



Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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Informational Letter

Section 1

Transmittal:	16-INF-18
To:	Social Services District Commissioners
Issuing Division/Office:	Employment and Income Support Programs
Date:	December 30, 2016
Subject:	Social Security Administration (SSA) Cost-of-Living (COLA) for January 2017 and Updated SSI and SSP Benefit Levels Chart
Suggested Distribution:	Local District Commissioners Temporary Assistance Directors SNAP and MA Directors WMS, SSI Maximization, and Staff Development Coordinators
Contact Person(s):	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
Attachments:	SSI and SSP Benefit Levels Chart Effective January 1, 2017
Attachment Available Online:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Filing References

Previous ADMs/INFs	Releases Cancelled	Dept. Regs.	Soc. Serv. Law & Other Legal Ref.	Manual Ref.	Misc. Ref.
15-INF-10 14-INF-12 13-INF-07 11-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			Chapter 54 of the laws of 2016; Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2015; Chapter 58 of the Laws of 2014; Chapter 57 of the Laws of 2013; Chapter 57 of the Laws		ABEL Transmittal 16-4 GIS 16 TA/WMS046

01-INF-15 97-ADM-1			of 2012; 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		
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Section 2

I. Purpose

The purpose of this Informational Letter is to inform local social services districts (SSDs) that the January 1, 2017, federal cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for Title II Retirement, Survivors and Disability (RSDI) Social Security benefits and Title XVI Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits has been set at 0.3%. The updated SSI/SSP Benefit Levels Chart with an effective date of January 1, 2017 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 cost-of-living (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 in which there was a COLA increase, 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 2014 (the last year there was a COLA) to the third quarter of 2016. Due to this CPI-W increase, recipients of RSDI and SSI will have a COLA applied to benefits beginning in January 2017.

The 2017 COLA for RSDI and federal SSI benefits is 0.3%. As authorized by Chapter 54 of the Laws of 2016, the full amount of the 2017 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 and 2 remains unchanged from the 2016 level. Residents of Congregate Care Level 3 facilities will see an increase of \$1.00 in their Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) beginning in January 2017.

The attached SSI and SSP Benefit Levels Chart for 2017 reflects the 0.3% federal COLA increase and the statutory change as 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 was addressed by the Mass Rebudgeting ABEL Transmittal 16-4 and GIS 16 TA/WMS046.

Information on Medicare premiums can be found at: www.medicare.gov.

Issued By

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Division/Office: Integrated Family Assistance Programs