

Person (name)—family name, text X[X(39)]

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Data Element
Short name:	Family name
Synonymous names:	Surname; Last name
METEOR identifier:	453750
Registration status:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Services (retired), Standard 06/02/2012• Disability, Standard 13/08/2015• Indigenous, Standard 05/09/2014
Definition:	That part of a name a person usually has in common with some other members of his/her family, as distinguished from his/her given names, as represented by text.
Data Element Concept:	Person (name)—family name

Value domain attributes

Representational attributes

Representation class:	Text
Data type:	String
Format:	X[X(39)]
Maximum character length:	40

Data element attributes

Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use:	<p>A person's family name is one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The hereditary or tribal surname of a person's family.• Acquired by a person in accordance with a due process defined in a State or Territory Act relating to the registration of births, deaths, marriages and changes of name and sex, and for related purposes, such as the ACT Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration.• Any other name distinguished from a person's given name. <p>The agency or establishment should record the person's full family name on their information systems.</p>
Collection methods:	<p>Family name cannot be a repeated data element.</p> <p>There are no universal verification rules for a person's Family Name.</p> <p>This metadata item should be recorded for all persons who receive services from or are of interest to an organisation. For the purposes of positive identification, it may also be recorded for providers of those services who are individuals.</p> <p>Mixed case should be used.</p>

Family name should be recorded in the format preferred by the person. The format should be the same as that written by the person on a (pre) registration form or in the same format as that printed on an identification card, such as a Medicare card, to ensure consistent collection of name data.

A person is able to change his or her name by usage in all States and Territories of Australia with the exception of Western Australia, where a person may only change his or her name under the Change of Name Act. Care should be taken when recording a change of name for a minor. Ideally, the name recorded for the minor should be known to both of his/her parents, so the minor's records can be retrieved and continuity of care maintained, regardless of which parent accompanies the minor to the agency or establishment.

The following format may assist with data collection:

What is your family name? _____

Punctuation:

If special characters form part of the family name they should be included, e.g. hyphenated names should be entered with a hyphen.

Examples:

- hyphen, e.g. Wilson-Phillips

Do not leave a space before or after a hyphen, i.e. between the last letter of 'Wilson' and the hyphen, nor a space between the hyphen and the first letter of 'Phillips'.

- apostrophe, e.g. O'Brien, D'Agostino

Do not leave a space before or after the apostrophe, i.e. between the 'O' and the apostrophe, or a space between the apostrophe and 'Brien'.

- full stop, e.g. St. John, St. George

Do not leave a space before a full stop, i.e. between 'St' and the full stop. Do leave a space between the full stop and 'John'.

- space, e.g. van der Humm, Le Brun, Mc Donald

If the client has recorded their family name as more than one word, displaying spaces in between the words, record their family name in the same way leaving one space between each word.

Registered unnamed newborn babies:

When registering a newborn, use the mother's family name as the baby's family name unless instructed otherwise by the mother. Record unnamed babies under the newborn identification name Name type.

Persons with only one name:

Some people do not have a family name and a given name, they have only one name by which they are known. If the person has only one name, record it in the 'Family name' field and leave the 'Given name' field blank.

Registering an unidentified person:

The default for unknown family name should be unknown in all instances and the name recorded as an alias name. Don't create a 'fictitious' family name such as 'Doe' as this is an actual family name. When the person's name becomes known, record it as the preferred family name and do not overwrite the alias name of unknown.

Registering clients from disaster sites:

Persons treated from disaster sites should be recorded under the alias Name Type. Local business rules should be developed for consistent recording of disaster site person details.

Care should be taken not to use identical dummy data (family name, given name,

date of birth, sex) for two or more persons from a disaster site.

If the family name needs to be shortened:

If the length of the family name exceeds the length of the field, truncate the family name from the right (that is, dropping the final letters). Also, the last character of the name should be a hash (#) to identify that the name has been truncated.

Use of incomplete names or fictitious names:

Some organisations permit persons to use a pseudonym (fictitious or partial name) in lieu of their full or actual name. It is recommended that the person be asked to record both the pseudonym (Alias name) in addition to the person's legal name.

Baby for [adoption](#):

The word adoption should not be used as the family name, given name or alias for a newborn baby. A newborn baby that is for adoption should be registered in the same way that other newborn babies are registered. However, if a baby born in the hospital is subsequently adopted, and is admitted for treatment as a child, the baby is registered under their adopted (current) name, and the record should not be linked to the birth record. This should be the current practice. Any old references to adoption in client registers (for names) should also be changed to unknown. Contact your State or Territory adoption information service for further information.

