

For: FSA Employees

Guidance for Electronic Files for Emergency Relief Program 2022 (ERP 2022)

Approved by: Acting Deputy Administrator, Farm Programs



1 Overview

A Background

Cloud storage and the ability for programs to be executed completely through software reduces the need for paper documents. Electronic files are easily accessible, save time, space, and paper, and demonstrate FSA’s continued compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is moving to no longer accepting transfers of permanent or temporary records in analog formats and will only accept records in electronic format with appropriate metadata captured. This supports Presidential Memorandum M-19-21, which requires that all federal records are created, retained, and managed in electronic formats.

ERP 2022 files must be stored electronically, except for unscheduled paper copies.

B Purpose

This notice provides State and County Offices with guidance on how to:

- save and store all paper and electronic ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 files
- scan, save, file, and name electronic ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 files.

Electronic files must be treated exactly like paper files but will be housed digitally instead of in a physical location.

C Contact

Direct questions about this notice to Jody Kenworthy, DAFP Safety Net Division, by email to jody.kenworthy@usda.gov.

Disposal Date	Distribution
August 1, 2024	All FSA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

2 Electronic Folder Structure for ERP

A Overview

All electronic files for ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 will be kept in Box until the Digital Records Management System (DRMS) software is available. Once DRMS is live, all ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 files in Box will be moved into DRMS. Files will be stored and managed in DRMS going forward, with ERP 2022 as one of the first programs to adopt this process. Further guidance will be provided when other programs or documents adopt this process.

More information on DRMS can be found at <https://intranet.usda.gov/digital-records-management-program>.

B Creating ERP 2022 Electronic Folders

All electronic documents for ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 must be kept in an electronic file folder labeled “Program Files for Upload into DRMS” within Box. Within this electronic folder there must be an “ERP 2022” subfolder, and subfolders for each track labeled “ERP 2022 Track 1” and “ERP 2022 Track 2.” Within each program folder there must be folders with the program’s file codes. See Exhibit 1 for ERP unscheduled file.

Example: An ERP 2022 program file code folder is labeled “DAPF-27-a Approved Participant Folder”. All ERP 2022 applications that are approved must be kept in this folder:

- for Track 1:
 - FSA-523
 - a copy of the ECPR
 - CCC-770 ERP 2022 Track 1
 - copies of supporting documentation, if applicable
- for Track 2:
 - FSA-524
 - FSA-525
 - a copy of the ECPR
 - CCC-770 ERP 2022 Track 2
 - copies of supporting documentation, if applicable.

Note: Applications signed but not acted on may be stored in a temporary electronic file folder, or the “DAPF-XX Emergency Relief Program 2022 Folder”, which contains material about ERP that is too broad to file under a specific ERP file code. Once the application is acted on it must be moved to the appropriate folder.

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2 Electronic Folder Structure for ERP (Continued)

B Creating ERP 2022 Electronic Folders (Continued)

See section 4.2 of “FSA Box OneSpan User Guide v8” for more information on creating an electronic file folder at

https://intranet.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/documents/fsa_box_onespan_user_guide_20221212_v8_final.pdf.

3 Create an Electronic File from a Paper Copy

A Paper Files

For Track 1, paper copies of FSA-523 were mailed to producers. For Track 2, accepting paper copies of any documents should be limited and an exception. County Offices should work with producers to encourage and establish familiarity with Box/OneSpan, using the WACOM signature pad, or electronically completing and signing the application and submitting by e-mail. While the policy in this notice only pertains to ERP 2022, FSA is moving towards conducting business electronically.

B Guidance for ERP 2022 Paper Applications

ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 applications received as a paper with a valid signature must be uploaded to Box. County Offices must complete the following steps in the order listed to create an electronic copy of the paper application.

Step	Action
1	Date stamp the paper application.
2	Enter the information on the paper application into the automated ERP 2022 software.
3	Handwrite the application number on the paper application.
4	Scan the paper application and save it in Box using the naming convention provided in paragraph 4.
5	Since the file schedule is unscheduled with NARA, the paper copy of the application must be saved and filed in the office.

Notes: Policy will be provided on the disposition of paper copies once ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 have file schedules.

A new version of the ERP 2022 Track 1 or Track 2 application does **not** need to be saved in Box after COC, or their designee, signs the application. The program software captures this decision.

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3 Create an Electronic File from a Paper Copy (Continued)

C Guidance for All Other Paper Copy Documents

County Offices must complete the following steps in the order listed to create an electronic copy of any other documents received for ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2, including but not limited to, supporting documentation (other than eligibility forms) and reports.

Step	Action
1	Date stamp the document.
2	Scan the application and save it in Box using the naming convention provided in paragraph 4.
3	Since the file schedule is unscheduled with NARA, the paper copy of the document must be saved and filed in the office.

Note: Policy will be provided on the disposition of paper copies once ERP 2022 is scheduled.

4 Electronic Document File Naming Convention for ERP 2022

A Naming Convention for Electronic Document Files

Use the following naming convention for all electronic document files:

AdminOffice-CustomerName-ObjectType-Program-ProgramYear-UniqueID- FolderID- CreationDate-DispositionDate.pdf

Important: Each piece of metadata must be separated by a hyphen. This will allow the user to search by any of the metadata in DRMS. No spaces are allowed. Underscores may be used to function as spaces in the folder name.

Note: If the file name has too many characters to be used in Box, the creation and/or disposition date may be shortened or omitted.

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4 Electronic Document File Naming Convention for ERP 2022 (Continued)

A Naming Convention for Electronic Document Files (Continued)

The following table describes each piece of metadata.

