

## 1 i-Connect payroll extract file specification

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBER</b>	National Insurance (NI) number of the employee	9	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	AB123456C			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the employee's NI Number. The NI number is used in conjunction with one or more of the payroll reference fields (items 2-4) to identify the correct record on the administering authority's target system.</p> <p>Please contact your administering authority if any of the employees does not have a National Insurance number, as this is a mandatory field on the target system.</p> <p><b>This data item must be completed.</b></p>			
<b>B</b>	<b>2</b>	PAYROLL REFERENCE 1			<b>Ignore</b>
	Notes:	***This field is not used for the Payroll ref due to the location the info is posted to – use Payroll Ref 2 column C***			
<b>C</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>PAYROLL REFERENCE 2</b>	An additional unique identifier. Generally, this is the employee's payroll number with the current employer. It should be a unique identifier for each post in your organisation.	12	<b>Mandatory*</b>
	Example:	TY0123456			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter a unique identifier to match the post to the correct target system record, for example, Payroll Reference Number. Please contact your administering authority to confirm whether this unique identifier should be placed in Payroll Reference 1, Payroll Reference 2 or Payroll Reference 3.</p> <p><b>*Mandatory if the administering authority specifies this field as a unique identifier</b></p>			

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
D	4	<b>PAYROLL REFERENCE 3</b>		12	Ignore
E	5	<b>ADDRESS LINE 1</b>	Address Line 1 of the correspondence address of the employee	30	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	Riverview / 12 Main Street			
	Notes:	Please enter the first address line of where the employee lives. Upper- and lower-case characters are valid. Valid characters are A to Z, hyphen (-) and apostrophe ('). Remove any commas (,) as this can cause issues with the benefit statements.			
	<b>If any of the address lines (1 to 5) is present for the employee, a minimum of two address lines must be provided.</b>				
F	6	<b>ADDRESS LINE 2</b>	Address Line 2 of the correspondence address of the employee	30	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	23 Upper Riverbank			
	Notes:	Please enter the second address line of where the employee lives. Upper- and lower-case characters are valid. Valid characters are A to Z, hyphen (-) and apostrophe ('). Please do not include commas in the address fields.			
	<b>If any of the address lines (1 to 5) is present for the employee, a minimum of two address lines must be provided.</b>				
G	7	<b>ADDRESS LINE 3</b>	Address Line 3 of the correspondence address of the employee	30	<b>Only if applicable</b>
	Example:	Hale Barns			
	Notes:	Please enter the third address line of where the employee lives. Allowances described above.			
H	8	<b>ADDRESS LINE 4</b>	Address Line 4 of the correspondence address of the employee	30	<b>Only if applicable</b>
	Example:	Altrincham			
	Notes:	Please enter the fourth address line of where the employee lives. Allowances described above.			

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
I	9	ADDRESS LINE 5	Address Line 5 of the correspondence address of the employee	20	Only if applicable
	Example:	Cheshire			
	Notes:	Please enter the fifth address line of where the employee lives. Allowances described above.			
J	10	POSTCODE	Postcode of the correspondence address of the employee	10	Mandatory
	Example:	WA14 1TT			
	Notes:	Please enter letters (A-Z), numbers (0-9) and a single space. Ensure there are no commas in the address			
k	11	EMAIL ADDRESS			Ignore
L	12	TELEPHONE NUMBER			Ignore
M	13	MOBILE NUMBER			Ignore
N	14	WORKS PLACE NAME			Ignore
O	15	WORKS ADDRESS LINE 1			Ignore
P	16	WORKS ADDRESS LINE 2			Ignore
Q	17	WORKS ADDRESS LINE 3			Ignore
R	18	WORKS ADDRESS LINE 4			Ignore
S	19	WORKS ADDRESS LINE 5			Ignore
T	20	WORKS POST CODE			Ignore
U	21	WORKS EMAIL ADDRESS			Ignore

