

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL</b>	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS	Section 405	Page 1

### 405.1 Purpose

This section describes the policy and procedures for obtaining and verifying Social Security Numbers.

### 405.2 Participation Requirement

- A. Before certification any household for the Food Supplement Program (FSP), the household must:
  - 1. Provide a social security number (SSN) for each household member; or
  - 2. Apply for a social security number for any household member without one.
- B. If an individual has more than one number, the individual must provide all the numbers.

**NOTE:** If a household member has more than one SSN, document each number in the narrative and if necessary, refer the individual to the district Social Security Administration office to determine which number is currently active.

- C. The SSN must be verified within six months of certification. See verification in Section 405.8.
- D. Verify the SSN only once and keep the documentation (if not previously verified or verified online) in ECMS. If the CARES DEM1 screen verification field is coded with "FV" the SSN is already verified.
- E. Do not request a social security card.
- F. Refusal or failure without good cause to provide an SSN will result in disqualification of the person for whom the SSN is needed. See Failure to Comply in Section 405.5.

### 405.3 Obtaining Social Security Numbers

- A. For individuals who provide SSNs prior to certification, recertification, or at interim change, record the number and verify it as described in Section 405.8.
- B. Refer the following individuals to the Social Security Administration (SSA) to apply for a SSN:
  - 1. Those who have no SSN.
  - 2. Those who have a SSN but do not know the number.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL</b>	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS	Section 405	Page 2

### **405.3 Obtaining Social Security Numbers (continued)**

3. Those who have newborns without the SSA Form 2853, which mothers are given in the hospital as proof of applying for a number. Make a referral for a newborn only if this proof is not provided.

If the household is unable to provide proof of application for an SSN for a newborn, the household must provide the SSN or proof of application at its next recertification or 6 months following the month the baby is born, whichever is later. If the household is unable to provide a SSN or proof of application at that time, determine if good cause exists.

EXAMPLE: A household is certified from March 2015 through February 2016. A baby was born in May. The household must provide a SSN or proof of application by the end of February.

- C. Check SOLQ to see if the customer has applied for the SSN.
- D. If the individual cannot provide evidence of application for SSN within six months, and you cannot find evidence on SOLQ, he or she is disqualified from participation unless good cause exists. See Failure to Comply in Section 405.5.

### **405.4 Special Processing for Expediting Service**

- A. Households entitled to expedited service are not required to furnish or apply for a social security number until after they have received their first allotment. However, these households must provide or apply for a SSN prior to their second full month of participation.
- B. Households with a newborn may have up to six months following the month the baby was born to provide a SSN or to supply proof of application for one.

### **405.5 Failure to Comply**

- A. If a household member refuses or fails without good cause to provide or apply for a SSN, that individual is disqualified from participation in the program.
- B. The disqualification applies only to the individual for which the SSN is not provided and not the entire household.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL</b>	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS	Section 405	Page 3

### 405.5 Failure to Comply (continued)

C. The income and resources of individuals disqualified for failure to comply are handled in the following manner:

1. Resources - Consider the total value of resources of the disqualified member as available to the household.
2. Income - Count a prorated share of the disqualified member's income as income to the remaining household members. Determine the prorated share by first subtracting any allowable exclusions, then dividing the remainder evenly among the household members, including the disqualified member. All but the disqualified member's share is counted as available to the household.

**EXAMPLE:** A disqualified member's monthly income is \$200 after exclusions. Three persons are in the Food Supplement Program (FSP) benefit household, not including the disqualified member. Thus, the member's income of \$200, divided by 4, equals \$50 per member. The disqualified member's share of \$50 is not counted, therefore, \$150 of the total income is available to the household and must be counted.

3. Deductible expenses - The earned income deduction applies to any income earned by the disqualified member that was attributed to the household. The portion of the shelter, child support, or dependent care expenses either paid by or billed to the disqualified member's share is counted as a deduction for the remaining household members.

**EXAMPLE:** A disqualified member has gross earned income of \$200 monthly and pays \$60 towards the rent and \$20 towards the utilities. The household contains three persons plus the disqualified member. The household's prorated share of the income equals \$150. The prorated share of rent and utilities are \$45 and \$15, respectively. Include the \$150 in the household's total gross monthly income. Because it is earned income, the household is entitled to the earned income deduction. Consider the \$60 prorated share of the disqualified member's shelter expenses as a deductible shelter expense in the FSP computation.

**Exception:** If the disqualified person is entitled to a medical expense deduction, the household is not entitled to any portion of this person's deduction during the disqualification period. Also, if the person disqualified is the only senior or disabled member of the household, the household is not entitled to the uncapped shelter deduction.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL</b>	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS	Section 405	Page 4

### **405.5 Failure to Comply (continued)**

When a disqualification penalty is imposed, the household may not declare the disqualified individual to be a separate FSP benefit household. Continue to count a prorated share of the disqualified member's income and resources until the disqualification ends. However, if the disqualified member physically moves out of the home, the household must report the change in household composition. At that point, the disqualified member's income and resources are no longer available to the household and, therefore, not counted.

### **405.6 Good Cause for Failure to Comply**

- A. In determining if good cause exists for failure to comply with the requirement to provide or obtain a SSN, consider the information from the household member, the Social Security Administration, and the local department.
- B. Consider documentary evidence or collateral information that the household has applied for the number or made an effort to provide SSA with the necessary information as good cause for failure to comply. If the individual applying for the SSA has been unable to obtain the documents required by SSA, the worker must make every effort to assist the individual in obtaining these documents.
- C. Good cause does not include delays due to illness, lack of transportation, or temporary absences, because SSA makes provisions for mail-in applications.
- D. If the household member can show good cause why an application for a SSN was not made in a timely manner, allow that person to participate for one month in addition to month of application.
- E. If the household member has been unable to obtain the documents required by SSA, make every effort to assist the individual in obtaining the documents.
- F. Good cause for failure to apply must be shown monthly in order for the household member to continue to participate.
- G. Once the individual applies for a SSN, the member may participate pending notification of the household member's SSN.

### **405.7 Ending Disqualification**

The disqualified household member may become eligible by providing a social security number or evidence that an application for a social security number has been made.

<b>DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FAMILY INVESTMENT ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>FOOD SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM MANUAL</b>	
SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS	Section 405	Page 5

## **405.8 Verification at Application**

- A. **Social security numbers provided at application must be verified through the Social Security Administration.** Do not delay the certification of an otherwise eligible household solely to validate a household member's SSN, even if the 30-day processing period has not expired. As soon as all other eligibility requirements are met, except for verifying the SSNs, certify the household. Once verified, make a permanent annotation to the case file to prevent unnecessary re-verification in the future.
- B. The following sources may be used to verify a SSN:
1. The household member's social security card is not sufficient evidence by itself to satisfy the verification requirement, but the number on the card may be used to match with other information provided by the Social Security Administration, such as SDX records;
  2. The household's case record or ECMS if the SSN was previously verified through a SOLQ or SVES match when applying for TCA, PAA or TDAP;
  3. SDX.
  4. IEVS or SVES match

## **405.9 Verification at Recertification**

At recertification, verify newly obtained social security numbers, which were not previously verified. Do not re-verify previously verified numbers unless you have questions about the identity of the individual or validity of the SSN.