



CAHPS Survey for Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) and Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS)

ACO and MIPS Survey Vendor Training

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Welcome

November 1st Webinar Training Session

- CAHPS for ACOs and MIPS Survey Training on coding, preparing and submitting data files
 - 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. ET
 - Required for all approved ACO and MIPS survey vendors

Post Training Quiz

- Each key project staff member (Project Manager, Information Systems Specialist, Computer Programmer/Developer, Data Administrator, Back-up Administrator) must complete and submit a post-training quiz by Monday, November 4 at 2:30 pm ET
- Quiz will be emailed to each project staff member today at the scheduled conclusion of training
- We will notify survey vendors of their Post Training Quiz results by November 8, 2019

Agenda

- Data Safeguarding
- File Specifications
- Coding Guidelines and Decision Rules for Mail Surveys
- Survey Disposition Codes
 - Review Disposition Coding Scenarios
- Data Submission
- Questions & Answers



Data Safeguarding

- Protecting CMS Data
- Preventing Data Breaches
- Reporting Requirements



Protecting CMS Data

- The CAHPS for ACOs and CAHPS for MIPS sample files you receive contain personally identifiable data (PII) and protected health information (PHI)
- As a CMS data user you are required to keep CMS data (PII, PHI, and survey response data) secure and educate your staff, subcontractors and service providers about their respective roles and responsibilities for maintaining the confidentiality and security of CMS data.
- As a CMS data user you are responsible for using secure methods to transmit CMS data within your organization, to/from subcontractors and service providers.
 - Secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) ensures an encrypted transmission connection
 - If email is used, files must be securely encrypted and the password or key to decrypt the file must be communicated directly (not via email)

Preventing Data Breaches

- In addition to adhering to the secure use, storage, and transmittal requirements associated with CMS data use, all survey vendors must implement data confidentiality, privacy, and security procedures in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Your data use, storage and transmittal procedures must be designed to minimize the risk of breach, loss, or disclosure of data to an unauthorized person or entity
- Educating your staff, subcontractors and service providers about your data use, storage and transmittal procedures is an important component of your data protection procedures
 - Education is not a one-time event

Reporting Requirements

- A breach, loss, or disclosure of data to an unauthorized person or entity must be reported via a discrepancy report following detection of the event
 - The CAHPS for ACOs discrepancy report form is available at <http://acocahps.cms.gov/en/vendor-tools/discrepancy-form/>
 - The CAHPS for MIPS discrepancy report form has been distributed via email from the CAHPS for MIPS Project Team to each vendor with one or more group authorizations for 2019 survey administration
- Should the breach, loss or disclosure include PII from one or more beneficiaries, the event must also be reported to the CMS IT Service Desk at 800-562-1963 or 410-786-2580 or cms_it_service_desk@cms.hhs.gov within one hour of detection
- Failure to follow these reporting requirements may affect your approval to conduct CAHPS and/or the status of your CMS DUA

File Specifications

- Specifications for Data Files
- Survey Status Section
 - Field Requirements
- Beneficiary Response Section



Specifications for Data Files

- Survey vendors must use flat ASCII file format to submit survey data files
- Separate files must be submitted for ACO data and MIPS data (for vendors participating in both initiatives)
- Each file must contain a record for each beneficiary included in the sample file
- Each record will consist of two sections:
 - Survey Status Section
 - Beneficiary Response Section
- No substitutions for valid data elements are acceptable

Record Layout for Survey Status Section

RAND Field Name	Field Contents	Field Length	Valid Codes	Coding Notes
FINDER	Unique beneficiary finder number assigned by CAHPS for ACOs or MIPS Data Coordination Team	8	Numeric	From sample file
ACO_ID	For ACO, five character ACO identifier: begins with a letter (A or V), followed by 4 or 3 numbers	5	ACO [A]nnnn [V]nnn	From sample file
MIPS_ID	For MIPS, five character group identifier: begins with the letter G, followed by 4 numbers		MIPS [G]nnnn	

Record Layout for Survey Status Section, (cont'd)