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
V	22	DATE OF LEAVING	Date the employee left this post	10	Only if applicable*
	Example:	31/05/2015			
	Notes:	Please enter the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY. The DOL must not be in advance of the 'Payroll Period End Date'. <b>*Mandatory for leavers – Please note if the member has opted out, use column AX 'Opt out date'.</b>			
W	23	PAYROLL PERIOD END DATE	End date of the earnings period to which the pay relates	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	30/06/2015			
	Notes:	Please enter the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY. The same date must be present for each record on the file; mixed payroll period end dates are not acceptable. <b>This data item must be completed.</b>  Non-monthly payrolls - please note that the payroll period end date is used to determine the scheme year to which the financial information is written back on the target system. The pay date should be used instead of the payroll period end date if the payroll is paid in advance or arrears.			
X	24	ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS 1	Additional voluntary contributions the employee is paying	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	10.01 CUMULATIVE			
	Notes:	Please enter the cumulative contributions to date total for any additional voluntary contributions the employee is paying. Enter only numbers and decimal point. Leave blank or populate with zero values if value is null. <b>AVC – This figure is not reported/paid to the Investment department.</b>			
Y	25	ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS 2	Additional regular contributions the employee is paying	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	15.99 CUMULATIVE			
	Notes:	Please enter the cumulative contributions to date total for any additional regular contributions the employee is paying. Enter only numbers and decimal point. Leave blank or populate with zero values if value is null. <b>Pre-14 Additional ARC's / Added Years - This figure is reported/paid to the Investment department.</b>			

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
Z	26	<b>EMPLOYMENT SUSPENSION/BREAK START DATE</b>	The start date of any <b>unpaid</b> employment break for the employee	10	<b>Only if applicable</b>
	Example:	17/06/2015			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the start date of commencement of any <b>unpaid</b> employment break, for example, strike, maternity or paternity.</p> <p>Please enter the date in the format <b>DD/MM/YYYY</b>.</p> <p>Do not enter a date in advance of the Payroll Period End Date.</p>			
AA	27	<b>EMPLOYMENT SUSPENSION/BREAK END DATE</b>	The end date of any <b>unpaid</b> employment break for the employee	10	<b>Only if applicable</b>
	Example:	18/06/2015			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the end date of a termination of any <b>unpaid</b> employment break, for example, strike, maternity or paternity.</p> <p>Please enter the date in the format <b>DD/MM/YYYY</b>.</p> <p>Do not enter a date in advance of the Payroll Period End Date.</p>			
AB	28	FILLER	A spare field reserved for future use.		<b>Ignore</b>
AC	29	<b>EMPLOYMENT BREAK REASON</b>	Employment break reason	1	<b>Only if applicable</b>
	Example:	M			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the reason for the employment break, the following entries are valid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>A</b> - Leave of Absence</li> <li>• <b>E</b> - Education Break</li> <li>• <b>S</b> - Strike</li> <li>• <b>U</b> – Unauthorised</li> <li>• <b>Y/M</b> - Parental Break</li> </ul> <p>If the reason is left blank when dates have been provided, an 'Unauthorised' reason will be posted to the record.</p>			

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
<b>AD</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>SURNAME</b>	Surname of the employee	25	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Examples:	James / Howard-Jones / Vaughan Williams / O'Hara			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the last name of the employee. Upper- and lower-case characters are valid.</p> <p>Valid characters are A to Z, hyphen (-) and apostrophe (').</p>			
<b>AE</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>FORENAMES</b>	Forename(s) of the employee	25	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Examples:	Myfanwy / Amelia-Lily / Lewis Watson			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter a <b>maximum of three</b> forenames for the employee.</p> <p>Upper- and-lower case characters are valid. Valid characters are A to Z, hyphen (-) and apostrophe (').</p>			
<b>AF</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>GENDER</b>	Sex of the employee	1	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	M			
	Notes:	Please enter either <b>M</b> (male) or <b>F</b> (female) – not the word in full.			
<b>AG</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>DATE OF BIRTH</b>	Date of birth of the employee	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	06/05/1971			
	Notes:	Please enter the date in the format <b>DD/MM/YYYY</b> .			



Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
AM	39	PENSIONABLE PAY / APP	The pensionable pay/or assumed pensionable pay of the employee for the current pay period	10	Mandatory
	Example:	1000.01	PAY PERIOD		
	Notes:	Please enter the employee's pensionable pay / APP for the current payroll period. Enter only numbers and decimal point. <b>Populate with '0.00' if null.</b>			
AN	40	EFFECTIVE DATE			Ignore
AO	41	DATE JOINED PENSION SCHEME	The date the employee joined the pension scheme	10	Only if applicable
	Example:	01/04/2015			
	Notes:	Please enter the date joined fund in the format DD/MM/YYYY. <b>***The Date Joined Fund is mandatory for new starters / new posts. Only provide on a report once as this will generate a new record. If a DJF is provided multiple times, duplicate records will be created in error and may not be flagged up for some time***</b>			
AP	42	JOB TITLE	Job title/description of the employee	20	Only if applicable
	Example:	Payroll Officer			
	Notes:	Please enter the employee's job title for this post			
AQ	43	PART-TIME/WHOLE-TIME HOURS EFFECTIVE DATE			Ignore