Metadata Type	Definition of Metadata Type
Admin Office	The State and county FSA codes. Will be for the admin county. Will always be five numbers.
Customer Name	<p>The applicant’s name.</p> <p>Separate an individual’s name by hyphens.</p> <p>Do not separate an entity’s name by hyphens. It may be separated by underscores.</p> <p>Examples: Last-First-Middle BusinessName or Business_Name</p>
Object Type	<p>Form name or supplemental documentation, not separated by hyphens. It may be separated by underscores.</p> <p>Example: AD1026 or AD_1026</p> <p>For supplemental documentation, the word “Supplemental” should be inserted in place of the form name and then followed by the specific type of supplemental documentation.</p> <p>Example: SupplementalReceipts or Supplemental_Receipts</p>
Program	<p>Program name, not separated by hyphens. It may be separated by underscores.</p> <p>Example: ERP2022Track1 or ERP_2022_Track_1</p>
Program Year	<p>Program year(s), usually found on the program’s application. Separate multiple years by a hyphen. All years should be 4 digits.</p> <p>Example: 2022</p>

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4 Electronic Document File Naming Convention for ERP 2022 (Continued)

A Naming Convention for Electronic Document Files (Continued)

Metadata Type	Definition of Metadata Type
Unique ID (Application ID)	Identifier for the application. It is recommended that the application ID be used for all documentation related to the specific applicant's application.
Folder ID	Is used to enter any specific information used to search and find the record. Use the program file code. It should not be separated by hyphens. It can be separated by underscores. Example: DAPF27c or DAPF_27_c
Creation Date	Date the record was received. Example: C-YYYYMMDD
Disposition Date	End date of the first year of the disposition. Example: D-YYYYMMDD

More information on uploading an electronic file to a producer folder is available in section 4.3 in the “FSA Box OneSpan User Guide v8” and can be found at: https://intranet.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/documents/fsa_box_onespan_user_guide_20221212_v8_final.pdf.

Additional resources for Box and OneSpan can be found at <https://intranet.usda.gov/box-and-onespan>.

Note: If you have named your files following prior guidance on naming convention, do not rename the files. Use the naming convention in this notice for all ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 applications from the date of this notice.

B Examples for ERP 2022 Electronic File Names

The following is an example of the file name for an ERP 2022 Track 2 application that was received in Baltimore County, MD, application number 51:

24005-Calvin_Garner_Revocable_Trust-FSA524-ERP2022Track2-2022- 51-DAFP27-C-20230130-D-20231231

The following is an example of the file name for FSA-525 for ERP 2022 that was received in Washtenaw County, MI, with a Unique ID using the application number 198:

26161-Coyle-Bruce-Steven-FSA_525-ERP_2022_Track_2-2022-198- DAPF_27_a-C-20230209-D-20231231

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5 Signature Methods

A Choosing Signature Method

The following table provides the different types of signature methods and when to choose each one.

Signature Method	When to Choose this Signature Method
Box	The online Box resource was used to transmit the application to the producer who manually signed the application or electronically signed the application using a method other than One-Span and used the Box resource to return it to the County Office.
Box/One-Span	The signed application was electronically signed by the producer using the One-Span application remotely with a mobile device or in-person using a mouse or Wacom graphics pad and received electronically in the County Office.
Emailed/Fax	The signed application was received by the County Office by email or fax.
In Person	The signed application was delivered to the County Office in person. Note: This method should only be for paper applications that were handed directly to the County Office employees.
Mailed	The signed application was mailed to the County Office.
E-Signed	This method is not in the dropdown and will automatically be chosen for applications signed by producers using level 2 eAuth.

6 Action

A State Office Action

State Offices must:

- ensure County Offices use the correct electronic folder structure and file naming convention for ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2
- ensure County Offices keep all ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 files in Box until they can be moved to DRMS
- answer questions from County Offices.

B County Office Action

County Offices must ensure the ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 are electronically filed according to policy.

ERP Unscheduled File Schedule

The following table displays the ERP 2022 Track 1 and Track 2 unscheduled file schedule.

File Code	Type	Media	Description/Purpose/Classification/Definition	Disposition Instruction
DAPF-XX	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Emergency Relief Program (ERP) 2022 - material about ERP too broad to be filed under 1 of the more specific subjects in this series: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal e-mails on policy guidance • information/bulletins • amendments/notices • receipts for services. 	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.
DAPF-XX-a	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Approved Participant Folder - individual folders for each producer’s approved application for benefits. This includes forms and correspondence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Track 1 Application – FSA-523 • Track 2 Application – FSA-5245 • Track 2 Linkage Agreement FSA-525. 	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.
DAPF-XX-b	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Disapproved Participant Folder – individual folders for each producer’s disapproved application for benefits. This includes forms and correspondence such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COC minutes documenting basis for denial • notification letter to participant. 	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.
DAPF-XX-c	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Reports and Statistics. Subdivide as needed.	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.
DAPF-XX-d	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Payment Information/Registers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nonpayment • pending payment • overpayment registers. 	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.

ERP Unscheduled File Schedule (Continued)

File Code	Type	Media	Description/Purpose/ Classification/Definition	Disposition Instruction
DAPF-XX-e	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Spot check selection and responses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participant documentation submitted in response to spot check • spot check results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • findings • over/underpayments • notification to participant. 	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.
DAPF-XX-f	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Appeals – appeal documentation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • correspondence • forms • other related documentation. 	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.
DAPF-XX-g	Temporary	Paper and Electronic	Internal Controls – comprehensive documentation noting the agency’s efforts to ensure compliance.	Cut off files at the end of the year, after final payment. Destroy when 10 years old.