RAND Field Name	Field Contents	Field Length	Valid Codes	Coding Notes
DISPOSITN	Final disposition code	2	10, 31, 11, 20, 22, 24, 32, 33, 34, 35, 40	10 = Completed survey 31 = Partially completed survey 11 = Institutionalized 20 = Deceased 22 = Language barrier 24 = Mentally or physically unable to respond 32 = Refusal 33 = Non-response (no indication of bad address and invalid telephone number) 34 = Blank survey or Incomplete survey returned 35 = Bad address and bad telephone number 40 = Excluded from survey

Record Layout for Survey Status Section, (cont'd)

RAND Field Name	Field Contents	Field Length	Valid Codes	Coding Notes
MODE	Survey completion mode	1	1-3, 8	1 = Mail; 2 = Inbound CATI; 3 = Outbound CATI; 8 = Not applicable
DISPO_LANG	Survey language	1	1- 9	Language survey was completed in or attempted to be administered: 1 = English; 2 = Spanish; 3 = Cantonese; 4 = Korean; 5 = Mandarin; 6 = Russian; 7 = Vietnamese; 8 = Not applicable; 9 = Portuguese
RECEIVED	Date survey was received or completed: YYYYMMDD	8	YYYYMMDD	Date survey was received: YYYYMMDD 88888888 = Not applicable
FOCALTYPE	Provider type: 1= Primary care; 2 = Specialist	1	1-2	From sample file
PRTITLE	Type of provider (physician, physician assistant, nurse practitioner, certified nurse midwife, certified clinical nurse specialist)	35	Text	From sample file

Record Layout for Survey Status Section, (cont'd)

RAND Field Name	Field Contents	Field Length	Valid Codes	Coding Notes
PRFNAME	Provider first name	30	Text	From sample file
PRLNAME	Provider last name	50	Text	From sample file
LANG_PROT	Documents the procedure the ACO or group used to administer survey in languages other than English; not applicable indicates the ACO or group administered the survey in English only	1	1-3, 8	1 = Dual language mailings; 2 = Instructions on letter or insert; 3 = Language specific mailings; 8 = Not applicable

Record Layout for Survey Status Section, (cont'd)

RAND Field Name	Field Contents	Field Length	Valid Codes	Coding Notes
PHONE ATTEMPTS	Number of phone attempts	2	01-07, 88	<p>2-digit number indicating total number of telephone contact attempts.</p> <p>A seventh attempt may only be made if the sixth attempt results in the beneficiary establishing a firm callback date and time.</p> <p>Cases finalized prior to start of outbound CATI should be coded 88 = Not applicable</p>
SURVEY MAILING	Indicates whether a returned mail survey came from the first or second survey mailing	1	1-2, 8	<p>1 = First survey mailing; 2= Second survey mailing; 8 = Not applicable</p>

Field Requirements for Survey Status Section

- Survey Status Section must contain data for each beneficiary in the sample file, regardless of final disposition, in order to pass all audit checks
- All fields in the Survey Status Section require a valid data value for the file to pass all audit checks

Field Requirements for Survey Status Section, (cont'd)

- Use code “8 – Not applicable” or “88 – Not applicable” when appropriate
 - Survey language (DISPO_LANG) for a sample record that is excluded from the survey
 - Survey completion mode (MODE) for a mail survey that was returned as undeliverable AND no valid phone number was obtained
 - Survey language protocol (LANG_PROT) when the survey was only administered in English
 - Number of phone attempts (PHONE ATTEMPTS) when the case is finalized prior to the start of outbound CATI

Field Requirements for Survey Status Section, (cont'd)

- Guidance for coding of PHONE ATTEMPTS and SURVEY MAILING
 - If survey completed via CATI:
 - PHONE ATTEMPTS must be coded 01-07, and
 - SURVEY MAILING must be coded as 8 – Not Applicable
 - For surveys with final dispositions other than 10, 31, or 34:
 - PHONE ATTEMPTS must be coded as 88 – Not Applicable, and
 - SURVEY MAILING must be coded as 8 – Not Applicable

Beneficiary Response Section

- Beneficiary Response Section must contain data for each beneficiary who has a final disposition of “Completed survey” (10), “Partially completed survey” (31) or “Blank or Incomplete survey returned” (34) to pass all audit checks
 - All response fields must have a valid data value
 - Valid values also include:
 - 88 - Not Applicable
 - 98 - Don’t Know
 - 99 - Refused
 - M - Missing
- Beneficiary Response Section must remain blank for all other final dispositions

