted in yellow. Please ensure your AE, Outlet, and Annotation import files match the structure provided (especially the order of data elements) or your data will not be appropriately imported into the Web Portal.

3. Edit Check Specifications

(File: FY 2024 PLS Edit Check Changes_FINAL.xlsx)

The first tab in the edit check specification document, labeled “Edit Changes FY24,” provides new, changed, and/or deleted edit checks that reflect the approved changes since the FY 2023 collection. As noted in the “Description of Change” column, changes to the edit checks for FY 2024 include:

3.1. Deleted Edit Checks

- 66 **noncritical** and **critical** edit checks were deleted for FY 2024 due to their associated variables being deleted or heavily revised and the checks are no longer applicable.
- 1 **noncritical** ratio edit check was deleted as it was a duplicate check.

3.2. Added Edit Checks

- 5 **critical** edit checks have been added to review EBOOK_CIR, ESERIAL_CIR, EAUDIO_CIR, EVIDEO_CIR, and KIDPHYSCIR and ensure -2 is not reported.
- 19 **critical** edit checks have been added to ensure the 19 new Yes/No variables are answered with <Y>es, <N>o, or <M>issing (AUTORENEW, EBOOK_AE, EBOOK_CO, EBOOK_SL, ESERIAL_AE, ESERIAL_CO, ESERIAL_SL, EAUDIO_AE, EAUDIO_CO, EAUDIO_SL, EVIDEO_AE, EVIDEO_CO, EVIDEO_SL, RESDB_AE, RESDB_CO, RESDB_SL, OLP_AE, OLP_CO, OLP_SL).
- 1 **noncritical** edit check was added to confirm zero (0) values reported for ELMATCIR.
- 4 **noncritical** edit checks were added to check when EBOOK_CIR, ESERIAL_CIR, EAUDIO_CIR, or EVIDEO_CIR equals zero (0), but at least one associated Yes/No variables for who provides access to materials (EBOOK_AE, EBOOK_CO, EBOOK_SL,

ESERIAL_AE, ESERIAL_CO, ESERIAL_SL, EAUDIO_AE, EAUDIO_CO, EAUDIO_SL, EVIDEO_AE, EVIDEO_CO, EVIDEO_SL) is **Yes**.

- 4 **noncritical** edit checks were added to check when EBOOK_CIR, ESERIAL_CIR, EAUDIO_CIR, or EVIDEO_CIR is greater than zero (0), but the associated Yes/No variables for who provides access to materials (EBOOK_AE, EBOOK_CO, EBOOK_SL, ESERIAL_AE, ESERIAL_CO, ESERIAL_SL, EAUDIO_AE, EAUDIO_CO, EAUDIO_SL, EVIDEO_AE, EVIDEO_CO, EVIDEO_SL) are all **No**.
- 1 **critical** edit check has been added to ensure the reported value for KIDPHYSCIR is not greater than PHYSCIR.
- 2 **noncritical** edit checks were added to help review the new behaviors for STATSTRU 22 and 23.
- 2 **noncritical** edit checks were added to review the ratios of CAP_REV to POPU_LSA and TOTPHYS to POPU_LSA.

3.3. Revised Edit Checks

- 17 **noncritical** ratio edit checks had their bounds updated.

The “All Edits FY24” tab includes both the unaltered edit checks brought forward from FY 2023 and modifications mentioned above for FY 2024. We provide definitions for each column header in the “Edit Changes FY24” and “All Edits FY24” table below:

- **Description of Change** (“*Edit Changes FY24*” tab only): Provides a summary explanation of the new, revised, and deleted edit checks; for revised edit checks, this column specifies whether the logic, edit message text, and/or code number are changed.
- **Pubord**: Indicates the broad type of edit; “C” means a current year edit, and “H” means a historical edit (comparing current year and prior year values).
- **Critical**: Indicates if the edit is a critical, non-critical, or internal¹ edit. “Y” indicates a critical edit, “N” indicates non-critical, and “I” indicates internal (which is also non-critical).
- **Old Code** (“*Edit Changes FY24*” tab only): The five-digit edit check number used prior to FY 2024; only provided for edit checks that have a new code number for FY 2024.
- **Code**: Presents the edit check code, a five-digit number, which is assigned in the following manner:

¹ Since FY 2017, internal edits have been incorporated into the Web Portal Edit Report. In prior cycles, internal edits were run only in the Post-Lock Edit Report and were not part of the Web Portal Edit Report.

- First three digits refer to the data element number being checked. (If there are multiple data elements for the check it is typically the number of the data element that is a sum of the detail variables.)
- Last two digits usually refer to the specific type of logic. (The definitions for these codes are available on the “Logic Type Codes” tab.)
- **Flag Condition:** Presents edit check logic expression.
- **Edit Message:** Presents text that is displayed in the Edit Report associated with this edit.
- **Edit Condition:** Provides detailed explanation of the edit check that lists the data element numbers associated with this edit. This is not displayed in the Edit Report.

Need Help?

Please contact us at PLS@air.org and/or 1-866-744-5746 (open from 9 am to 5 pm ET) if you have any questions.