



**NEW YORK STATE**  
**OFFICE OF TEMPORARY AND DISABILITY**  
**ASSISTANCE**  
 40 NORTH PEARL STREET  
 ALBANY, NY 12243-0001  
**Andrew M. Cuomo**  
*Governor*

**Informational Letter**

**Section 1**

<b>Transmittal:</b>	11-INF-12
<b>To:</b>	Local District Commissioners
<b>Issuing Division/Office:</b>	Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance/Center for Employment and Economic Supports
<b>Date:</b>	November 25, 2011
<b>Subject:</b>	Social Security Administration (SSA) Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for January 2012 – SSI Benefit Levels Chart
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Local District Commissioners, TA, FS, & MA Directors, WMS, SSI Max, CAP & Staff Development Coordinators
<b>Contact Person(s):</b>	1-800-343-8859; FS Questions -- Food Stamp Bureau (518) 473-1469; SSI Questions -- SSI Bureau (518) 473-0332 ; TA Questions -- Temporary Assistance Bureau (518) 474-9344; Systems Questions -- Upstate Systems Bureau (518) 473-7991; Downstate WMS (212) 961-8185
<b>Attachments:</b>	<a href="#">SSI Benefit Levels Chart effective January 1, 2012</a>
<b>Attachment Available On – Line:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Filing References**

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
10-INF-23 09-INF-22 09-INF-14 08-INF-19 07-INF-16 06-INF-33 05-INF-22 04 INF-22 03 INF-40 02 INF-35 01 INF-27 01 INF-15 97 ADM-1		18 NYCRR 352.8(c)(1)(ii)	Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2011; Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2010; Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2009; Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2008; Chapter 132 of the Laws of 2007; Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2006; Chapter 515 of the Laws of 2006; Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2005		ABEL Transmittal 11-4 ABEL Transmittal 08-3 ABEL Transmittal 07-3 ABEL Transmittal 06-4 ABEL Transmittal 05-6 ABEL Transmittal 04-4 GIS 09 TA/WMS036 GIS 05 TA/DC042 GIS 00 TA/DC021 GIS 99 TA/DC021

## Section 2

### I. Purpose

- To inform social services districts that the January 1, 2012, cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for RSDI (Title II - regular and disability Social Security benefits) and SSI (Title XVI – Supplemental Security Income) has been set at 3.6%;
- To provide social services districts with the *SSI Benefit Levels Chart effective January 1, 2012*.

### II. Background

Every year, the Social Security Administration (SSA) adjusts RSDI and federal SSI benefits to reflect the increase in the cost of living. This increase is based on the change in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of the last year a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) was determined 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 2008 (the last year a COLA was determined) to the third quarter of 2011. Therefore, RSDI and SSI recipients will receive a COLA in 2012. There had been no COLA adjustment for either 2009 or 2010.

The January 1, 2012, COLA for RSDI and federal SSI benefits has been set at 3.6%. As authorized by Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2011, the full amount of the 2012 federal COLA will be passed along to all recipients of optional or mandatory SSI State supplementation. Residents of Congregate Care facilities will also see an increase in their Personal Needs Allowances (PNAs).

The attached *SSI Benefit Levels for 2012* chart reflects the 3.6% federal COLA increase and the statutory change noted above. It is provided as a resource for informational purposes. The chart can also be viewed on CentraPort under Desk Guides and on the OTDA Intranet site within the Center for Employment and Economic Supports under Desk Guides/Aids. The increases in income of Temporary Assistance (TA) and Food Stamp (FS) recipients will be addressed by the annual Mass Rebudgeting. See ABEL Transmittal 11-4 for more information about the annual Mass Rebudgeting.

The standard Medicare Part B monthly premium will be \$99.90 in 2012, a \$15.50 decrease over the 2011 premium of \$115.40. However, most Medicare beneficiaries were held harmless in 2011 and paid \$96.40 per month. The 2012 premium represents a \$3.50 increase for them. For most beneficiaries, this will be the first Part B premium increase since 2009. For the past two years, most beneficiaries' Medicare fees went unchanged because of a "hold harmless" law, which barred the government from increasing them without a cost-of living adjustment to Social Security. For the quarter of beneficiaries who did not fall under the "hold harmless" protections, new enrollees and higher-income beneficiaries (annual income above \$85,000 for a single person or \$170,000 for a married couple), the new Medicare premiums will be a decrease in fees. Beneficiaries who have seen increases in the past two years will have premiums decrease from \$115.40 in 2011 to \$99.90 in 2012.

**Issued By**

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**Title:**

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**Division/Office:**

Center for Employment and Economic Supports