FREE FIELD GUIDE

LEDES E-Billing Submission Guide

LEDES formats, the fields on a 1998B line, the portal submission workflow, top rejection reasons and how to resubmit or appeal

MIRA · miranow.ai · Updated October 2026

24
Fields on every LEDES 1998B line

|
Pipe delimiter between 1998B fields

[]
Characters that end each 1998B line

YYYYMMDD
Date format in 1998B files

1 LEDES invoice formats

Format	Structure	When it is used
LEDES 1998B	Pipe-delimited text, 24 fields	Widely required; fees and expenses without tax detail
LEDES 2000	XML	Older XML format, only if a client asks for it
LEDES XML E-Billing 2.0, 2.1, 2.2	XML	Richer invoice data for complex fee arrangements and taxes

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Use the exact format and version the client's portal names. Specifications are published by the LEDES Oversight Committee at ledes.org.

2 Fields on a LEDES 1998B line

Field	What it holds	Example
INVOICE_DATE	Invoice date	20261031
INVOICE_NUMBER	Firm's invoice number	10452
CLIENT_ID	Client identifier	00711
LAW_FIRM_MATTER_ID	Firm's matter number	0528
INVOICE_TOTAL	Total of the whole invoice	455.00
BILLING_START_DATE / END_DATE	Billing period	20261001 / 20261031
INVOICE_DESCRIPTION	Invoice-level description	Services for October
LINE_ITEM_NUMBER	Line sequence	1
EXP/FEE/INV_ADJ_TYPE	F fee, E expense, IF or IE invoice adjustment	F
LINE_ITEM_NUMBER_OF_UNITS	Hours on a fee line, quantity on an expense	1.3
LINE_ITEM_ADJUSTMENT_AMOUNT	Line discount or adjustment	0
LINE_ITEM_TOTAL	Units x unit cost + adjustment	455.00
LINE_ITEM_DATE	Date of the work	20261014
LINE_ITEM_TASK_CODE	UTBMS task code	L320
LINE_ITEM_EXPENSE_CODE	UTBMS expense code (expense lines)	E110

Field	What it holds	Example
LINE_ITEM_ACTIVITY_CODE	UTBMS activity code	A104
TIMEKEEPER_ID / NAME	Who did the work	22547
LINE_ITEM_DESCRIPTION	Narrative	Reviewed collected records for privilege
LAW_FIRM_ID	Firm identifier	Often the firm's tax ID
LINE_ITEM_UNIT_COST	Hourly rate or unit price	350
TIMEKEEPER_CLASSIFICATION	Timekeeper role code	PARTNR
CLIENT_MATTER_ID	Client's own matter number	423-987

Line 1 of the file reads LEDES1998B[], line 2 lists the 24 field names, and every invoice line repeats the invoice-level fields. Examples are illustrative.

3 Submission workflow through a client portal

1 Confirm setup
Matter, timekeepers, classifications and rates are approved in the client's portal.

2 Finalize entries
Codes, narratives and expenses are reviewed against the outside counsel guidelines.

3 Generate the file
Export the invoice in the format and version the client requires.

4 Validate before upload
Check required fields, totals, codes, rates and that line dates fall inside the billing period.

5 Submit
Upload the file and any required attachments, such as receipts.

6 Track status
Watch for acceptance, rejection or line-item adjustments.

7 Respond
Correct and resubmit rejected invoices, or appeal reductions with reasons.

8 Close the loop
Record the outcome and payment, then fix the upstream cause.

4 Top rejection and reduction reasons

Reason	What it looks like	Fix upstream
Block billing	Several tasks under one time entry	One task per entry with its own time
Wrong or missing UTBMS code	Code absent or not on the client's list	Code at entry and check the client's code set
Rate not approved	Rate differs from the approved rate	Update approved rates with effective dates
Timekeeper not approved	Timekeeper missing from the matter	Request approval before the person bills
Vague description	Attention to file, work on matter	Name the task, subject and purpose
Expense not allowed	Disallowed or undocumented expense	Check expense rules; attach receipts
Dates outside the billing period	Line dates before start or after end date	Set the period to match the entries
Totals do not add up	Line totals differ from the invoice total	Recalculate after every adjustment
Duplicate invoice	Invoice number already used	Follow the client's resubmission numbering rule
Wrong matter ID	Client matter number missing or wrong	Store the client's matter ID on the matter record

Portals report reasons in their own wording. LEDES also publishes standardized error codes that some systems use.

5 Resubmit or appeal

- [ ] Read the exact rejection or adjustment reason
- [ ] Decide: correct and resubmit, or appeal the reduction
- [ ] Fix technical errors in the source billing system, then regenerate the file
- [ ] Check whether the client wants the same or a new invoice number
- [ ] Write each appeal with facts: the guideline section, the approval, the task purpose
- [ ] Attach evidence such as a rate approval or staffing approval
- [ ] Submit the appeal inside the portal's deadline
- [ ] Log the reason category, correction time and result
- [ ] Update rates, timekeepers or codes so the same error does not repeat
- [ ] Tell the timekeepers whose entries were reduced

6 Narratives that pass review

Do

- ✓ One task per entry
- ✓ Name the document, person or issue
- ✓ State the purpose for the matter
- ✓ Use a verb that matches the activity code

Avoid

- ✗ Block-bill a day under one line
- ✗ Write attention to file or work on matter
- ✗ Describe clerical work as legal work
- ✗ Leave internal shorthand the client cannot read

7 Clean time data upstream

MIRA supports the upstream part of the eBilling workflow: it captures work activity, prepares clearer billing narratives and suggests task and activity codes for lawyer review. It does not replace the billing system, LEDES administration or the client's eBilling portal.

Sources and references: LEDES Oversight Committee: LEDES 1998B format specification and sample file (ledes.org); LEDES Oversight Committee: LEDES 1998BI, LEDES 2000 and LEDES XML E-Billing 2.0, 2.1, 2.2; LEDES Standardized Error Codes; UTBMS code sets (ABA). General information, not legal advice. Check your jurisdiction's rules and your client billing guidelines.

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