

## MDS 3.0 Data Specifications Version Summary

### Introduction

Each published version of the data specifications has a version number which is formatted as N.NN.NN (e.g., "1.00.1". The first portion of the version number (e.g., "1.00") is referred to as the **major version number**, and the last portion (e.g., ".1") is referred to as the **minor version number**. The major version number is incremented whenever there is a substantive change to the data specifications that requires software changes. Minor version numbers are incremented when minor changes or corrections are made to a major version.

When a new major version of the data specs is published, it will have an associated starting **effective date**. The version that is in effect when the new specs are published will have an ending effective date on the day before the new version takes effect.

For example, version 1.00 was the initial version of the MDS 3.0 data specs. It had a starting effective date of 10/1/2010. In January, 2011, the first new major version of the data specs, version 1.01, was published. Version 1.01 has a starting effective date of 4/1/2011. Version 1.00 therefore ends on the previous day: 3/31/2011.

The data specs effective dates, in conjunction with the **target date** for a submitted record, determine which version of the data specs applies to the record. The target date for a submitted record is defined as follows:

- a) If A0310F is equal to [01], then the target date is equal to A1600 (entry date).
- b) If A0310F is equal to [10,11,12], then the target date is equal to A2000 (discharge date).
- c) If A0310F is equal to [99], then the target date is equal to A2300 (assessment reference date).

When a submitted record is validated by the ASAP system, its target date is evaluated and is used to load the appropriate set of edits for the specifications in effect on the target date. If the submitted record does not conform with those edits, the appropriate warnings or error messages will be issued and the record may be rejected. Using V1.00 and V1.01 as examples, if the target date of a submitted record is 3/31/2011, then it must conform with V1.00. If the target date of a submitted record is 4/1/2011, then it must conform with V1.01.

Once a new version of the data specs takes effect, data submission software will typically have to handle records from the previous version (or versions) and the new version. That software must therefore calculate the target date for each record, determine which version of the specs applies, and use those specs to validate the record prior to submission. Failure to do this may result in warnings, fatal errors, or unexpected results.

For example, suppose that a new MDS 3.0 item is defined and activated in a new version of the data specs. If that new item is submitted for a record with a target date that precedes the new version of the specs, then that new item will be ignored. It will be ignored because the new item is unknown to the data specs that are in effect and the ASAP system ignores unknown items. If the new item is omitted from a record with a target date that is on or after the effective date of the new specs, then a fatal error will occur and the record will be rejected. This will occur because the ASAP system will apply the new version of the specs and will see that the new item was not submitted when it was required.

Note that the appropriate data specs version is determined regardless of the submission date. Thus, if a record is submitted in 2012 with a target date of 10/1/2010, version 1.00 will apply. It should also be noted that if a record is being modified using Section X, then the version of the data specs is determined using the target date of the modified record, just as if it was a new record.

When submitting a record (either a new record, a modification, or an inactivation), the SPEC\_VRSN\_CD field in the control section must be included. The SPEC\_VRSN\_CD is an informational item which indicates the version of the data specs that was used to create the record. The allowable values of

SPEC\_VRSN\_CD correspond to the major version numbers that have been published, and the submitted value should match one of these values. If it does not, a warning will be issued. Note that if the value submitted does not match the version that is in effect based upon the target date of the record, no warning will be issued. Furthermore, the value submitted does not affect or control in any way the version of the data specs that is applied to the submitted record. As explained above, this is controlled solely by the target date of the submitted record.

On rare occasions, a change to the data specs may take effect based upon **submission date** rather than target date. When this occurs, it will be noted in the data specs.

## Data Specifications Versions

The table below lists the major data specs versions that have been published along with the starting and ending effective dates associated with each version. This table will be updated as future versions are published.

Data Specs Version	Effective Start Date	Effective End Date
1.00	10/01/2010	03//31/2011
1.01	04/01/2010	none