

EZ Clear Enrollment Brochure

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EZ Clear High-Speed Savings Bond/Note Redemption Program

Welcome to EZ Clear! EZ Clear is a division of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, Pittsburgh Branch. EZ Clear serves as the central processing site for United States Savings Bond/Note redemption. Utilizing imaging technology, the EZ Clear Department processes bonds deposited by financial institutions and Federal Reserve Banks across the United States. Financial institutions not currently enrolled in the EZ Clear Program may do so by reviewing the EZ Clear Enrollment Brochure and completing an EZ Clear Enrollment Form.

Overview

The EZ Clear Program is designed to efficiently process redeemed United States Savings Bonds and Saving Notes on behalf of the Bureau of the Public Debt. This program is available to all financial institutions who are authorized paying agents for the Department of the Treasury.

Enrollment in the EZ Clear Program is required of paying agents that submit separately sorted savings bond cash letters. Once enrolled, the depositing financial institution is eligible to receive a \$0.30 per bond commission. To determine if you should enroll in the EZ Clear Program, review the [Depositing Savings Bonds](#) page, and the [Savings Bond Redemption Fee Payments](#) page.

Please read the entire brochure carefully to fully understand the guidelines needed to make the program efficient. An EZ Clear enrollment form should be completed and returned to the address indicated on the enrollment form at least two weeks prior to your anticipated start date.

Eligible Savings Bonds

Authorized paying agents may submit paid savings bonds/notes through the EZ Clear program. Eligible bond series include A, B, C, D, E, EE, I.

Series H/HH bonds are NOT eligible for EZ Clear.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL INSTITUTIONS ARE REQUIRED TO AFFIX THE PAID STAMP ON THE FRONT OF THE BONDS SUBMITTED AND LIST THE REDEMPTION AMOUNT.

Depositing Savings Bonds

There are two deposit methods available:

- A mixed cash letter in which savings bonds are mixed with other work types (e.g. commercial and government checks, non-cash items, etc.). The mixed cash letter is then deposited at a participating Federal Reserve Office for processing and crediting of the items. Financial institutions depositing mixed cash letters are not eligible for the redemption fee commission because the local Federal Reserve Office separates the bonds from the mixed deposit before forwarding the bonds to the EZ Clear central processing site.
- A separately sorted cash letter (EZ Clear fine sort cash letter) contains only eligible EZ Clear savings bonds. EZ Clear cash letters should be mailed directly to EZ Clear.

When preparing savings bonds for deposit, the following guidelines should be used:

- All bonds should be encoded with the redeemed amount, not face amount, directly on the bond or document carrier.
- Series A-E large style (8 1/2" x 7 3/4") paper bonds should be folded and placed in a clear-front document carrier to allow the face of the bond containing the serial number and issue date to be visible. Encoding should be done on the document carrier.
- For all other savings bonds, e.g., E paper (4 1/4" x 7 3/4"), EE and I card style bonds, MICR encoding must be done directly on the bonds. Encoding strips and document carriers are reject repair options only.

When preparing either type of cash letter for deposit, the following guidelines should be used:

- An adding machine tape or computer printout (called a detail) listing all of the amounts in each bundle of work must be attached.
- Cash letter information should include: the financial institution's Routing/Transit (RT) number, date, total items deposited, total dollar amount deposited, and any bundle amounts that comprise the total dollar amount.
- Savings bonds must be encoded by adhering to the depositor MICR encoding guidelines.

[Click here](#) for depositor MICR encoding guidelines.

Enrollment

An EZ Clear enrollment form should be completed for each different RT number that will be depositing a separate savings bond cash letter for your institution. Redemption fees for each RT number can be directed to the same account or different accounts, including a general ledger account.

The address that you provide for your institution will be the mailing address for any deposit and bond pricing error adjustments. Please ensure the address will route the adjustments to the proper office/branch of your institution.

Please ensure the contact name is someone at your institution that can answer or direct to the appropriate area/department any EZ Clear questions regarding deposits, adjustments, or ACH payments.

