

# The Federal XML Naming and Design Rules and Guidelines

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The Federal XML Community of Practice is revamping the Federal XML Developers Guide. Here is what to expect of the revised guidelines:

**MODULARITY:** The guidelines stress a modular approach to developing schemas, in order to encourage reuse and standardization across agencies. Each root schema will have a unique namespace and allow developers to import elements from other schemas, departments, agencies or outside standards bodies.

**FEDERAL ENTERPRISE SCHEMAS:** The guidebook also proposes creation of four new generic schemas that can be used across government. One schema will be for qualified data types (data with security restrictions) and another will be for unqualified data types. A third schema will contain general “complex data elements” or compound elements such as “address,” “person” and “organization.” The last schema will contain simple data elements such as “first name,” “last name” and “birthdate.”

**NAMESPACES:** Namespaces are used to identify schema modules. The guide encourages agencies to name their namespaces in a hierarchical manner, using the Uniform Resource Name format for permanent identification (although the more user-friendly Uniform Resource Locator format may also be used).

**VERSIONING:** The guidebook is encouraging agencies to assign version numbers to their schemas, updating the numbers when revisions are made.

—Source: Mark Crawford of LMI Consulting, the Federal XML Naming and Design Rules and Guidelines draft (available at [www.core.gov](http://www.core.gov))