Montana Department of
LABOR & INDUSTRY
Unemployment Insurance Division

Rate Exchange

Instructions & Specifications

Updated: October 2023

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Introduction

To improve the number of errors with Unemployment Insurance (UI) tax rates, Montana Unemployment Insurance (UI) offers a process for UI tax preparers to receive updated rate information for their clients. Using UI eServices for Employers (eServices) a file containing rate information for all associated clients can be requested and downloaded as often as needed.

The file also includes credit balance information. If any of your clients have a credit balance on their UI tax account at the time you request the rate exchange, the amount of the credit will be included in the file as well.

Contact our eServices Customer Support Team at (406) 444-3834 or uieservices@mt.gov with questions about Montana's UI Rate Exchange.

Participation – MOU Required

Participation in the Rate Exchange through eServices requires a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The understanding reached with the MOU is that you will collect and maintain authorization from each of your clients to act on their behalf in matters related to Unemployment Insurance Contributions (tax). We will not require a copy of the authorization to release rate information; however, if at any time we do request a copy of the authorization, you must provide it.

Download the MOU from our Guides, Forms & More web page.

Please note: Participation in the rate exchange does not grant you third party access into your client's individual UI account on eServices. That level of access does require a completed authorization form.

Importing Client Lists and Retrieving Rates

Retrieving UI rates for your clients is a two-step process:

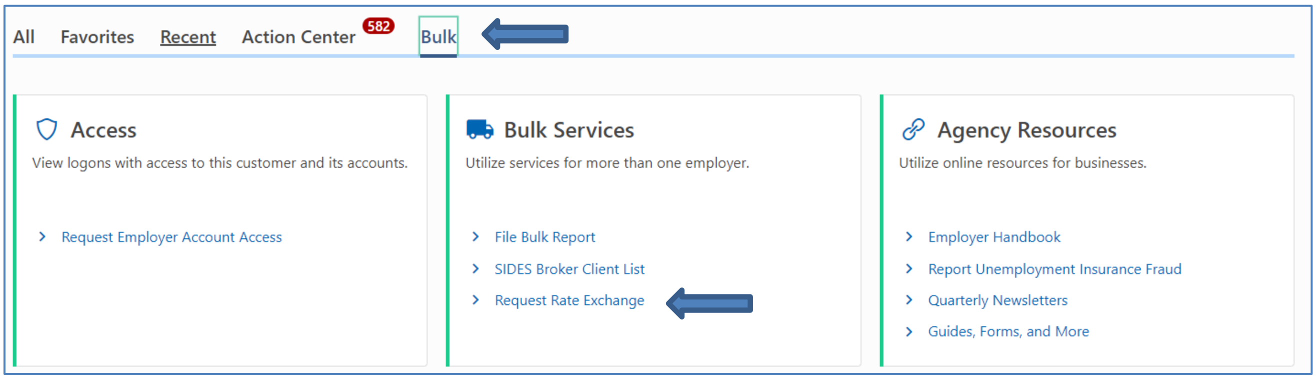
- Step 1 – Provide us with a list of clients you need rates for.
- Step 2 – Download a file containing the rates requested.

Please note: Generally, the fiscal rate exchange is a two-day process. Once your client list is uploaded, system batch processing must take place on our side before we can provide the list of rates. Our batch process begins around 5:30pm (mountain time) each business day. Rate exchange requests received prior to 5:30 will be available for pick the following business day. Requests submitted after that time will take an extra business day.

Import Client List

If you haven't already, you will need to create a UI eServices for Employers (eServices) logon to retrieve the UI tax rates for your clients.

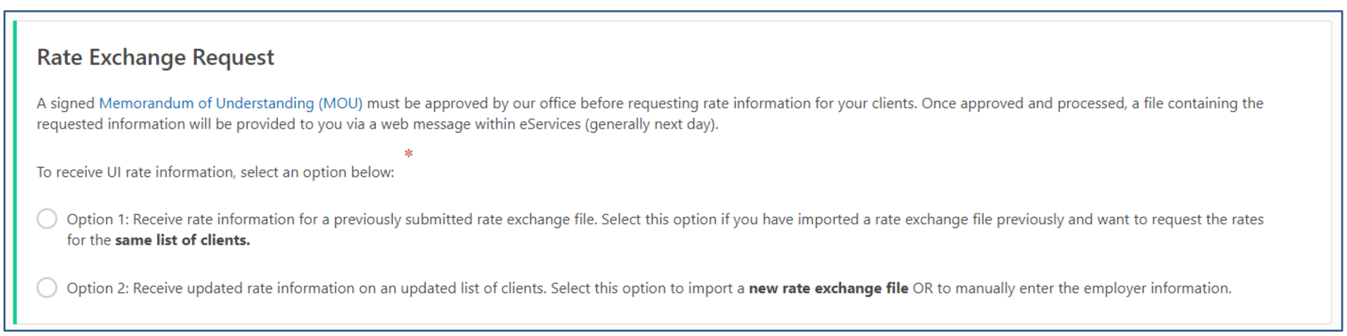
Log into eServices and navigate to the **Bulk** tab and select the **Request Rate Exchange** option on the Bulk Services Panel:



