

SHIP Needs SHIPTools Meets

The Health Assistance Partnership (HAP) provides support for State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs) based on needs mutually identified by the SHIPs, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and HAP. By sharing best practices and undertaking capacity building initiatives, HAP works with SHIPs to find appropriate solutions to the challenges SHIPs face in ways that resonate with CMS.

HAP uses its experiences in the field to help shape the support it offers while aligning this support with the goals of SHIPs as articulated by CMS. In so doing, HAP works with CMS to further the SHIP mission of supporting the approximately 45 million Medicare beneficiaries that exist today.

This document includes a list of the Programmatic SHIP Needs for the 2007-2008 SHIP Grant year as articulated by CMS in the following:

- FY 2007 State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Grants
- Appendix A: Guidance for Organizations Providing Personalized Assistance for Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage
- Appendix B: Performance Measures
- Appendix C: SHIP Clusters for 2007 Performance Awards
- Appendix D: Attestation of SHIP Minimum Requirements
- State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Grant Terms and Conditions for Grant period: April 1, 2007-March 31, 2008

For the purposes of capacity building, Programmatic SHIP Needs are defined as those stated in the documents above that are directly involved in helping SHIPs counsel, educate and capture their services to Medicare beneficiaries.

This document shows how one of HAP's services, SHIPTools, furthers the programmatic needs of SHIPs. SHIPTools is a customizable web-based management system developed by HAP in early 2007 to assist SHIPs in counseling, educating and reaching their Medicare beneficiaries. SHIPTools is the result of nearly four years of work in the areas of SHIP reporting, on-line training, web-based communications and database development.

SHIPTools was created to connect HAP's work to SHIP needs in an entirely new approach because experience has indicated that the needs of SHIP programs vary greatly from one another. SHIPTools allows the maximum flexibility possible in tailoring the applications for the individual needs of SHIP programs while helping them meet the goals and objectives of CMS. In the development of SHIPTools, special attention was given to making it possible to add on to the suite of tools, just as you would add a room onto a house that already has a solid foundation laid. In this way, SHIPTools can remain responsive to the future needs of SHIPs and goals of CMS in the continuing quest to best serve the Medicare population.

Programmatic SHIP Needs	SHIPTools Functionality
<i>Community Education and Partnership</i>	
<p>Increase local and State participation in CMS education and communication activities, thus enhancing communication between CMS and SHIPs to assure that SHIP counselors are equipped to respond to a rapidly changing counseling environment and to provide CMS with information about the support and resources that SHIPs need to provide accurate and reliable counseling services.¹²</p>	<p>Where CMS has made it possible through their contractor ABT, SHIPTools provides information to SHIPTalk for upload into the systems used by CMS. This could also be done for organizational, partner, resources and counselor information if the appropriate file export guidelines were provided.</p>
<p>Conduct Outreach programs, other than one-on-one counseling, to provide health insurance information, counseling, and assistance to eligible individuals.³</p>	<p>In one implementation of SHIPTools, a state has chosen to collect the beneficiary address information as a mandatory field. Users then create mailing lists of beneficiaries, based on specific topics discussed in counseling sessions. This is done to follow up with targeted mailings around specific services beneficiaries received from the SHIP program as well as upcoming activities that may be relevant based on a beneficiary's previous interaction with the SHIP program.</p>
<p>Perform targeted outreach in order to provide access to counseling to low-income, dual-eligible, and hard-to-reach populations.⁴</p>	<p>SHIPTools provides SHIPs the ability to enter scheduled events into a web-based calendar. When entering an event, the user can determine the visibility of the event, meaning whether it is an event the general public should see, just members of a particular organization or all SHIP team members should have access to. The calendar function accommodates multiple views such as displaying all events, specific topical events, events in a particular county, or events hosted by a particular organization. After the event has occurred, users can then enter the additional information on topics discussed and number of people attended/enrolled such that the event is then ready to be submitted to CMS at the end of the quarter. In this way, SHIPTools enables a</p>