Coding Guidelines and Decision Rules for Mail Surveys

- Decision Rules for Data Capture
- Decision Rules for Screener and Dependent Questions



Decision Rules for Data Capture

- Enter all mail survey responses provided by the beneficiary for each survey item
- Use the following examples to inform data capture for mail surveys

Decision Rules for Data Capture, (cont'd)

- If a mark falls between two response options but is obviously closer to one than the other, select the response option to which the mark is closest
- In this example the response should be coded as “2 – Sometimes”

Example 1 (Mail)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



Code as:
“2 - Sometimes”

Decision Rules for Data Capture, (cont'd)

- If a mark falls equidistant between two response options, do not impute a value
- Code the item as “M – Missing”

Example 2 (Mail)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



Code as:
“M - Missing”

Decision Rules for Data Capture, (cont'd)

- If a response is missing, do not impute a value
- Code the the item as “M – Missing”

Note: dependent questions appropriately skipped should be coded as “88 – Not Applicable”

Example 3 (Mail)

Never

Sometimes

Usually

Always



**Code as:
“M - Missing”**

Decision Rules for Data Capture, (cont'd)

- When more than one response option is marked, do not impute a value
- Code the item as “M – Missing”

Exception: Questions that have instructions to “mark one or more” may have multiple responses

Example 4 (Mail)

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always



Code as:
“M - Missing”

Decision Rules for Data Capture, (cont'd)

- When more than one response option is marked and the beneficiary's intent is obvious, select the obvious response option
- In these examples the response should be coded as "1 – Never"

Example 5 (Mail)

Never 
 Sometimes 
 Usually
 Always
 {
**Code as:
 "1 - Never"**

Example 6 (Mail)

Never 
 Sometimes
 ~~Usually~~
 Always
 {
**Code as:
 "1 - Never"**

Decision Rules for Screener and Dependent Questions

- Some mail survey items can and should be skipped by certain beneficiaries
- If beneficiary makes an error in following a mail survey skip pattern, do not “clean” or correct the error
 - Report data for all survey items answered by the beneficiary
- Do not impute a screener response based on beneficiary’s answers to dependent questions
- Screener questions that are left blank should be coded as “M – Missing”
- Dependent questions that are appropriately skipped should be coded as “88 – Not Applicable”

Decision Rules for Screener and Dependent Questions, (cont'd)

Example 1

7. In the last 6 months, did you make any appointments for a **check-up or routine care** with this provider?
- Yes
 No → **If No, go to #9**
8. In the last 6 months, when you made an appointment for a **check-up or routine care** with this provider, how often did you get an appointment as soon as you needed?
- Never
 Sometimes
 Usually
 Always
9. In the last 6 months, did you contact this provider's office with a medical question during regular office hours?
- Yes
 No → **If No, go to #11**

Q8 should be coded "M"

Example 2

7. In the last 6 months, did you make any appointments for a **check-up or routine care** with this provider?
- Yes
 No → **If No, go to #9**
8. In the last 6 months, when you made an appointment for a **check-up or routine care** with this provider, how often did you get an appointment as soon as you needed?
- Never
 Sometimes
 Usually
 Always
9. In the last 6 months, did you contact this provider's office with a medical question during regular office hours?
- Yes
 No → **If No, go to #11**

Q8 should be coded "88"

Survey Disposition Codes

- Guidance on Survey Disposition Codes
- Final Survey Disposition Codes
- Disposition Codes Requiring Submission of Survey Data
- Identifying Completed, Partially Completed, and Blank/Incomplete Surveys
- Disposition Coding Scenarios



Guidance on Survey Disposition Codes

- Disposition codes are used to track and report the status of sampled beneficiaries
- Survey vendors are required to assign and maintain up-to-date disposition codes for each beneficiary in the sample
- Vendor interim disposition codes are for internal purposes only and should not be reported
 - Only final disposition codes are reported in data submissions
- Submitted data files must contain a final disposition code for each beneficiary in the file
- Some final disposition codes rely on counts of Applicable to All (ATA) items and/or Summary Survey Measures (SSMs)