You will need to provide your institution's Routing/Transit (RT) number. This RT number needs to appear as the depositing RT number on your EZ Clear savings bond cash letter deposits to receive credit for the deposit.

You will need to provide ACH information for the monthly redemption fee (commission) payments your institution will receive for processing the savings bonds through EZ Clear.

ACH information can be an internal general ledger or demand deposit/share draft account at your institution or a demand deposit/share draft account at a correspondent institution.

If you choose a demand deposit/share draft account at a correspondent institution, you will need to provide the RT number of the correspondent institution.

[Click here](#) for EZ Clear Enrollment Form.

Complete the enrollment data and print the enrollment form.

Sign the enrollment form, make a copy for your records and mail the original to:

EZ Clear Central Processing Site
Federal Reserve Bank – Pittsburgh
PO Box 399
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0399

Redemption Fee Payments

Redemption fee payments (commission) for cashing savings bonds are paid to EZ Clear participants depositing separately sorted cash letters. Redemption fee payments will be made to the financial institution based on the RT number on the EZ Clear cash letter. Fees are paid on a monthly basis to each eligible financial institution (not each paying agent or branch office) for all bonds processed under one RT number.

Redemption fee payment credits are sent via Automated Clearing House (ACH) using the information designated in Section 2 of the EZ Clear enrollment form. To receive a redemption fee payment, the ACH information must include the valid RT of an institution capable of processing ACH transactions and a valid account number or general ledger account for automatic posting of the fees credit.

The redemption fee payment will be an ACH "demand credit" which uses a Prearranged Payment and Deposit (PPD) format for demand deposit/share draft accounts and Cash Concentration Disbursement (CCD) for general ledger accounts.

If the receiving financial institution uses an ACH 05 addendum record option when receiving ACH transactions, the month and number of bonds the commission payment reflects will be noted on an ACH activity report. The effective date of payment will be the last business day of each month for the previous month's activity (e.g. January's redemption fees are paid on the last business day of February).

Prior to receiving the first redemption fee payment, an ACH pre-notification letter will be sent to the contact listed on the EZ Clear enrollment form and a \$0.00 pre-notification entry will be functioned to the account number designated in Section 2 of the EZ Clear enrollment form. The contact should verify that the \$0.00 pre-notification entry was received. Please notify EZ Clear if any of the ACH information is incorrect.

Note: An ACH pre-notification letter is also sent when the ACH information on the EZ Clear enrollment form is updated. It is critical that valid ACH information is provided to EZ Clear to ensue the timely crediting of redemption fee payments. Additionally, please provide a copy of the ACH pre-notification letter to your internal area or the internal area of your correspondent institution that handles ACH transactions.

If there are any questions regarding ACH redemption fee payments, please call EZ Clear at 1-800-245-2804 and select Option 4, then Option 4 from the recorded menu between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Eastern Time.

ACH Changes or Corrections

If your institution is currently receiving a monthly redemption commission from EZ Clear, either through a Demand Deposit Account (DDA) or General Ledger (GL) account, and would like to change the way commission is posted, the following choices are available:

1. Pre-notification Letter. Changes can be written directly on a pre-notification letter and mailed to:

EZ Clear Adjustments
Federal Reserve Bank
Pittsburgh Branch
P.O. Box 399
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0399

2. Letter of correspondence with RT number. The letter should outline the current ACH information and the new ACH information and should be mailed to the address shown above or faxed to 412-261-8562.
3. ACH Notification of Change (NOC). The NOC is an electronic correction for ACH changes and can be sent by your ACH area or ACH provider. A NOC can be sent using EZ Clear's pre-notification or redemption commission payment entry. The following correction codes can be used:
 - C01 - Incorrect Account Number (DDA or GL account number)
 - C02 - Incorrect Routing Number (ACH routing number)
 - C03 - Incorrect Routing Number & Account Number
 - C05 - Incorrect Transaction Code (DDA or GL tran code)
 - C06 - Incorrect Account Number & Tran Code
 - C07 - Incorrect Routing Number, Account Number, & Tran Code

NOTE: If your institution name or any other information on file with EZ Clear (e.g. address, contact, phone number, etc.) needs to be changed, you should use a pre-notification letter or letter of correspondence. If you have any questions regarding this ACH service, please call 1-800-245-2804 and select Option 4, then Option 4 from the recorded menu.