	SHIP program to ‘advertise’ events to increase attendance and the reach of the program. This is done simultaneously with completing a public and media activity form to satisfy NPR reporting requirements. For all events that are entered into the system but missing required information for submission to CMS, they are flagged for follow up to indicate to the user that there is additional information required before the event is considered complete.
Program Administration	
Partner with other public and private organizations and work toward the vision of a comprehensive and coordinated local network that is capable and accessible to provide the full range of needed information, counseling and assistance to all beneficiaries. ⁵	SHIPTools’ organizational database allows SHIP programs the ability to classify their partners in ways that make sense for them through the addition of notes fields, searchable user-defined tags and by an organization type drop down field. This enables SHIPTools’ users to run reports and generate mailing lists segmented by audience so that targeted outreach and communication with community partners can occur.
Offer systems of referral to appropriate Federal or State departments or agencies that provide assistance with problems related to health insurance coverage (including legal problems). ⁶	Because SHIPTools is web-based and not platform specific, it could be used as a way to share information regarding specific cases requiring follow-up or referral. The privileges and roles would provide users from different organizations the ability to login and view only those cases requiring their attention while protecting the privacy of the beneficiaries.
Coordinate the exchange of health insurance information between the staff of departments and agencies of the State government, other pertinent federal agencies including CMS, and SHIP staff (including volunteers). ⁷	Same as above
Fund systems to connect beneficiaries to local counseling assistance. ⁸	SHIPTools provides a customizable web portal for state SHIP programs to make their SHIPTools web presence ‘look’ and ‘feel’ like the rest of their program. This helps alleviate potential confusion Medicare beneficiaries may

	<p>have in trying to find a local resource to assist them with their needs. Experience has also indicated that enabling the SHIP program to brand their SHIPTools web presence like the rest of their program helps demonstrate in a tangible way to their volunteer pool, the community of which they are a part.</p>
<p>Support counseling services in rural areas of the State using the efforts outlined for Local Access Awards.⁹</p>	<p>SHIPTools is a customizable web-based management system with maximum flexibility to adapt to the unique needs of SHIP programs and the different ways they operate on a daily basis. All functionality is broken into datasets and scopes with five levels of access. This creates over 350 privileges that can be turned on and off placing ‘control’ and a sense of ‘ownership’ of SHIPTools firmly in a SHIP program’s hands.</p>
<p>Manage and oversee local operations to promote the delivery of high quality SHIP services to meet the needs of the State’s Medicare population.¹⁰</p>	<p>SHIPTools offers customizable roles tailored to a SHIP program that dictate what the different SHIP team members can see and do in SHIPTools. Privileges are grouped into roles that are decided by the SHIP Program. These roles determine levels of access to functionality and can accommodate considerable variation in the way SHIPTools operates across different SHIP programs. Roles that contain privileges to access the state-wide SHIP program provide administrators the ability to examine progress of team members and local SHIP sites.</p>
<p>Provide support to local organizations that serve as local SHIP counseling locations.¹¹</p>	<p>SHIPTools offers local programs real-time access to information on the SHIP services they are providing. It enables local volunteers and SHIP coordinators access to different reports and information on the counseling, education and outreach activities being provided in ways that protect the privacy of the individuals being served. SHIPTools contains case management functionality to</p>

	enable local programs to better serve repeat clients by being able to see the number of visits and view what was discussed in each counseling session. A team member's designated SHIPTools role within their local organization determines their access to this information. This helps local programs to include the services they are providing for SHIP in other reporting possibly required by their organization. SHIPTools' flexibility can also accommodate integration with other database applications to further address reporting issues.
Maintain capabilities to send and receive e-mail communications and other information through the Internet, including expanding/maintaining Internet capability at the local levels of the State SHIP program, where applicable. Counselors should have access to Internet-based enrollment and other counseling tools at the time and place of counseling. ¹²	SHIPTools contains emailing functionality for communicating across state programs. Users can generate lists of team members based on specific criteria stored in their database including, but not limited to, region they live in, organization they are affiliated with, counties they cover, the type of role they play in the SHIP program. This promotes targeted communications with SHIP team members that can serve to keep participants engaged.
Provide Internet access to local counselors and generally support efforts to provide locally accessible counseling services. ¹³	
Maintain a customer-oriented and user-friendly toll-free telephone number for use by Medicare eligible individuals for SHIP-related inquiries. ¹⁴	
Include references within the FY 2007 revised budget submission indicating how at least 5% of Federal SHIP funding will be used to provide one-on-one pharmaceutical benefits counseling to dual eligible beneficiaries with mental illness. ¹⁵	
Program Performance	
Provide a description, including quantifiable objectives, of	SHIPTools has implemented a system of filters that allows

