



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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Commissioner

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

## Informational Letter

### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	18-INF-15
<b>To:</b>	Social Services District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Integrated Family Assistance Programs / Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Date:</b>	November 14, 2018
<b>Subject:</b>	Social Security Administration (SSA) Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for January 2019 and Updated SSI and SSP Benefit Levels Chart
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Local District Commissioners Temporary Assistance Directors SNAP and MA Directors WMS, SSI Maximization and Staff Development Coordinators
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	SSI Questions - SSI State Supplement Bureau (518) 408-4757 TA Questions - Temporary Assistance Bureau (518) 474-9344 Systems Questions - Upstate Systems Bureau (518) 474-6055 Systems Questions - Downstate Systems Bureau (212) 961-8185
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">SSI and SSP Benefit Levels Chart Effective January 1, 2019</a>
<b>Attachment Available Online:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
17-INF-12			Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2018;		

### Section 2

#### I. Purpose

The purpose of this Informational Letter is to inform local social services districts (districts) that the January 1, 2019 federal cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Title II Retirement, Survivors and Disability Insurance (RSDI) Social Security benefits and Title XVI Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits has been set at 2.8%. The updated SSI/SSP Benefit Levels Chart, with an effective date of January 1, 2019, is attached.

## **II. Background**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) adjusts RSDI and federal SSI benefits to reflect the increase in the cost of living. This COLA increase is based on the change in the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of the previous year to the third quarter of the current year.

## **III. Program Implications**

This year, there was an increase in the CPI-W from the third quarter of 2017 to the third quarter of 2018. Due to this CPI-W increase, recipients of RSDI and SSI will have a COLA of 2.8% applied to benefits beginning in January 2019.

As authorized by Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2018, the full amount of the 2019 federal COLA will be passed along to all recipients of optional or mandatory SSI State supplementation.

Please note, the corresponding Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) for persons in Congregate Care Levels 1, 2 and 3 has increased from the 2018 level. Residents of Congregate Level 1 facilities will see an increase in their PNA of \$4.00 dollars to \$148.00. Congregate Care Level 2 recipients will see their PNA increase \$5.00 to \$171.00 and the PNA for Congregate Care Level 3 recipients will increase \$6.00 to \$204.00. These increases are effective January 1, 2019.

The attached SSI and SSP Benefit Levels Chart for 2019 reflects the 2.8% federal COLA increase and the statutory change noted above. The chart is provided as a resource for informational purposes. The chart is also found on Centraport under Desk Guides and on the OTDA Intranet website. The increase in income that results from the COLA for Temporary Assistance (TA) and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients will be addressed in upcoming releases.

### **Issued By**

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**Division/Office:** Integrated Family Assistance Programs