Column	Item	Data Item		Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
AR	44	PART-TIME HOURS				Ignore
AS	45	PART-TIME INDICATOR				Ignore
AT	46	WHOLE-TIME EQUIVALENT HOURS				Ignore
	Notes:					
AU	47	<b>EMPLOYEE'S MAIN SECTION CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		Employee's main section scheme contributions for the current payroll period	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	120.00	PAY PERIOD			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the employee's main section scheme contributions for the current payroll period. Enter only numbers and decimal point. <b>Mandatory - populate with '0.00' if null pay this period. Negative values are OK.</b></p> <p><b>Please note: This figure is compared to the funds received by the investments department, check this will balance. If there is a discrepancy, please provide information and a breakdown in an email to the Pension Section.</b></p>				
AV	48	<b>EMPLOYERS CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		Employer's scheme contributions for the current payroll period	5	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	240.00	PAY PERIOD			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the employer's scheme contributions for the current payroll period. Enter only numbers and decimal point. <b>Mandatory - populate with '0.00' if null pay this period. Negative values are OK.</b></p> <p><b>Please note: This figure is compared to the funds received by the investments department, check this will balance. If there is a discrepancy, please provide information and a breakdown in an email to the Pension Section.</b></p>				

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
AW	49	SCHEME CONTRIBUTION RATE	Employee's scheme contribution rate	5	Mandatory
	Example:	6.25	PAY PERIOD		
	Notes:	Please enter the member's scheme contribution rate for the current payroll period: Main scheme 5.50% to 12.50% or 50/50 scheme 2.75% - 6.25%. Enter only numbers and a maximum of 2 decimal points.  <b>Mandatory – a rate is required for all members on the report.</b>			
AX	50	OPT OUT DATE	The date the employee opted out of the pension scheme	10	Only if applicable
	Example:	31/05/2015			
	Notes:	Please enter the date the employee opted out of the pension scheme. Please enter the date in the format DD/MM/YYYY. If the member has received a payroll refund, negative period figures do need to be included so the i-Connect figures balance with those paid to Investments.  Should there be negative cumulative figures due to a payroll refund occurring over a financial year, this will be a validation error and no data will post.  If the member is a validation error, please let Pensions know the member has opted out, as this data will not have been posted and pensions will not be aware of the change in status from active.			
AY	51	OPT IN DATE			Ignore
		Ignore - please use Date Joined fund, column AO.			

Column	Item	Data Item	Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
AZ	52	<b>MAIN SECTION CUMULATIVE PENSIONABLE PAY / APP</b>	The total pensionable pay or assumed pensionable pay in the main section of the CARE scheme for the scheme year (1 April-31 March)	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	1000.01	CUMULATIVE		
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the cumulative Pen Pay / APP for the employee's main scheme pensionable pay for the current financial year. Enter only numbers and decimal point.</p> <p><b>Mandatory, populate with '0.00' if null or the member is not in the CARE scheme.</b></p> <p>Negative values will be a validation error.</p> <p><b>***This is the YTD CARE pay figure - it is particularly important this is correct as it will be used to calculate pension benefit figures (LG members)***</b></p>			
BA	53	<b>50/50 SECTION CUMULATIVE PENSIONABLE PAY / APP</b>	The total pensionable pay or assumed pensionable pay in the 50/50 section of the CARE scheme for the scheme year (1 April-31 March)	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	1000.01	CUMULATIVE		
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the cumulative pen pay / APP for the employee's 50/50 section pensionable pay for the current financial year. This is required only for members of the LGPS. Enter only numbers and decimal point.</p> <p><b>Mandatory - populate with '0.00' if null / if the employee is not in the CARE scheme / if a member of the Police or Firefighters' Pension Scheme.</b></p> <p>Negative values will appear as a validation error.</p>			