<p>how SHIPs intend to address the performance measures. Measurement of States shall also be based on an analysis of NPR data submitted. SHIP performance will be assessed on the measures outlined in Appendix B (Performance Measures) of [the FY 2007 SHIP Grant].¹⁶</p>	<p>all fields of data collected to be searchable. This is complemented by a system of columns that allows users to select the appropriate fields they are interested in generating a report for so that they can quickly create reports of the real-time information in their system, in ways that are meaningful to them. These columns and filters have been implemented in all parts of SHIPTools including the team members area, the client contact forms, the public and media forms, training activities and the organization database. These columns and filters can also be restricted by role so that users do not have access to information that the SHIP program deems inappropriate based on a team member’s level of involvement. By streamlining the collection and analysis of data, SHIPTools enables SHIP team members to spend less time inputting and organizing data and more time working directly with beneficiaries.</p>
<p>Continue pursuit of [program objectives] through counselor development, training activities, outreach efforts, and partnership building. Additionally, States must demonstrate how they provide quality assurance measures to assure the accuracy of the information provided by SHIP counselors, including counselor training, certification, and monitoring.¹⁷</p>	<p>SHIPTools provides users the ability to create certification profiles that they can then assign to their team members based on parameters SHIPs define themselves. If for example a program has a yearly certification that requires attendance at 5 update trainings, completion of one online review and completion of two client contact forms, they can create the certification for this and then search SHIPTools for all those team members that meet that criteria. From the list that is generated they can then assign those individuals a certification profile so team members who met the requirements for a specific timeframe are identified. Users can go back at any point and search by certification to see who did or did not complete certain certification profiles. When team members are certified, indications are automatically made next to each person’s name in the team</p>

	<p>member portion of SHIPTools. This history of a person’s involvement with the SHIP program is retained. This level of tracking also allows SHIP managers to reward and/or recognize the dedication of its team members.</p>
<p>Conduct quality assurance and improvement initiatives in support of locally-based counselors.¹⁸</p>	<p>For interested SHIP programs, SHIPTools has implemented an electronic work flow approval process for all client contact forms and events submitted from the field. When a counselor submits a client encounter it can immediately be reviewed by program administrators at the state level. If there are any questions regarding the form, follow up with the counselor is timely. The program administrator is able to make necessary edits/changes to the form such that it is ready for submission to CMS in the next quarter while meeting the standards set by the program administrator.</p>
<p>Total number of Medicare Beneficiaries in a state that were reached through one-on-one client contacts and in-person outreach, education, and enrollment group events per year per 1,000 beneficiaries in a state.¹⁹</p>	<p>The value of SHIPTools is not in the information it collects, but how it can help users access that information to assist with their program. Special attention is paid in the design of SHIPTools so that users can quickly access the information they need in ways that are meaningful to them. This is done in two ways: by the implementation of a system of columns and filters that allows users to create their own reports on all information stored in SHIPTools including the fields from the client contact forms, public and media activity forms and team member information; and by a section in SHIPTools that houses count, sum and average reports of information. To create further understanding of the information, these count, sum and average reports can be filtered by region, organization and team member.</p>
<p>Total number of active SHIP counselor [Full Time Equivalents] per 100,000 Medicare beneficiaries in a state.²⁰</p>	<p>See above</p>
<p>Total number of active SHIP local and field site counselor</p>	<p>See above</p>