Final Survey Disposition Codes

Final Disposition	Code	Description	Criteria
Completed survey	10	A completed survey includes a response to at least one item in the 10 SSMs and ≥50% of the ATA items	A completed survey includes a response for at least one item from the 10 SSMs and 50% or more of the ATA items. Appropriately skipped items don't count as a response. There <u>must</u> be no evidence that the beneficiary is ineligible.
Partially completed survey	31	A partially completed survey includes a response to at least one item from the 10 SSMs and <50% of the ATA items	A partially completed survey includes a response to at least one item from the 10 SSMs and fewer than 50% of the ATA items. Appropriately skipped items don't count as a response. There <u>must</u> be no evidence that the beneficiary is ineligible.

Final Survey Disposition Codes, (cont'd)

Final Disposition	Code	Description	Criteria
Institutionalized	11	Institutionalized	Institutionalized or residing in a group home or institution (hospice, nursing home, etc.)
Deceased	20	Deceased	Deceased at the time of survey administration
Language barrier	22	Unable to complete the survey in English and any offered optional language	Unable to complete the survey in English and any offered optional language
Mentally or physically unable to respond	24	Mentally or physically unable to respond to either mail or phone portion of the survey	Mentally or physically unable to respond either to mail or phone portion of the survey
Refusal	32	Refused to complete the survey	Refused to complete the survey
Non-response	33	No response collected	No response collected either by mail or by phone; no indication of bad address <u>and</u> bad phone number

Final Survey Disposition Codes, (cont'd)

Final Disposition	Code	Description	Criteria
Blank or Incomplete survey returned	34	Responded by mail or initiated CATI interview, no answers to any item from the 10 SSMs	Responded by mail or CATI, with no answers to any item from the 10 SSMs. There <u>must</u> be no evidence that the beneficiary is ineligible.
Bad address and bad phone number	35	Unable to obtain a viable address <u>and</u> phone number is not valid	Address is confirmed as not viable, and no valid phone number was identified for the beneficiary
Excluded from survey	40	Excluded from all survey processes	Beneficiary was determined to be ineligible after sample selection <u>but before data collection was initiated</u> (see sampling section of QAG)

Disposition Codes Requiring Submission of Survey Data

- Survey data is required for the following disposition codes:

Disposition	Code
Completed survey	10
Partially completed survey	31
Blank or incomplete survey returned	34

- When survey data is required, all response fields must have a valid data value
 - Code any blank or missing fields as “M – Missing” or “88 – Not Applicable”, as appropriate

Identifying a Completed Survey

- Completed survey (Code 10):
 - Contains a response to at least one item from the 10 SSMS *and*,
 - Contains a response to at least 50% of the ATA items
 - Items answered in violation of a skip pattern do not count as a response
 - Appropriately skipped items do not count as a response

Identifying a Partially Completed Survey

- Partially completed survey (Code 31):
 - Contains a response to at least one item from the 10 SSMS *and,*
 - Contains a response to fewer than 50% of the ATA items
 - Items answered in violation of a skip pattern do not count as a response
 - Appropriately skipped items do not count as a response

Identifying a Blank or Incomplete Survey

- Blank or Incomplete survey returned (Code 34):
 - No responses to any question from the 10 SSMS
 - Items answered in violation of a skip pattern do not count as a response
 - Appropriately skipped items do not count as a response

Disposition Coding Scenarios

Example 1 – Completed (10) Survey

Questions answered by beneficiary: 19 total

Q1, Q4, Q12, Q24, Q29, Q32, Q33, Q36, Q38, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q44, Q45, Q47, Q48, Q54, Q56a, Q57

Note: The remaining questions were left blank or were coded as “M – Missing”, “98 – Don’t Know”, “99 – Refused”, or “88 – Not Applicable”

Determine if question(s) within required SSMs have response:

- Beneficiary answered the following question(s) within an SSM: Q12, Q32, Q33
- Is at least one question within a required SSM answered?
 - Yes

Calculate percentage of ATA items answered:

