



Version Control Policy

Health and Aged Care Web Services

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1. Scope

This policy applies to any software developer or any health and aged care provider that implements software products or transacts digitally with our systems for health and aged care claims and exchange of information.

2. Background

By keeping software products up to date, health and aged care providers will be able to take advantage of more advanced functions that are not currently available in older versions of software products. Products using older versions of web services may have missing fields or require different values, or contain insufficient data to complete claims. Using current versions of web services will ensure faster and more efficient processing of transactions as a result of reduced errors and rejections.

3. Version Control System

The department will use semantic versioning, a formal convention for specifying compatibility using a three-part version number: major version; minor version; and patch.

- The major version is incremented for web service changes based on the significance of the change (functionality and risk). For example, a web service may require significant change to comply with new legislation or other external factors. In this case the version number would change from 1.2.1 to 2.0.0
- The minor version is incremented for releases which add new (optional), but backward-compatible, web service features. In this case the version number would change from 1.0.0 to 1.1.0
- The patch number is incremented for minor changes and bug fixes which do not change the web service functionality. In this case the version number would change from 1.0.0 to 1.0.1

4. Version Control Requirements

The following provisions apply to web services used to transact digitally with the department for health and aged care claims and exchange of information.

- 4.1 The department will provide web services that are backwards compatible.
- 4.2 The department will support the current version (n) and, where appropriate, the previous version ($n-1$) of a web service.
- 4.3 The department will deprecate version ($n-2$) of a web service. A deprecated web service can continue to be used by those software developers that have already subscribed to the web service, but is not available to any new software developers (i.e. no new development work).
- 4.4 The department will provide 12 months' notice to software developers and health and aged care providers prior to retiring a deprecated ($n-2$) version of a web service. Once a version of a web service is retired, it can no longer be used to transact digitally with our systems.
- 4.5 Software developers and health and aged care providers must transition to a current version of a web service within 12 months, unless otherwise approved by the department in writing and in advance.



4.6 New software developers, or software developers developing new products, must develop using the current version (*n*) of a web service.

4.7 It is the responsibility of health and aged care providers to check with their software developers that they are using a version of a software product with a Product Certification issued by the department.

5. Glossary

Term	Description
The department	The Commonwealth of Australia as represented by the Department of Human Services
Our systems	As defined in cl 22.1 of the Interface Agreement
Product Certification	As defined in cl 22.1 of the Interface Agreement
Software Developer	The legal entity responsible for the development of a product which interfaces with Department of Human Services' ICT Systems