Appendix C
Verification Interfaces

Definitions
As used in these Recommendations and Appendices, the following definitions are applicable:

- *Application:* a program, potentially containing a graphical user interface, allows a human to interact so as to provide input or output.

- *Consumer*: human or machine or both.

- *Verification Interface*: the mechanism used to allow an information system to share information for the purposes of verification of a consumer's personal information (e.g. name, date of birth, address, income, etc.) with other information systems. A Web service is an example of an interface.

- *Web Service*: loosely coupled machine-to-machine interactions over a network consisting of sets of (HTTP) request and response messages along with a definition of the structure of the messages, expressed in a NIEM Compliant XML format.

Federal Reference Software
To achieve seamless integration with the Federal verification Web services, States must use the same standards (e.g., WSI based Web services and NIEM compliant XML messages).

We believe the Federal reference software recommended in Recommendation 2.2 should access Federal Web services to aid State programs in the creation and implementation of the verification Web services. This software must integrate Web services interfaces in a way that will minimize program implementation efforts. Given the variety of programming languages and business logic in use, we believe SDKs (Software Development Kits, including software and associated artifacts) should be accompanied by well documented, high-level sample source code and API messages. These SDKs and their sample implementations should be robust enough to allow for reuse by developers. Materials should be made readily available to the public, and collaborative improvement of the materials is strongly encouraged.

A critical first step in ensuring the data can be used in a consumer-mediated online system as called for in the recommendations is providing data for individuals rather than households. To support a consumer-mediated online application process, verification interfaces facilitated by the Federal reference software should be automated and real-time and, where practical and applicable, pre-populate the application when performing new enrollments, eligibility requests, renewals or changes across multiple programs.

Where real-time, automated verification information does not produce the required information, or information consistent with the consumer's current circumstance, States should implement processes to provide for the digital submission (e.g., ability to fax, scan or e-mail) of verification documentation that can be submitted and reused for initial and subsequent eligibility determinations.

Other Best Practices

In addition to verification data from Federal and State systems, new and existing State eligibility and enrollment systems should facilitate automated queries across programs to determine if an consumer is known to other eligibility and/or enrollment systems (e.g., because the consumer is currently or has been previously enrolled) prior to completing the application process. If a consumer is known to another eligibility and/or enrollment system, the system should allow for the retrieval of relevant eligibility data.

Further, streamlined eligibility and enrollment in an interoperable system requires the seamless transmission and receipt of data between programs. Rather than force legacy system changes to accommodate different verification sources and formats (e.g., HL7, XML), States may include Web services or translation tools that reliably and consistently translate or transform data from various sources and formats in their implementation plans.

To allow consumers to direct and manage use and reuse of their information, Federal and State data suppliers (e.g., SSA, IRS, DHS and other Federal and State entities) should examine data use, retention and reuse policies to allow for the reuse of a consumer's eligibility and enrollment information, where practicable. Areas to examine include the appropriate uses of personal information, including the sharing of data across health and human services programs to facilitate additional enrollments, renewals, and transitions between programs. Where allowed and practicable, States should provide for "express lane" determinations across programs (i.e., an eligibility finding for one program is a *de facto* finding for a second program with no additional eligibility verification necessary).