Proposed solution: modify the definition of Alphanumeric in *Data Formats* section of Systems Rules in Section 2 of the Release 3.1 implementation guide to promote clarification of data content expectations

Current definition:

Alphanumeric: Type = A/N
Data elements that are assigned the format of A/N consist of a sequence of any characters from common character code schemes of EBCDIC, ASCII, and CCITT International Alphabet 5. When using an alphanumeric field, the significant characters are always left justified in the field with any remaining space in the field padded with spaces. Left justified implies that the data must start in the first position of the field. Spaces indicate absence of data. Alphanumeric character set includes those selected from the uppercase letters, lower case letters, numeric digits, space character, and special characters as follows: A...Z, a...z, 0...9, < . > / ? ; : ' " [{] } \ | ` ~ ! @ # $ % ^ & * ( ) - _ = + (space). Use of any special characters as record delimiters is subject to the trading partner agreement identifying delimiters. Use of any of the alphanumeric characters is permitted in data elements with the alphanumeric data type unless otherwise indicated in a Data Population Rule.

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   a. Alphanumeric character set includes those selected from the uppercase letters, lower case letters, numeric digits, space character, and special characters as follows: A...Z, a...z, 0...9, < . > / ? ; : ' " [{] } \ | ` ~ ! @ # $ % ^ & * ( ) - = + (space). Use of any of the alphanumeric characters is permitted in data elements with the alphanumeric data type unless otherwise indicated in a Data Population Rule.
   b. Spaces indicate absence of data.
   c. Use of any special characters as record delimiters is subject to the trading partner agreement identifying delimiters.
   d. When using an alphanumeric field, the significant characters are always left justified in the field with any remaining space in the field padded with spaces. Left justified implies that the data must start in the first position of the field. Narrative segments imply continuation of text; leading spaces are allowed on 2nd or subsequent variable narrative segments when the previous narrative segment ends with a character other than space.
   e. Edits should not be applied to case sensitivity. Eg. If data was previously reported in upper case and is subsequently reported in lower case it should be accepted by the jurisdiction as "unchanged" text as long as the value of the text is the same (ABC vs. abc)
   c.f. Nonprintable characters: Examples including XML escape sequences (E.g. "&", """) or CRLF/CR should not be included in narrative text.