



This guide provides a quick reference to the collection of the **Statistical linkage key 581 (SLK-581)** used for the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set (AODTS NMDS).

What is the SLK-581?

The SLK-581 is a client identifier that is based on information that is likely to be:

- unique to each client
- relatively stable across a client's lifetime
- reliably reported by clients across multiple treatment settings.

This means that records with the same SLK-581 combination are likely to belong to the same client, which means the SLK 581 can be used to estimate the number of clients who use AODT services and analyse clients' movements between agencies over time.

Structure

The structure of the complete SLK-581 element is: **XXXXXDDMMYYYYX**.

The SLK-581 is made up of four elements:

- 3 Letters of family name
 - 2 Letters of given name
 - Date of birth
 - Sex.
- } — See overleaf for which letters to record

Additionally, the SLK-581 is to be submitted with a companion element: *Date accuracy indicator*

The relationship between the elements relating to the SLK-581 is shown in the figure below. Further information on each element is listed below.

SLK-581 (element)	XXX (letters of family name)	XX (letters of given name)	DDMMYYYY (date of birth)	X (sex)	Date accuracy indicator
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Submission and validation

All jurisdictions indicated their preference to submit the *SLK-581* as a single, complete, element. To avoid additional changes to collection and validation systems, *Date of birth* and *Sex* will still be collected as independent elements in the episode file.

- *Date accuracy indicator* should be placed in column 27 of the episode file.
- Completed *SLK-581* should be placed in column 28 of the episode file.

Validation rules for SLK-581 data:

- *SLK-581* and *Date accuracy indicator* must not be blank (default **99999010119009** to be used for missing SLK)
- *SLK-581* is 14 characters long
- The first 5 characters of *SLK-581* are either letters of the alphabet or the numbers '2' and '9'
- Unknown *Letters of the family name* and *Letters of given name* should be coded with consecutive '9's and not repeated letters (ZZ) or string of letters (ABC)
- If *Letters of the family name* and *Letters of given name* are not long enough to supply the requested letters then the number '2' should substitute to reflect the missing letters. '2' should always correspond to the same space as the missing letter.
- If *Date of birth* is unknown (default 01011900), then *Date accuracy indicator* is 'UUU'
- *Date accuracy indicator* is a three letters combination of 'A', 'U' and 'E'.

Confidentiality

The AIHW is subject to a strict privacy regime which has its basis in two pieces of legislation: the *Australian Institute of Health and Welfare Act 1987* and the *Privacy Act 1988*. Under these pieces of legislation, no one (not even the police or courts) has access to information collected for the AODTS NMDS.

To meet the requirements of these Acts, the AIHW has a number of privacy protocols, including:

- formal delegation of responsibilities to data custodians within the Institute
- rules that ensure data subjects cannot be identified with the release of statistical information
- encryption of linkage keys.

In the case of data requests made to the AIHW by other organisations or individuals, state and territory jurisdictions are the owners of the information collected for the AODTS NMDS for their jurisdiction. As such, the AIHW requires the approval of jurisdictions for data requests containing jurisdiction-specific data. Release of unit record data that includes the SLK data item requires approval from the AIHW Ethics Committee as well as approval from all jurisdictions.

[XXX]XXDDMMYYYYX—Letters of the family name

In the first three characters of the SLK-581, the agency should record the second, third and fifth letters of the client's family name.

Example: Dorina Chatswood = HAS

Short names: place a '2' in the place of the missing letter(s). Example: May Lee = EE2

Non alphabetic characters: ignore non alphabetic characters (hyphens, dashes etc.) when counting letters. Example: John O'Ran-Miller = RAM

Missing names: used code '999'

Agency Reminder

Agencies should ask for a person's 'given name' and 'family name' separately, as some people present family name first when asked their name. They should avoid the terms

'first name', 'last name' or 'surname'.

XXX[XX]DDMMYYYYX—Letters of given name

In the fourth and fifth characters of the SLK-581, the agency should record the second and third letters of the client's given name.

Example: Dorina Chatswood = OR

Short names: place a '2' in the place of the missing character(s). Example: Jo Simons = O2

Non alphabetic characters: ignore non-alphabetic characters when counting letters. Example: Li-Anne Davis = IA

Missing names: used code '99'

XXXXX[DDMMYYYY]X—Date of Birth

The sixth through to the thirteenth characters of the SLK-581 represent the person's date of birth.

- DD represents the day in the month a person was born
- MM represents the month in the year a person was born
- YYYY represents the year a person was born

Example:

Birth date = 4 November 1983

Date of Birth = 04111983

A date accuracy indicator is to be reported in conjunction with all dates of birth.

Reminder

Dates of birth should not contain dots or any other non-numbers.

XXXXXDDMMYYYY[X]—Sex

The fourteenth character in the SLK-581 represents the sex of a person.

In the AODTS NMDS, acceptable values for sex are:

Code	Value
1	Male
2	Female
3	Other
9	Not stated

Code 9 is primarily for use in administrative collections when transferring data from data sets where the item has not been collected.

Example: sex = Female Sex = 2

Date accuracy indicator

Date accuracy indicator is a three character code that indicates the extent to which the recorded *Date of birth* is accurate, estimated or unknown.

This indicator has many possible combinations depending on whether the day, month or year of birth is estimated or unknown.

Common examples of *Date accuracy indicator* codes include:

AAA: If a date is from a reliable source and is known as accurate then the Date accuracy indicator should be AAA.

Example: Dorina was born on 4 October 1983 and *Date of birth* is recorded as 04101983. Date accuracy indicator = AAA.

UUE: If only the age of the person is estimated and there is no certainty of the accuracy of this, then the *Date accuracy indicator* should be UUE. That is, the day and month are 'unknown' and the year is 'estimated'.

Example: Dorina's birth date is unknown but it is estimated that she is about 30. Her date of birth is recorded as 01011982. *Date accuracy indicator* = UUE.

UUU: No information is known about the person's date of birth or age.

Example: Dorina's birth date and age was unknown. Her date of birth is recorded as the default date- 01011900. *Date accuracy indicator* = UUU.

Level of accuracy	Date component (for a format DDMMYYYY)		
	(D)ay	(M)onth	(Y)ear
Accurate	A	A	A
Estimated	E	E	E
Unknown	U	U	U

Need more information?

Find more information on the data elements in the Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services National Minimum Data Set: Data Collection Manual.

Go to: <http://www.aihw.gov.au/alcohol-and-other-drugs/aodts-submission-guidelines/>