FTEs per 100,000 Medicare beneficiaries in a state. ²¹	
Percent of low-income beneficiaries reached of the total number of beneficiaries with low-income in a state. ²²	See above
Percent of beneficiaries with a disability reached of the total number of beneficiaries with a disability in a State. ²³	See above
Total number of Medicare beneficiaries in a State that were reached through one-on-one client contacts per year per 1,000 beneficiaries. ²⁴	See above
Total number of Medicare beneficiaries reached that discussed an enrollment, enrollment assistance, eligibility, benefits, and/or benefit comparisons topic under Medicare (Parts A and B), Medicare Health Plans, Medicare Prescription Drug coverage, Medicaid, Medigap/Supplement/SELECT and Other: MyHealth topic per year per 1,000 beneficiaries in a state. ²⁵	See above
Total number of Medicare beneficiaries reached that discussed Medicare Prescription Drug enrollment assistance as a topic per year per 1,000 beneficiaries in a State. ²⁶	See above
Percent of active SHIP counselors that participated in update trainings per year. ²⁷	See above
Number of local partners integrally tied to the provision of SHIP counseling services by formal agreement such as a Counselor Agreement Contract, or Memorandum of Understanding. ²⁸	SHIPTools includes an organization database to track information related to local sites and partners that SHIP programs deem appropriate. One of the fields included is date of Memorandum of Understanding signed, which users can then generate a report around.
Submit on a quarterly basis through the National Performance Reporting System data from the client contact form of the SHIP National performance Report and data from the Public	SHIPTools provides the ability for users to compile reports on client contact information and public and media activities in the text format required by SHIPTalk for seamless upload

<p>and Media Activity Form of the NPR. All quarterly reports shall be submitted by the end of the month following the close of the reporting period.²⁹</p>	<p>into that system. SHIPTools provides users the ability to view their data and then create the file according to export instructions which users can then log into SHIPTalk and submit.</p> <p>For privacy and data integrity purposes, this ability to view state-wide data and create the files for export to SHIPTalk is based on privileges and roles associated with each SHIP program.</p>
<p>Submit on a semi-annual basis, the Resource Report Form of the NPR.³⁰</p>	<p>SHIPTools contains a team member database that contains all information required by the SHIP Resource Report. At any time, users with the appropriate privileges, have the ability to generate a SHIP Resource Report for a specific date range from SHIPTools. This Resource Report is automatically calculated based on the information stored in the team member database of SHIPTools among others. For example, to calculate the number of local SHIP counselor hours for section 1D of the report, SHIPTools looks at all the active counselors and adds up their time spent as captured on the client contact forms they have submitted. Users can then log into SHIPTalk and enter that information into the form under their login.</p>
<p>Submit all required NPR data accurately, completely, and timely in the format specified by CMS. All reports shall be completed according to instructions contained therein.³¹</p>	<p>SHIPTools has streamlined the process of submitting quarterly and semi-annual data for SHIP programs through the creation of text files that follow the instructions posted on SHIPTalk that were last revised 4/26/2005.</p>
<p>Submit a mid-term narrative progress report to CMS. The report shall include: a description of the progress made toward meeting each of the objectives outlined in the 2007 SHIP grant application and objectives related to the performance measures as described in the SHIP grant application as revised. As part of the 2007 mid-term narrative progress</p>	<p>If the collection of additional pieces of information is required, the flexibility of SHIPTools enables additional fields to be added very easily at a state's request. For example, fields for tracking services to those with mental disabilities will be added this winter and made available to all interested SHIPTools' users.</p>

<p>report, SHIPs must also describe their specific plans and any progress on efforts to enhance one-on-one pharmaceutical benefits counseling to dual eligible beneficiaries with mental illness. The mid-term narrative progress report will cover the period from date of grant award through August 31, 2007. The report itself will be due to CMS on September 30, 2007.³²</p>	
<p>Program Development</p>	
<p>Increase and enhance beneficiary access to a counselor work force that is trained and fully equipped and proficient in providing the full range of services including enrollment assistance in appropriate benefits plans and continued enrollment assistance in prescription drug coverage as described in Appendix A.³³</p>	<p>SHIPTools contains an online training component that allows users to monitor team members' understanding of content through performance on online tests. Tracking performance in this way identifies areas where team members could use additional training on subject matter and issues they may be struggling with during counseling sessions.</p>
<p>Recruit and train counselors in communities across the state.³⁴</p>	<p>SHIPTools contains a training component that tracks attendance at initial, update and online trainings. Users can register team members for SHIP trainings and confirm their attendance. Once team members have attended a training, the training is listed in an individual's entry in the team member portion of SHIPTools so there is a history of all trainings attended by each SHIP team member. This information is searchable and can also be grouped for certification purposes.</p> <p>For trainings that cover multiple days, each session a user attends is tracked. After the user has attended all sessions of a training, an entry is made under their name in the team member portion of SHIPTools.</p>
<p>Provide information that may assist individuals in obtaining benefits and filing claims under Titles XVIII and XIX of the Social Security Act.³⁵</p>	<p>SHIPTools provides a place to house resources that are relevant to the SHIP program. These resources, consisting of web links and files, are populated by the SHIP program.</p>