Column	Item	Data Item		Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable		
BB	54	<b>FULL TIME EQUIVALENT FINAL PAY</b>		Full-time equivalent pensionable pay in respect of the employment for the scheme year (pre-2014 scheme definition)	10	<b>Only applicable in month 12</b>		
	Example:	18000.00	ANNUAL					
	Notes:	<p><b>***Blank until month 12***</b></p> <p>Please enter the member's annual final pay, based on the pre-CARE definition of pay for the current financial year.</p> <p>A value is required before the scheme year end for use with annual benefit statements and member self-service systems. Enter only numbers and decimal point.</p>						
BC	55	<b>CUMULATIVE EMPLOYEE'S MAIN SECTION CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		Employee's main section cumulative scheme contributions	10	<b>Mandatory</b>		
	Example:	999.99	CUMULATIVE					
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the cumulative contributions to date total for the employee's main section scheme contributions, for the current financial year. Enter only numbers and decimal point.</p> <p><b>Mandatory - populate with '0.00' if null.</b></p>						
BD	56	<b>CUMULATIVE EMPLOYER'S CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		Employer's cumulative scheme contributions	10	<b>Mandatory</b>		
	Example:	1999.98	CUMULATIVE					
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the cumulative contributions to date total for the employer's scheme contributions for the current financial year. Enter only numbers and decimal point. <b>Mandatory - populate with '0.00' if null.</b></p>						
BE	57	<b>REASON FOR LEAVING</b>		Reason the employee terminated employment	100	<b>Only if applicable</b>		
	Example:	Voluntary Early Retirement						
	Notes:	<p>This is a 100-character (including spaces) field to hold the reason why the employee's employment has terminated. If the member has left this is currently an optional field to complete.</p>						

Column	Item	Data Item		Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
BF	58	<b>CUMULATIVE EMPLOYER SHARED COST APCs</b>		Cumulative shared cost additional pension contributions (employer contributions only)	10	Only if applicable
			CUMULATIVE			
	Notes:	Include the YTD figures within this column OR if this is not possible apply to Cumulative Employer Contributions (column BD)				
BG	59	<b>CUMULATIVE EMPLOYEE APCs</b>		Cumulative employee additional pension contributions (include employee SCAPC contributions, but exclude employer SCAPC contributions)	10	Only if applicable
	Example:	1050.00	CUMULATIVE			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the cumulative contributions to date total for any additional pension contributions the employee is paying. Employee SCAPC contributions should be included; please do not include any employer SCAPC contributions.</p> <p>Enter only numbers and decimal point. Period Employee APC figure is provided in column BK.</p> <p><b>Leave blank or populate with zero values if null.</b></p>				
BH	60	<b>EMPLOYEE'S 50/50 SECTION CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		Employee's 50/50 section scheme contributions for the current payroll period	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	360.00	PAY PERIOD			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the employee's 50/50 section scheme contributions for the current payroll period.</p> <p>Enter only numbers and decimal point. <b>Mandatory - populate with '0.00' if null pay this period. Negative values are OK.</b></p> <p><b>Please note: This figure is compared to the funds received by the investments department, please check this will balance. If there is a discrepancy, please provide information and a breakdown via email to the main contact at the Pension Section.</b></p>				

Column	Item	Data Item		Description	Maximum Number of Characters	Mandatory/Ignore/Only if applicable
BI	61	<b>CUMULATIVE EMPLOYEE'S 50/50 SECTION CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		Employee's cumulative 50/50 section scheme contributions	10	<b>Mandatory</b>
	Example:	999.99	CUMULATIVE			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the cumulative contributions to date total for the employee's 50/50 section scheme contributions, for the current financial year. Enter only numbers and decimal point.</p> <p><b>Mandatory - populate with '0.00' if null.</b></p>				
BJ	62	<b>PAY PERIOD SHARED COST APCs</b>		Pay period shared cost additional pension contributions (employer contributions only)	10	<b>Only if applicable</b>
	Example:	100.50	PAY PERIOD			
		Include the Period Shared Cost APC figures here OR if this is not possible apply to Employer Contributions (column AV)				
BK	63	<b>PAY PERIOD EMPLOYEE APCs</b>		Pay period employee additional pension contributions (include employee SCAPC contributions, but exclude employer SCAPC contributions)	10	<b>Only if applicable</b>
	Example:	100.50	PAY PERIOD			
	Notes:	<p>Please enter the pay period total for any additional pension contributions the employee is paying. Employee SCAPC contributions should be included, please do not include any employer SCAPC contributions. Enter only numbers and decimal point.</p> <p><b>Leave blank or populate with zero values if null. This relates to Post-14 APC contributions only.</b></p> <p><b>Please note: This figure is compared to the funds received by the investments department, please check this will balance. If there is a discrepancy, please provide information and a breakdown via email to the main contact at the Pension Section.</b></p>				

# Preparation

## 1.1 Record matching

i-Connect will automatically match, where possible, each separate post on your payroll system to a corresponding record on your administering authority's pensions administration system (referred to throughout this document as 'the target system'). The matching process uses employees' National Insurance numbers, together with a unique payroll identifier.

### 1.1.1 Unique payroll identifier

A unique payroll identifier must be present for each payee/post on the payroll extract file. This key can be a combination of fields held on the payroll system, for example, payroll reference, employee reference and post number. There are two fields available on the payroll extract file to output the unique payroll identifier:

- Payroll Reference 2 (Data Item 3)
- Payroll Reference 3 (Data Item 4)

These two fields provide you and your administering authority with the flexibility to create a unique payroll identifier in a single field or across multiple fields.