- Beneficiary answered these ATA items: Q1, Q4, Q24, Q29, Q32, Q33, Q36, Q38, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q44, Q45, Q47, Q48, Q54, Q56a, Q57
- ATA item(s) answered by beneficiary = 18
- ATA items available = 29 total
- Percentage ATA Complete = $(18/29) \times 100 = 62\%$

Assign final disposition:

- Final disposition is code 10 – completed survey
- Beneficiary answered at least one question from a required SSM and answered $\geq 50\%$ of the ATA items

Disposition Coding Scenarios, (cont'd)

Example 2 – Partially Completed (31) Survey

Questions answered by beneficiary: 16 total

Q1, Q4, Q6, Q24, Q29, Q36, Q38, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q44, Q45, Q47, Q48, Q56a, Q56c

Note: The remaining questions were left blank or were coded as “M – Missing”, “98 – Don’t Know”, “99 – Refused”, or “88 – Not Applicable”

Determine if question(s) within required SSMs have response:

- Beneficiary answered the following question(s) within an SSM: Q6
- Is at least one question within a required SSM answered?
 - Yes

Calculate percentage of ATA items answered:

- Beneficiary answered these ATA items: Q1, Q4, Q24, Q29, Q36, Q38, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q44, Q45, Q47, Q48, Q56a, Q56c
- ATA item(s) answered by beneficiary = 14*
- ATA items available = 29 total
- Percentage ATA Complete = $(14/29) \times 100 = 48\%$

* **Note:** The race questions (Q56a-56e4) count as one ATA item no matter how many racial categories are answered “Yes.” In this example, the beneficiary has only answered a total of 14 ATA items because Q56a and Q56c are racial categories.

Assign final disposition:

- Final disposition is code 31– partially completed survey
- Beneficiary answered at least one question from a required SSM and answered < 50% of the ATA items

Disposition Coding Scenarios, (cont'd)

Example 3 – Blank or Incomplete (34) Survey			
<p>Questions answered by beneficiary: 16 total Q1, Q4, Q24, Q29, Q36, Q38, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q44, Q45, Q47, Q48, Q54, Q56, Q57</p> <p>Note: The remaining questions were left blank or were coded as “M – Missing”, “98 – Don’t Know”, “99 – Refused”, or “88 – Not Applicable”</p>	<p>Determine if question(s) within required SSMs have response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiary answered the following question(s) within an SSM: None Is at least one question within a required SSM answered? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No 	<p>ATA items answered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Beneficiary answered these ATA items: Q1, Q4, Q24, Q29, Q36, Q38, Q41, Q42, Q43, Q44, Q45, Q47, Q48, Q54, Q56, Q57 <p>Note: The number of ATA items answered does not contribute to the determination of disposition code 34 – blank or incomplete survey.</p>	<p>Assign final disposition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final disposition is code 34 – blank or incomplete survey Beneficiary answered no questions from a required SSM

Data Submission

- Data Warehouse Access
- Data Submission Deadlines
- Data File Submission
- File Encryption
- Guide to Data File Submission Process
- File Audit Checks and Data Verification
- File Submission Notification
- Technical Support



Data Warehouse Access

- Each program (ACO and MIPS) has a secure data warehouse hosted by the RAND Corporation
 - Operates as a web-based secure file transfer system that survey vendors use to obtain sample files and submit survey data files
 - Does not require special software or licensing fees for survey vendors with the exception of Symantec File Share Encryption
- Vendor staff received a data warehouse instruction packet prior to delivery of the 2019 survey sample
 - Data Administrator and Back-up Data Administrator have privileges to upload and download files
 - Project Manager has privileges to download files

Data Submission Deadlines

- A fully conforming interim survey data file must be submitted by survey vendors no later than December 12, 2019 at 7:59 p.m. Eastern Time
 - Survey vendors must submit an initial file by December 10, 2019
 - Each file resubmission must include all records
- A fully conforming final survey data file must be submitted by survey vendors by January 23, 2020 at 7:59 p.m. Eastern Time
 - Survey vendors must submit an initial file by January 21, 2020
 - Each file resubmission must include all records
- It is the responsibility of the survey vendor to ensure that data are submitted on time