You have two options for indicating which clients you'd like rates for:

1. Request the rates for the same list of clients you requested on your most recent exchange
2. Import or key in a list of all your clients (recommended to ensure no one is missed)

Select the appropriate option:



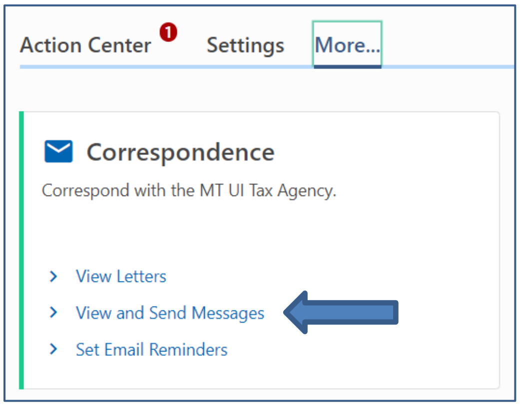
If you choose Option 2, to enter a new list, you can either key in each client OR select **Import** to upload a list of your clients (see Import Record File Layout section).

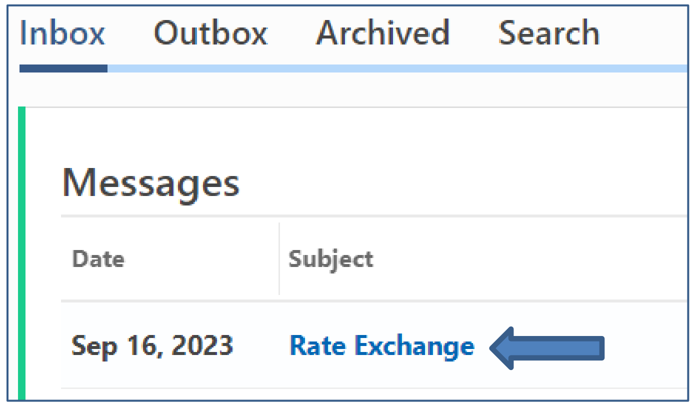
Once your client list is added, click **Submit**.

When the rate file is ready for pick up (generally the next day), you will receive an email notifying you a web message exists within eServices. If you don't receive the email, check your spam folder or simply log into eServices and review your web messages.

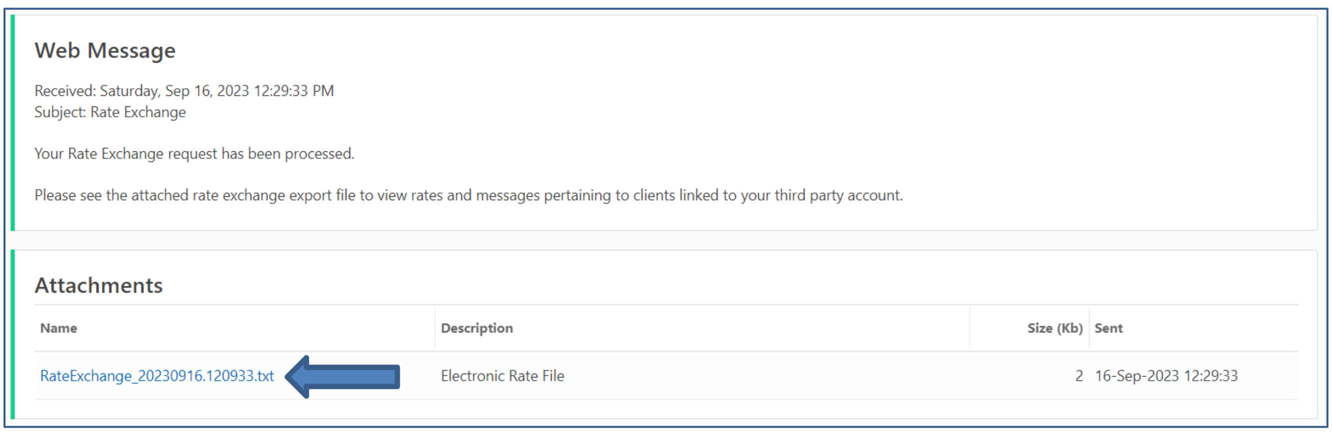
Retrieve Rate File

To retrieve the rate file, log into eServices and from either the Action Center or the More.. tab, view the messages on your account. From the Inbox, select the Rate Exchange message.