	Rather than use email to continually send out updates to materials and potentially causing confusion with team members wondering if they have the latest version of a resource, team members know to ‘pull’ the information from the resources tab where the most up-to-date versions the SHIP program recommends using are located. The resources can be organized using a folder system of the SHIP program’s designation thereby maintaining consistency with how print materials and handbooks have been organized for team members previously.
Provide information regarding long-term care insurance. ³⁶	See above
Provide information regarding Medicaid programs, including Medicare Savings Programs. ³⁷	See above
Provide information regarding other types of health insurance benefits that may be provided to eligible individuals in the state. ³⁸	See above
Provide information regarding health insurance coverage options created under the Balanced Budget Act of 1999, the Benefits Improvement And Protection Act of 2000, and the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement and Modernization Act (DIMA) of 2003. ³⁹	See above
Provide Policy comparison information for Medicare supplemental policies (as described in section 1882(g)(1) of the Social Security Act, as amended) and information that may assist eligible individuals with filing claims under such Medicare supplemental policies. ⁴⁰	
Establish a sufficient number of staff positions (including volunteers) necessary to provide the services of a health insurance information, counseling and assistance program. ⁴¹	Since SHIP programs vary widely, the team member portion of SHIPTools provides programs the flexibility to track information such as staff and volunteers in ways that are useful to each program. SHIPTools provides users the ability to develop regions such

	<p>that service provision across geographic areas can be tracked. Similarly the creation of regions as defined by SHIP programs allows them to easily identify areas that need more coverage or could benefit from additional, more targeted SHIP resources.</p>
<p>Assure that SHIP staff members (including volunteers) have no conflict of interest in providing health insurance information, counseling and assistance, and abide by the SHIP Security Plan Guidelines for safeguarding confidential beneficiary information.⁴²</p>	<p>In a team member’s information, SHIPTools provides programs the ability to track their counselor agreements and when they were signed.</p>
<p>Collect and disseminate timely and accurate health insurance information to staff members (including volunteers).⁴³</p>	<p>SHIPTools provides a connected web space and management features for two types of audiences, the general public and SHIP team members via a volunteer intranet. Both the public and private web spaces allow a SHIP program to post news items and information specific to their different audiences. Because of the way SHIPTools is designed, resources, information and news items can also be posted specifically to segmented audiences.</p>
<p>Provide training programs for staff members (including volunteers).⁴⁴</p>	<p>SHIPTools includes an online training component that allows users to create reviews/tests based on materials they have uploaded into SHIPTools. When creating the questions for a review, SHIPTools enables users to link questions to specific content. Subsequently, if a team member answers a question incorrectly, there is a ‘hint’ supplied that can direct the team member to the correct answer. These hints can be customized based on the number of times a question is answered incorrectly by the same person to encourage team members to ‘drill down’ to the information. The hints do not need to be based off of content within SHIPTools and may connect to other websites and information.</p>