Data File Submission

Follow all required file naming conventions

- Vendor name = Abbreviated vendor name. This must match the name portion of the data warehouse folder name.
- ACO/MIPS = Capital letters, as shown, to distinguish data files for each program
- MM = number of month of submission (justify leading zero)
- DD = number of day of submission (justify leading zero)
- YY = 2 digit year of submission
- N = number of the submission sent that day
 - ACO Example: XYZResearch.ACO.012120.1.txt.pgp
 - MIPS Example: XYZResearch.MIPS.012120.1.txt.pgp

File Encryption

- Data files from survey vendors must be encrypted using Symantec File Share Encryption software (formerly PGP)
 - If needed, get the latest version from <https://www.symantec.com/products/file-share-encryption>
 - All prior versions of PGP are acceptable
- Encrypt your data file before submitting it to the ACO or MIPS data warehouse
 - Use the Public Key provided by the Data Coordination Team to encrypt the files

File Audit Checks and Data Verification

- The Data Coordination Team will audit data files as they are submitted for compliance with file layout specifications
- Files are audited for:
 - Use of .pgp file extension
 - Logical record lengths, appropriate character set, naming conventions
 - Presence of required data fields
 - Range checks
 - Verification of survey disposition code
- Data files that are submitted without encryption or proper formatting, or that fail to follow the required file naming conventions, will be deleted and must be resubmitted

File Submission Notification

- Survey vendors will receive two email notifications for each data file submitted to the data warehouse
- First (automated) email, from RANDkiteworks@rand.org, confirms receipt of a data file
- Second email is sent by a member of the Data Coordination Team after completion of audit checks
 - Will go out within one business day of file submission

File Submission Notification, (cont'd)

- If file fails audit checks, second email will:
 - Instruct survey vendors that they must submit the data file again
 - Contain full detail of the audit check report including a list of involved records
- If file passes audit checks, second email will indicate no further action is necessary and provide a summary of file contents for verification by the vendor

Errors to Avoid

During the most recent survey cycle, we observed the following common errors:

- Non-adherence to file naming conventions
 - ACO Example: XYZResearch.ACO.012120.1.txt.pgp
 - MIPS Example: XYZResearch.MIPS.012120.1.txt.pgp
- Incorrect beneficiary record counts
 - Survey data submissions must include the same number of records contained in the sample file, regardless of disposition code
- Invalid data values in response fields
 - All response fields must contain a valid data value
 - Reference the Survey File Record Layout document for each field's valid values
- Incorrect disposition codes
 - Records must be assigned final disposition codes as described in the Final Survey Disposition Codes Table of the Quality Assurance Guidelines

Issues to Consider When Coding Mail Surveys

- Written response to Q46 or Q58 without marking “Some other language” or “Helped in some other way” options
 - Data capture systems should select the “Other” option any time a beneficiary writes in a response to Q46 or Q58, regardless of the content of the response
- Lighter pen markings in response boxes
- Follow guidance for determining coding of “M” (Missing) versus “98” (Don’t Know)

Technical Support

- Contact us for technical support and/or assistance for data submission
 - CAHPS for ACOs Data Team
 - ACO-DataSupport@rand.org
 - CAHPS for MIPS Data Team
 - MIPS-DataSupport@rand.org

Question & Answer Session



Conclusion

- Post Training Activity
- Contact Us



Post Training Activity

Post Training Quiz

- Will be emailed to each vendor's Project Manager, Information Systems Specialist, Computer Programmer/Developer, Data Administrator, Back-up Administrator today at 2:30 p.m. ET
- Each staff member must complete and submit by 2:30 p.m. ET on November 4, 2019
- We will notify survey vendors of their Post Training Quiz results by November 8, 2019

Contact Us

CAHPS for ACOs Survey	
Website	acocahps.cms.gov
Email, Project Team	ACOCAHPS@hsag.com
Email, Data Support Team	ACO-DataSupport@rand.org
Phone	Toll free 855-472-4746
CAHPS for MIPS Survey	
Website (CAHPS for MIPS Survey)	www.cms.gov/Research-Statistics-Data-and-Systems/Research/CAHPS/mips.html
Website (Quality Payment Program)	https://qpp.cms.gov/
Email, Project Team	MIPSCAHPS@hsag.com
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