Click the file Name under the Attachments Section of the web message to download the file.



Please Note: Error messages may be included in the file. Don't forget to review those and correct if/when necessary.

Import Record File Layout

Client lists can be imported into eServices using either of the following file types:

- Microsoft Excel
- Delimited text file

One record occurrence should be included for each client.

Microsoft Excel Import Record Layout

Your Excel file should follow the format below:

First line – Can contain header information or be left blank
Repeating rows - Repeated for each client:

- First Column – MT
- Second Column – 7 digit UI account number (Optional field)
- Third Column – 9 digit FEIN (Optional field)
- Forth Column – Business Name (Optional field)

Please note: You must match two out of the three optional fields with our records to receive a response.

Example File Layout:

MT	2057574	111111111	COMMON COUNTY
MT	2056633	222222222	SMITHS DENTAL PRACTICE
MT	2057795	333333333	JOES COFFEE SHOP
MT	2057796	444444444	BONNIES DOG RESCUE

Delimited Text File Import Record Layout

Location	Field	Length	Type	Descriptions and Remarks
1-2	State Code	2	A/N	Constant "MT"
3-19	Client UI Account Number	17	A/N	Enter the 7 digit UI account number for each client
20-28	Client Federal Employer Identification Number	9	A/N	Federal Employer ID number. Enter only numeric characters. Omit hyphen, prefixes & suffixes.
29-68	Client Business Name	40	A/N	Enter client's business name
69-69	Blank	1	A/N	Enter blank.
70-109	Client Mailing Address Street Line 1	40	A/N	Enter first street line of client's mailing address. Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.
110-149	Client Mailing Address Street Line 2	40	A/N	Enter second street line of client's mailing address. Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.
150-174	Client Mailing Address City	25	A/N	Enter the city of the client's mailing address. Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.
175-176	Client Mailing Address State	2	A/N	Enter the state of the client's mailing address. Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.
177-186	Client Mailing Address Zip Code	10	A/N	Enter the zip code of the client's mailing address. Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.
187-225	Blank	39	A/N	Enter blanks.
226-242	Client ID for use by TPA	17	A/N	Enter the client ID used by the TPA to identify the client. Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.
243-250	File Creation Date	8	A/N	Enter the date the file was created. (YYYYMMDD). Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.
251-256	File Creation Time	6	A/N	Enter the time the file was created. (HHMMSS). Optional field, if not used, fill with blanks.

Rate Export File Record Layout

For each record occurrence received, we will generate one record occurrence for return.

Location	Field	Length	Type	Descriptions and Remarks
1-256	Data Received	256	A/N	Original data received in the import file
257-261	Calendar year/quarter	5	A/N	The calendar year/quarter to which the information applies. (YYYYQ)
262-262	Matched Indicator	1	A/N	Y-The Montana UI Tax System matched the record occurrences received N-The Montana UI Tax System was unable to match the record occurrence received
263-263	Accepted Indicator	1	A/N	Y-The record occurrence received from the TPA resulted in acknowledging the employer is a client of the TPA submitting the record N-The record occurrence received from the TPA did not result in acknowledging the employer is a client of the TPA submitting the record
264-280	Montana UI Account Number	17	A/N	If matched indicator was equal to 'Y', the 7 digit UI Account number is provided If matched indicator was equal to 'N', the 7 digit UI Account number is not provided.
281-289	Federal Employer Identification Number	9	A/N	If matched indicator was equal to 'Y', the FEIN matched to the UI Account Number is provided. If matched indicator was equal to 'N', the FEIN matched to the UI Account Number is not provided.
290-329	Employer Business Name	40	A/N	If matched indicator was equal to 'Y', the Business Name is provided. If matched indicator was equal to 'N', the Business Name is not provided.
330-330	Blank	1	A/N	Blank