Savings Bond Adjustments

All EZ Clear adjustments (e.g. incorrect bond pricing, encoding, detail amounts, etc.) will be functioned through the EZ Clear Adjustments area, and reference information will be included with each adjustment.

Inquiries concerning adjustments functioned by EZ Clear Adjustments should be directed as follows:

EZ Clear Adjustments
Federal Reserve Bank - Pittsburgh
P.O. Box 399
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0399

Inquiries regarding adjustments or depositing errors greater than \$10,000 may be initiated by calling 1-800-245-2804, and selecting Option 4, then Option 4 from the recorded menu.

Incorrect bond pricing, adjusted by the Bureau of the Public Debt, can occur within a time frame of seven to ten business days from the date of the cash letter deposit. Inquiries should not be made prior to this time frame.

Additionally, all paying agents are required to film or image their redeemed bonds prior to depositing them with their check processing Federal Reserve Office. Bond filming or imaging will maximize the ability to use EZ Clear's reference information in the event of an error. This will also ensure that if the originals are lost in transit, agents will have images to submit in lieu of the originals. [Click here](#) for EZ Clear Savings Bond Adjustment Request Form.

Fedline for the Web

If your institution has access to Fedline for the Web, the following will be available to expedite EZ Clear adjustments:

- Pricing error adjustment advices greater than \$20 are received electronically and archived for 12 months.
- EZ Clear adjustment requests can be initiated electronically. Any supporting documentation for the adjustment request can be sent by using the DTF archive or by mailing the documents to:

EZ Clear Adjustments
Federal Reserve Bank - Pittsburgh
P.O. Box 399
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0399

For further information on this service, please call EZ Clear Adjustments at 1-800-245-2804 and select Option 4, then Option 4 from the recorded menu.

If your institution does not have Fedline for the Web and you would like to sign up for this service, please contact Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis at 1-888-333-7010 or Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City at 1-800-333-2690, Option 1, Option 1.

Facsimiles (Photocopies)

Facsimiles are necessary for any savings bonds/notes that were:

1. Lost or destroyed internally before being submitted to EZ Clear.
2. Missing from a cash letter that has already been submitted to EZ Clear.
3. Impounded by the Secret Service.

The facsimile(s), with required documentation, **must be supplied within one calendar year** of the cash letter date. If this information cannot be supplied within one calendar year, a claim must be filed directly with the Bureau of the Public Debt using form PD F 2517, Application For Relief On Account Of The Loss, Theft, or Destruction Of Paid United States Savings Bonds/Notes.

[Click here](#) for the PD F 2517 application.

To receive credit for a paid savings bond/note that has been lost or destroyed, an agent must:

- Complete an indemnification statement for each security. The indemnification statement must be at the top of the page on standard size paper (8 1/2" X 11"). The indemnification statement must also identify the serial number, issue date, payment date, and payment amount of the security. The circumstances of the loss (e.g., lost internally, impounded by the Secret Service) must be stated, as well as the name and address of the institution. An authorized official representing the institution must sign the indemnification statement.
- Make a copy of the signed indemnification statement and facsimile for your files.
- Below the indemnification statement, make a copy of the front and back of the security.
- If the entire EZ Clear Cash Letter is missing, submit a copy of the cash letter and copy of the EZ Clear Debit, if available.

Mixed Cash Letter Depositors must recreate the savings bonds included in the original cash letter by using the EZ Clear indemnification statement. [Click here](#) for the EZ Clear facsimile indemnification instructions. Any non-bond portion of the cash letter must be handled by your check office that processes paper items. These offices may require the use of different forms.

Separately Sorted Cash Letter Depositors that receive a debit advice for the missing savings bonds/notes may send these items directly to EZ Clear using the address below and following the guidelines for submitting facsimiles referenced above.