<p>Make recommendations concerning consumer issues and complaints related to the provision of health care to agencies and departments of the State and federal government responsible for providing or regulating health insurance.⁴⁵</p>	<p>SHIPTools is designed with the concept that SHIP programs need to be able to identify trends in the services they are providing to inform their programs as well as national policymakers. The implementation of Advanced Search capabilities to compare the topics covered in counseling and event activities is one such way that SHIPTools is helping programs spot trends in service delivery. Another way SHIPTools can inform policymakers is through the creation of regions that mirror local legislative districts. With the appropriate permissions assigned to them, local legislators can log in and look at the types of services being provided by their local SHIP programs without violating privacy concerns around individual beneficiary contact information. Likewise this can occur at any level up through state or national depending on privileges and roles in the system.</p>
<p>Fulfill the purposes of the SHIP grant to strengthen the capability of states to provide information, counseling, and assistance that will help Medicare beneficiaries in their understanding and access to program benefits, including Medicare preventive services as well as improve the value of their health care coverage. Through counseling, education, and outreach, SHIPs should continue to help beneficiaries identify, understand, and enroll in programs and plans, when eligible and appropriate, including providing enrollment assistance in prescription drug coverage as described in the CMS Enrollment Assistance Guidance, as well as Medicare Advantage plans, Medicare supplemental insurance policies, Medicare Savings Programs, long-term care insurance and financing, and other public and private health insurance coverage options available to Medicare beneficiaries.⁴⁶</p>	<p>SHIPTools has implemented advanced search capabilities to encourage ‘convergence reporting’ on the services being provided. This allows SHIP programs, for example, to examine the number of client contact forms and events a counselor has completed in conjunction with the number of trainings a person has attended to ensure that the team member is remaining an active participant in the SHIP program.</p>
<p>Provide counseling to individual beneficiaries unable to</p>	<p>The creation of SHIPTools, a web-based system that has the</p>

<p>access other channels of information or needing and preferring locally based individual counseling services.⁴⁷</p>	<p>ability to limit what users access through the creation of unique roles consisting of bundles of privileges, allows SHIP programs to tailor it to their needs while providing a way for all local sites to report on their counseling activity. Experience has indicated that the design of SHIPTools to provide real-time access to information has offered incentive to local programs to better capture their activities.</p>
<p>Attend the Annual SHIP Director’s Conference and up to two other events designated by CMS as critical to SHIP training and informational needs.⁴⁸</p>	
<p>Assure full accessibility of SHIP services to all categories of Medicare eligible individuals, including the aged, disabled, and end stage renal disease patients. SHIP services are to be provided without discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, or income.⁴⁹</p>	

¹ FY 2007 State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Grants, p.4.

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³ FY 2007 State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Grants, Appendix D, “Attestation of SHIP Minimum Requirements.” p.31.

⁴ State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Grant Terms and Conditions for Grant period: April 1, 2007- March 31, 2008, p.3.

⁵ FY 2007, p.5.

⁶ Appendix D, p.31.

⁷ Appendix D, p.32.

⁸ FY 2007, p.6.

⁹ FY 2007, pp.6-7.

¹⁰ Terms and Conditions, p.3.

¹¹ FY 2007, p.6.

¹² Terms and Conditions, p.4.

¹³ FY 2007, p.6.

¹⁴ Terms and Conditions, p.4.

¹⁵ Terms and Conditions, p.2.

¹⁶ FY 2007, pp.4-5.

¹⁷ FY 2007, p.5.

¹⁸ FY 2007, p.6.

¹⁹ FY 2007 State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) Grants, Appendix B, “Performance Measures,” p.27. *note: according to discussion of Performance Awards on p. 9 of FY 2007, it refers to total number of one-on-one client contacts per 10,000 Medicare beneficiaries while performance measures stipulate per 1,000 Medicare beneficiaries.*

²⁰ Appendix B, p.27.

²¹ Appendix B, p.27.

²² Appendix B, p.27.

²³ Appendix B, p.27.

²⁴ Appendix B, p.27.

²⁵ Appendix B, p.27.

²⁶ Appendix B, p.27.

²⁷ Appendix B, p.27.

²⁸ Appendix B, p.27.

²⁹ Terms and Conditions, pp.1-2.

³⁰ Terms and Conditions, p.2.

³¹ Terms and Conditions, p.2.

³² Terms and Conditions, p.3.

³³ FY 2007, p.4.

³⁴ FY 2007, p.6.

³⁵ Appendix D, p.31.

³⁶ Appendix D, p.31.

³⁷ Appendix D, p.31.

³⁸ Appendix D, p.31.

³⁹ Appendix D, p.31.

⁴⁰ Appendix D, p.31.

⁴¹ Appendix D, p.31.

⁴² Appendix D, p.32.

⁴³ Appendix D, p.32.

⁴⁴ Appendix D, p.32.

⁴⁵ Appendix D, p.32.

⁴⁶ Terms and Conditions, p.3.

⁴⁷ Terms and Conditions, p.3.

⁴⁸ Terms and Conditions, p.3.

⁴⁹ Terms and Conditions, p.4.