



Application Forms and Automated Processing Services

General Information

This section provides Agents information needed to obtain ARC application forms and related documents and describes automated services available from ARC to assist in application processing.

ARC application forms are available through a variety of media tailored to the specific needs of the Agent. Section 35.2 contains a complete listing of application form types and describes situations that may require their submission to ARC by Agents. The ARC Agent Reporting Agreement requires that certain application types be filed with ARC to maintain Agent compliance with the ARA, e.g., new branch locations, changes of ownership, and changes of location. Other application types are provided to support Agents in performing important database maintenance functions, such as changes in bank account information, addresses, phone numbers and key agency personnel.

There are two distinct methods for submitting applications to the Accreditation and Database Management Department:

1. The **preferred and most effective method** is the electronic system, using the ARC Application Processing System (APS) software. There are two methods for preparing and submitting electronic applications.
 - a. Some applications can be best prepared by combining Agent use of the ARC Application Processing System (APS) software and transmission of applications through the Internet for electronic review and processing. Agents may gain access to the ARC APS electronic system by executing appropriate electronic processing agreements with ARC. The agreement forms are available for completion by Agents in the APS software.
 - b. A second electronic method involves the use of ARC APS software to prepare an application, and copying the application to electronic diskette. The Agent subsequently sends both paper and diskette to ARC for system entry and electronic processing. The process is expedited for the Agent in that all application data can be entered into the review and processing system quickly and accurately from the diskette provided by the Agent, and automated review and processing can be performed without delay.
2. The **less preferred method** is the submission of applications in a paper-only format, using paper forms obtained from the ARC web site. This manual technique is more prone to human error and requires

more time and resources to capture data and perform required processing. A paper-only application may be subject to a surcharge to cover additional expenses to ARC associated with manual processing. Section 35.2 and ARC Form 352 identify application forms that are subject to the surcharge.

ARC software and application forms contain detailed preparation instructions and are generally self-explanatory. ARC also operates an Accreditation Information Center to provide information concerning applications, customer support in operating ARC application software, status information on Agent applications, and other general information concerning the accreditation process. The Information Service Center operates on weekdays from 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M. EST and receives calls at 703-816-8085.

The Application Processing System (APS)

The Application Processing System (APS) includes as an option an on-line program that uses automation technology to communicate between the Agent and ARC and to perform application review and processing. This electronic environment enables ARC to process agent applications faster and more accurately than ever before. Applications are submitted through the Internet, and are checked for completeness and accuracy by computer within minutes of receipt. APS applications processed through the Internet provide the Agent immediate feedback concerning the application status, identify any corrective action needed from the Agent, and provide the ability to correct errors without delay.

Once an application is accepted by the ARC APS system, it is assigned an application pending number, which the Agent may use to monitor the application status with ARC Accreditation Information Center personnel.

Minimum computer system requirements to use the ARC APS software are as follows:

Hardware	30mb available disc space, CD-ROM drive and modem and access to an Internet service provider(ISP).
Operating System	Windows 95, 98, NT, 2000 or XP
Software	Microsoft Word 97 or Microsoft Office 97 or later versions



How to Obtain APS Software from ARC

Existing ARC approved Agents may obtain APS software, free of charge, from the ARC Web Site. ARC Web Site Form 350 contains the latest information on obtaining current versions of the APS Software and related agreement documents.

ARC Web Site for Agents

ARC Agents who elect to file applications shown in Section 35.2 in a paper-only format, can access the ARC Web Site through the Internet at <http://www.arccorp.com>. A complete menu of the most current application forms is available, and application forms may be downloaded by the Agent, completed in original form, and submitted as original paper applications to ARC. Application forms available on the ARC Web Site are assigned the same form numbers as those contained in APS software.

Fees for applications submitted as paper only, may include a surcharge to offset the additional costs associated with processing of non-automated forms. Section 35.2 of this manual and ARC Form 353 identify applications having a paper surcharge requirement.