EZ Clear Adjustments
Federal Reserve Bank – Pittsburgh
P.O. Box 399
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0399

Facsimile Indemnification Statement Instructions

The unique U.S. Savings Bond Indemnification Statement (FORM 700-A) must be used. Please use one form for each bond. Always follow these guidelines when submitting facsimiles of U.S. Savings Bonds

1. Please submit a complete photocopy of both the front and the back of the bond.
2. The bond cannot have been filmed in a check carrier that conceals the back of the bond and the endorsement of the owner.
3. A completed indemnification statement must accompany each photocopy. Please ensure the indemnification statement, the front of the bond, and the back of the bond are all on one 8 ½ by 11 sheet of paper due to EZ clear having to scan the items.
4. All facsimile requests are researched before processing. If it is determined that the savings bonds submitted as facsimiles are retired, we will provide our source of receipt information.

[Click here](#) for a facsimile indemnification statement example

[Click here](#) for the facsimile indemnification form (FORM 700-A)

Please mail photocopies of the front and back of the lost U.S. Savings Bond(s) and a completed indemnification statement(s) to:

Federal Reserve Bank – Pittsburgh
EZ Clear Central Processing Site
P.O. Box 399
Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0399

For further information on this service, please call EZ Clear Adjustments at 1-800-245-2804 and select Option 4, then Option 4 from the recorded menu.

Savings Bonds Repair Options

To repair savings bonds, you may use one of the following options:

1. Place an encoding strip on the bottom of the bond and encode directly on the strip.
2. Place an encoding tab on the bottom of the bond and encode on the tab. Please **DO NOT** cover any part of the bond serial number with the encoding tab.
3. Place the bond in clear front document carrier so that the face of the bond that contains the serial number, issue date, and paid stamp is visible and encode directly on the carrier.

When using document carriers, please do not staple, tape, or use any other form of adhesive. If the document carrier has a pressure sensitive adhesive strip, please **DO NOT** remove the protective covering which exposes the adhesive. Removing the protective covering will cause the adhesive to tear or possibly mutilate the bond when EZ Clear removes the bond from the carrier.

EZ CLEAR SAVINGS BOND ADJUSTMENT REQUEST FORM

RT: _____
 Bank Name: _____
 Street/PO Box: _____
 City: _____
 Sender's Reference #: _____
 Phone Number: _____

Request Date: _____
 Request For: Credit Debit Info
 Amount of Request: \$ _____
 State: _____ Zip: _____
 Contact Name: _____
 Fax Number: _____

Please Check One of the Following:

Enclosed Not Listed (photo of bond must be included with request)	Indemnified Photocopy (See Facsimile Instructions below)
Listed Not Enclosed (photo of bond must be included with request)	Entry In Error (copy of EZ Clear Entry must be included)
Encoding Error (photo of bond must be included with request)	Duplicate Entry (copy of both FRB statements must be included)
Listing Error (photo of bond must be included with request)	Photo And Original Paid
Not Our Item (photo of bond must be included with request)	Copy Of Advice (copy of FRB statement must be included)
Non-Cash Item (photo of bond must be included with request)	Information Request (copy of EZ Clear Entry must be included)

Facsimile Instructions:

1. A complete photocopy of both the **Front** and the **Back** of the bond is necessary.
2. The bond cannot have been filmed in a Check Carrier that conceals the back of the bond and the endorsement of the owner.
3. A COMPLETED INDEMNIFICATION STATEMENT (FORM 700-A) must accompany each photocopy.

Research Information:

Cash Letter Date:	Cash Letter Total : \$
Tape Total: \$	(Use the following for Encoding and Listing Errors)
Before Item:	Listed As:
After Item:	Should Be:

Comments: _____

Please mail all Adjustment Requests to:

**EZ Clear Adjustments
 Federal Reserve Bank - Pittsburgh
 P.O. Box 399
 Pittsburgh, PA 15230-0399
 Phone: 1-800-245-2804
 Fax: 412-261-8562**