331-337	UI Contributions Rate	7	A/N	If accepted indicator was equal to 'Y', the UI Contributions Rate is provided. If accepted indicator was equal to 'N', the UI Contributions Rate is <u>not</u> provided.
338-344	Administrative Fund Tax Rate (AFT)	7	A/N	If accepted indicator was equal to 'Y', the AFT Rate is provided. If accepted indicator was equal to 'N', the AFT rate is <u>not</u> provided.
345-351	Total Tax Rate	7	A/N	If accepted indicator was equal to 'Y', the sum of the UI Contributions Rate and AFT Rate is provided. If accepted indicator was equal to 'N', the sum of the UI Contributions Rate and AFT Rate is <u>not</u> provided.
352-354	Employer Class Type	3	A/N	If accepted indicator was equal to 'Y', the class type is provided. (REG, RMB, GOV) If accepted indicator was equal to 'N', the class type is <u>not</u> provided.
355-355	Taxable Wage Base Indicator	1	A/N	If accepted indicator was equal to 'Y': 'Y' indicator is provided for class types in which the taxable wage base applies 'N' indicator is provided for class type in which the taxable wage base does not apply If accepted indicator was equal to 'N', taxable wage base indicator <u>not</u> provided.
356-364	Taxable Wage Base Amount	9	A/N	If accepted indicator and wage base indicator was equal to 'Y', yearly taxable wage base is provided. If accepted indicator was equal to 'Y' and wage base indicator was equal to 'N', wage base value is equal to 999999999. If accepted indicator was equal to 'N', taxable wage base amount is <u>not</u> provided.

365-380	Credit Amount	16	A/N	If accepted indicator was equal to 'Y', the Credit amount is provided if applicable. If accepted indicator was equal to 'N', Credit amount is not provided.
381-465	Blank	85	A/N	Blank
466-466	Message Count	1	A/N	The number of messages provided to the TPA from zero to four.
467-496	Message One	30	A/N	If message count is greater than or equal to one, the first message is provided. If message count is zero, the first message is not provided.
497-526	Message Two	30	A/N	If message count is greater than or equal to two, the second message is provided. If message count is less than or equal to one, the second message is not provided.
527-556	Message Three	30	A/N	If message count is greater than or equal to three, the third message is provided. If message count is less than or equal to two, the third message is not provided.
557-586	Message Four	30	A/N	If message count is greater than or equal to four, the fourth message is provided. If message count is less than or equal to three, the fourth message is not provided.
587-594	File Creation Date	8	A/N	The date the return file was created. (YYYYMMDD)
595-600	File Creation Time	6	A/N	The time the return file was created. (HHMMSS)

Appendix A: Rate File Error Message Descriptions

The following error message descriptions are being provided to assist in the clean-up of faulty or incorrect data. Error messages can be found in spaces 467-586 of the return Fiscal Rate Exchange file. Up to four messages may occur for each client. To ensure the efficient processing of future submissions, **please correct as many errors as possible**.

EMPLOYER NOT FOUND: Message is received when the UI account number, FEIN, and Business Name submitted from the TPA does NOT match the information in our tax system. If this client has wages in Montana that need to be reported, visit our online website *UI eServices for Employers* to register the business. If the client does not have wages to report in Montana, remove the account information from the file and do not report any tax or wage information for this client.

CLIENT REPORTED BY ANOTHER TPA: Message received if more than one TPA has claimed they are filing UI information in Montana for a particular client. Because we are unsure which TPA has the authority to file for this client, a rate will not be given on the return Fiscal Rate Exchange file. The client must notify the TPA if they are no longer participating in their services. The TPA who is no longer responsible for submitting UI information for the client needs to remove the account information from their file and not report any tax or wage information for this client.

INACTIVE ACCT. STOP REPORTING: Message is received when the UI account number, FEIN, and Business Name submitted from the TPA DOES match records on our tax system, but the account is no longer subject to UI in Montana. The account has been inactivated. If this client has wages in Montana that need to be reported, contact our office to have the account reactivated. If the client does not have wages to report in Montana, remove the account information from the file and do not report any tax or wage information for this client.

UI RATE NOT ASSIGNED: Message is received when the UI account number, FEIN, and Business Name submitted by the TPA DOES match records on our tax system, but a rate is not available.

DUPLICATE RECORD IN FILE: Message is received when duplicate information is submitted for a client. If the UI account number, FEIN, and Business Name match the records on our tax system, the first entry on the file for this client will be accepted and each following record containing the same information will receive this error message. Remove all duplicate records.

INCORRECT FEIN IN FILE: Message received if the UI account number and Business Name submitted match our tax system, but the FEIN does NOT match our records. The FEIN we have on record is provided in spaces 281-289 on the return Fiscal Rate Exchange file. Verify the FEIN with the client and either update the file or contact our office to update the FEIN.

