

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Center for Employment & Economic Supports

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Page: 1

TO: Subscribers

SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION: Commissioners, TA Directors, SNAP Directors, HEAP Coordinators

FROM: Phyllis Morris, Deputy Commissioner
Center for Employment and Economic Supports

SUBJECT: Federal Government Shutdown – Granting Good Cause for Inability to Apply for Social Security Card(s)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT: TA Questions: TA Bureau at 1-800-343-8859, extension 4-9344
SNAP Questions: SNAP Bureau at 1-518-473-1469
HEAP Questions: HEAP Bureau at 1-800-343-8859, extension 3-0332

The Social Security Administration's (SSA) social security card centers are closed due to the federal government shutdown. Applicants and recipients of Temporary Assistance (TA), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) benefits have good cause in their delay to provide verification of a Social Security Number (SSN) for themselves or a required household member if the applicant/recipient is unable to apply for a social security card during the federal government shutdown.

During the shutdown, Social Services Districts (SSDs) must not delay determining eligibility for TA, SNAP and/or early outreach 2013-14 HEAP applications if the household is otherwise eligible, except for the receipt of verification that a SSN has been applied for from the SSA. Additionally, the SSD must not take any negative action against a household that is unable to provide the required verification during the government shutdown. SSDs must notify the applicant or recipient of the need to provide the required verification at the next client contact (provided SSA social security card center are open).

SSA field offices are also unable to issue a proof of income letter during the shutdown. Individuals 18 years of age and older may view their Social Security Benefit Statement online and use a printout (as long as it contains appropriate identifying information) of this statement to provide verification of income. Those under 18 may request their Benefit Statement online and will receive it in the mail within ten days.

SSDs may continue to use the State Online Query (SOLQ) to verify SSI income for TA and SNAP. The Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program is open during the shutdown, allowing for uninterrupted service in attaining verification of an individual's alien status. The Government to Government Services Online (GSO) is still available and eIAR services are continuing uninterrupted.