The examples in the table below use the following information:

- National Insurance Number: AA123123A
- Payroll Reference: 555444
- Post Number: 144-543

Unique Payroll Identifier	National Insurance Number	Payroll Reference 1	Payroll Reference 2	Payroll Reference 3
Single Field	AA123123A		555444144543	
Multiple Fields (2)	AA123123A		555444	144-543

Each reference field corresponds to a specific field on the target system. Your administering authority will provide you with their specific field-level matching requirements as part of the i-Connect implementation process; please contact them as soon as possible, if this information has not been provided.

**The selected matching method must be consistent for all records on the payroll extract file.**

## **2 Extract file creation preparation**

### **2.1 File format**

All payroll extract files uploaded into i-Connect must be saved as comma-separated-value (CSV) files. Files not in this format will be rejected during the upload process.

Fields containing commas must be embedded within a set of double quotes (commonly referred to as 'text qualifiers'), to maintain data integrity. For example, a data entry in Address Line 1 (data item 15), with a comma present, would be output as: "Dun Roamin, Dun Campin"

### **2.2 Header row**

A header row must be present on the first row of each payroll extract file, to describe the i-Connect data items. Failure to include a header row will result in the first record on the file being omitted from processing, as i-Connect always assumes the first row is the header.

A sample header row is:

```
NI_NUMBER,PAY_REF_1,PAY_REF_2,PAY_REF_3,ADD_LINE_1,ADD_LINE_2,ADD_LINE_3,ADD_LINE_4,ADD_LINE_5,POSTCODE,EMAIL_ADDRESS,TELEPHONE_NUMBER,MOBILE_NUMBER,WORKS_PLACE_NAME,WORKS_ADD_LINE_1,WORKS_ADD_LINE_2,WORKS_ADD_LINE_3,WORKS_ADD_LINE_4,WORKS_ADD_LINE_5,WORKS_POSTCODE,WORKS_EMAIL_ADDRESS,DATE_OF_LEAVE,PAYROLL_PERIOD_END_DATE,ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS_1,ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS_2,EMPLOYMENT_BREAK_START,EMPLOYMENT_BREAK_END,FILLER_1,SUSPENSION_REASON,SURNAME,FORENAMES,GENER,DOB,MARITAL_STATUS,TITLE,FILLER_2,AUTO_ENROLMENT_QUALIFYING_EARNINGS,ANNUAL_,PENSIONABLE_SALARY,PENSIONABLE_PAY,EFFECTIVE_DATE,DATE_JOINED_PENSION_SCHEME,JOB_TITLE,PART_TIME_HOURS_EFFECTIVE_DATE,PART_TIME_HOURS,PART_TIME_INDICATOR,WHOLE_TIME_EQUIVALENT_HOURS,EMPLOYEES_MAIN_SECTION_CONTS,EMPLOYERS_CONTS,SCHEME_CONT_RATE,OPT_OUT_DATE,OPT_IN_DATE,MAIN_SECTION_CUMULATIVE_PEN_PAY,5050_SECTION_CUMULATIVE_PEN_PAY,FTE_FINAL_PAY,CUMULATIVE_EMPLOYEES_MAIN_SECTION_SCHEME_CONTS,CUMULATIVE_EMPLOYERS_SCHEME_CONTS,REASON_FOR_LEAVE,CUMULATIVE_SCAPCs,CUMULATIVE_APCCs,EMPLOYEES_5050_CONTS,CUMULATIVE_EMPLOYEES_5050_CONTS,SCAPCs,APCs
```

The column names do not have to be identical to those above, but the field ordering must be the same as the order specified in section 1.

## **2.3 Duplicate records**

All records on the i-Connect payroll extract file must be unique. Uploaded files will be rejected if there are one or more records containing duplicate combinations of National Insurance Number and the unique payroll identifier.

## **2.4 Other payroll extract file considerations**

- The order of the data items must match the order specified in the file layout.
- The payroll period end date (data item 23) must be the same on all records.
- Blank rows must not be present in the payroll extract file.
- Ensure all leading zero values remain if the file has to be converted to CSV format.
- Ensure all transactions processed after the payroll cut-off date are included on the i-Connect payroll extract file report. This must include new starters, leavers, post changes and so on.
- Part-time hours must be pro-rated for term-time employees.
- Negative values are indicated by a minus '-' character at the beginning of the data field (for example, '-115.64').