Prefixes:

Where a family name contains a prefix, such as one to indicate that the person is a widow, this must be entered as part of the 'Family name' field. When widowed, some Hungarian women add 'Ozveg' (abbreviation is 'Ozy') before their married family name, e.g. 'Mrs Szabo' would become 'Mrs Ozy Szabo'.

A useful resource when capturing ethnic names is the referenced Naming Systems of Ethnic Groups produced by Centrelink, Canberra, AGPS.

Misspelled family name:

If the person's family name has been misspelled in error, update the family name with the correct spelling. The misspelled name should not be deleted as recording misspelled names is important for filing documents that may be issued with previous versions of the person's name. Discretion should be used regarding the degree of recording that is maintained.

Comments:

Often people use a variety of names, including legal names, married/maiden names, nicknames, assumed names, traditional names, etc. Even small differences in recording - such as the difference between MacIntosh and McIntosh - can make record linkage impossible. To minimise discrepancies in the recording and reporting of name information, agencies or establishments should ask the person for their full (formal) 'Given name' and 'Family name'. These may be different from the name that the person may prefer the agency or establishment workers to use in personal dealings. Agencies or establishments may choose to separately record the preferred names that the person wishes to be used by agency or establishment workers. In some cultures it is traditional to state the family name first. To overcome discrepancies in recording/reporting that may arise as a result of this practice, agencies or establishments should always ask the person to specify their first given name and their family name or surname separately. These should then be recorded as 'Given name' and 'Family name' as appropriate, regardless of the order in which they may be traditionally given.

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Origin: Standards Australia 2006. AS 4590—2006 Interchange of client information. Sydney: Standards Australia.

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

Supersedes [Person \(name\)—family name, text X\[X\(39\)\]](#)

- [Community Services \(retired\)](#), Superseded 06/02/2012
- [Health](#), Superseded 05/10/2016
- [Housing assistance](#), Standard 20/06/2005
- [Tasmanian Health](#), Standard 01/09/2016

See also [Person \(name\)—given name, text X\[X\(39\)\]](#)

- [Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 06/02/2012
- [Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015
- [Indigenous](#), Standard 05/09/2014
- [WA Health](#), Incomplete 22/08/2012
- [WA Health](#), Incomplete 23/08/2012

See also [Person—name usage type, code AAA](#)

- [Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 06/02/2012
- [Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015
- [Health](#), Incomplete 11/04/2013

Implementation in Data Set Specifications:

[Closing the Gap/Child Health Check Initiative: Ear, nose and throat operation summary form DSS Indigenous](#), Standard 05/12/2017

DSS specific information:

This data element is used to record the family name of the health-care professional completing and signing the form.

[Ear nose and throat services patient cluster Indigenous](#), Standard 05/09/2014

Implementation start date: 01/04/2012

DSS specific information:

This data element has a maximum occurrence of 3. The first occurrence is reported for the patient, the second occurrence is for the Carer and the third occurrence is reported for the specialist.

[Ear operation details cluster Indigenous](#), Standard 05/12/2017

DSS specific information:

This data element is used to record the family name for the patient and the specialist.

[OATSIH Services Reporting \(OSR\) certification cluster Indigenous](#), Standard 07/12/2017

Conditional obligation:

This data element is used to obtain the details of the person authorised to certify the information in the questionnaire. The authorised person may be the CEO or other nominated authorised person.

[OATSIH Services Reporting \(OSR\) service details cluster
Indigenous](#), Standard 16/09/2014

DSS specific information:

This data element is used to obtain the details of the person authorised to certify the information in the questionnaire. The authorised person may be the CEO or other nominated authorised person.

[OATSIH Services Reporting \(OSR\) service details cluster
Indigenous](#), Superseded 07/12/2017

DSS specific information:

This data element is used to obtain the details of the person authorised to certify the information in the questionnaire. The authorised person may be the Chairperson or other nominated authorised person.

[OATSIH Services Reporting \(OSR\) service details cluster
Indigenous](#), Superseded 07/12/2017

Implementation start date: 01/07/2009

Implementation end date: 30/06/2010

DSS specific information:

This data element is used to obtain the details of the person authorised to certify the information in the questionnaire. The authorised person may be the CEO or other nominated authorised person.

[Person details data dictionary
Community Services \(retired\)](#), Standard 06/02/2012
[Disability](#), Standard 13/08/2015

[Service provider organisation contact information cluster
Indigenous](#), Superseded 07/12/2017

[Service provider organisation contact information cluster
Indigenous](#), Standard 07/12/2017

Implementation start date: 01/07/2008

Implementation end date: 30/06/2010

[Service provider organisational contact cluster
Indigenous](#), Standard 07/12/2017

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