

LEDES Error Codes v1.0

Introduction

The LEDES Error Codes Subcommittee was established to develop and publish a new set of LEDES codes dealing with eBilling invoice errors. The codes will serve to standardize the identification of LEDES file submission errors. Currently, corporate matter management and eBilling applications generate custom, often-times unintelligible, error codes when a Law Firm submits its LEDES files. This often leads to a prolonged period of back and forth discussions between the Law Firm, Corporate Client and Corporate Client Vendor to determine the exact cause of the error in order to remedy the submission. These delays in acceptable invoicing and the time it takes personnel to determine the error(s) causes the loss of a great deal of revenue for Law Firms; as well as added personnel expense for all concerned. Multiply this issue across the many various Corporate systems a Law Firm has to deal with to submit monthly invoices and you can immediately see the great time, effort and revenue savings to be achieved by standardizing the error codes across all systems, thus greatly reducing the cost of an eBill submission.

The goal of this project is to define uniform industry standard LEDES Error Codes that when adopted and implemented by software vendors will allow the Law Firm billing personnel to understand and rectify an eBill immediately, regardless of Corporate Client and attendant software to which the eBill was rendered. Further, the LEDES API standard will utilize these Standard Error Codes as part of the API information exchange.

The Approach to establishing these LEDES Error Codes is Phased; with Phase 1 being limited to identified, common (or standard) eBill errors encountered by Law Firms and Phase 2 intended to expand on Phase 1 and include errors dealing with the more advanced components of XML eBilling v2.1 and higher. Because tax errors can be very complex, they were omitted from Phase 1 and will be included as part of Phase 2. Phase 3 will endeavor to complete complex components of XML eBilling and to accommodate any new codes and client requirements, as well as endeavor to advise, in addition to inform.

Members

Co-Chairs

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OVERVIEW:

The development of a standardized set of error codes and a standard return file protocol/transmission will serve as a continuation of the LEDES.org mission to be a standard setting organization in the exchange of information between law departments or other legal organizations and the outside counsel and other legal vendors providing services to them. As LEDES.org has set standards for task codes and electronic invoice layout and transmission guidelines from the legal provider to the client, it seems fit for LEDES.org to define the standard for return communication from the legal service recipient to the legal service provider.

The overarching purpose of the standard error/rejection codes is to define a global standard for identification and description of common error/rejections as they relate to electronically submitted invoices. These codes may be general or specific in nature. A uniform error/rejection report provided in a standard file layout and protocol will allow legal service providers to interpret and respond to issues related to file transmission, enabling efficiencies in the e-billing process.

The return files will provide meaningful information in a standard format so that legal services providers will be able to 1) better tailor their electronic submissions to reduce errors in the future and 2) understand the nature of rejection independent of the client or 3rd part e-billing vendor.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP: Co-Chairs Stephanie Word (replaced in 2019 by Cathi Collins) and Mary Chronquist have been identified to lead the subcommittee and will work closely with Jane Bennitt from the Board. The subcommittee will interview the LOC e-billing vendor members for input. The subcommittee will propose new LEDES Error Codes and post this for public comment.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the sub-committee is to create a new LEDES Error Code Set

HIGH LEVEL STAGES:

Stage 1: A subcommittee will be formed and will be comprised of LEDES general membership interested in the project.

Stage 2: The leadership of the subcommittee will interview the LOC e-billing vendor members to invite comments on the proposed error/rejection codes, return file format(s) and the use of them in practice by law firms and client organizations, as well as assessing the compatibility of these proposed changes in the overall industry.

Stage 3: The general subcommittee will develop the error code lists and file layouts addressed in this project. The list will be published for comment by the LOC membership and general legal community.

Stage 4: Incorporation/review of comments and recommendations received regarding the code set, finalization of recommended code set and submission for ratification by the LEDES Board of Directors.

TIMELINE: Submit proposed Error Code Set for review/comment by general membership in

the fall of 2016 and ratify in 2017. While the original timeline was not achieved, the Error Code Set was submitted for review/comment in September 2019 and ratification in 2020.