INCORRECT UI ACCOUNT NUMBER: Message received if the FEIN and Business Name submitted match the records on our tax system, but the UI account number does NOT match our records. This message may be received if the UI account number submitted is incorrect OR null (blank). The correct UI account number is provided in spaces 264-280 on the return Fiscal Rate Exchange file. Update the file and tax and wage information for this client.

INCORRECT NAME IN FILE: Message received if the UI account number and FEIN submitted match the records on our tax system, but the Business Name does NOT match our records. The Business Name we have on file is provided in spaces 290-329 on the return Fiscal Rate Exchange file. Verify the Business Name with your client **(only if the name is completely different from the name we have on file)** and either update the file or contact our office to update the Business Name. Many times, this message is generated because of differences in spacing or punctuation. **We only need this information updated IF the name is completely different than the name we have on file.**

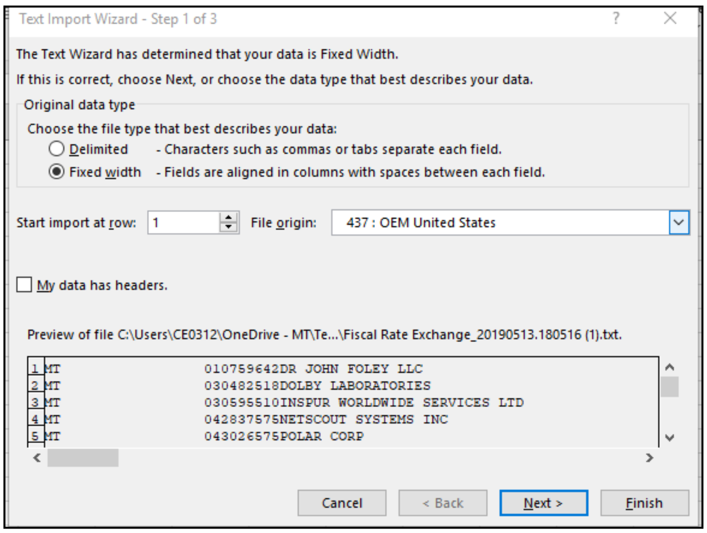
FEIN AND NAME DO NOT MATCH: Message received if the FEIN and Business Name do NOT match the records on our tax system, even though the UI account number may be valid. Verify the information with your client and either update the file or have your client contact our office.

UI ACCT # & NAME DO NOT MATCH: Message received if the UI account number and Business Name do NOT match the records on our tax system, even though the FEIN may be valid. Verify the information with your client and either update the file or have your client contact our office.

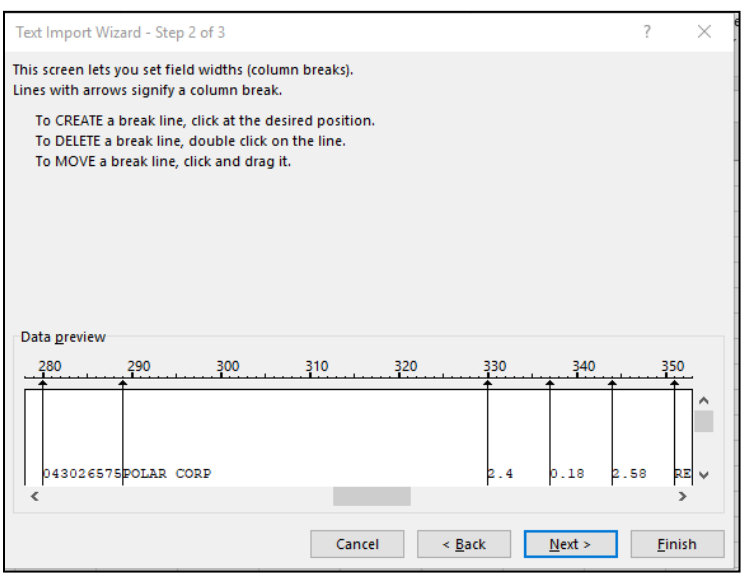
Appendix B: Convert Delimited Text Rate File to Excel

If you are not directly loading the rate file into your system, you may prefer to convert the Delimited Text File into Excel for ease of viewing. The following steps may help:

1. Open the file in Excel.
2. The Text Import Wizard should display automatically.
3. Choose Fixed width as the field type best describing your data and click Next.



4. Create line breaks using the field layout instructions in this document.



5. Click Next
6. Click Finish