



# Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

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## General Information System (GIS) Message

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### Section 1

<b>Transmittal:</b>	22 TA/DC063 Upstate and New York City
<b>Date:</b>	June 30, 2022
<b>To:</b>	Subscribers
<b>Suggested Distribution:</b>	Commissioners, TA Directors, Staff Development Coordinators
<b>From:</b>	Valerie Figueroa, Deputy Commissioner Employment and Income Support Programs
<b>Subject:</b>	SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR)
<b>Effective Date:</b>	Immediately
<b>Contact Information:</b>	Temporary Assistance Bureau: 518-474-9344 or <a href="mailto:otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov">otda.sm.cees.tabureau@otda.ny.gov</a>

### Attachments:

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### Section 2

The purpose of this General Information System (GIS) message is to inform social services districts (districts) of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) method and to provide guidance regarding how to handle documenting SSI/SSDI applications when the SOAR method is used. SOAR is a model that is utilized to gather documentation for eligible adults and children who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness and have a serious mental illness, medical impairment, and/or a co-occurring substance use disorder to ensure a complete and thorough SSI/SSDI application packet is submitted to the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Many people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness also suffer from disabling mental illnesses, co-occurring substance use, trauma, and/or other medical issues. SOAR is a method which works to overcome these barriers by providing applicants/recipients (A/Rs) with a case manager to assist in submitting a complete and thorough SSI/SSDI application packet to SSA.

A/Rs for Temporary Assistance (TA) who are determined to be potentially eligible to qualify for SSI or SSDI must pursue SSI or SSDI as a condition of initial and continued TA eligibility (see [11-ADM-01](#)). Utilizing the SOAR Model is a recognized best practice. If a district is interested in having staff become SOAR trained and certified they should visit the SOAR Works website at <https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/> for information about the free on-line course.

Districts are required to establish an administrative process that requires staff to screen, identify, refer and assist appropriate TA A/Rs in applying for SSI/SSDI benefits, including the use of a tracking system

to monitor the A/R's SSI application status. A letter from a SOAR case manager indicating they are utilizing the SOAR process is sufficient to verify initial compliance with the A/R's requirement to apply for SSI/SSDI. Districts are reminded that regardless of the application method used, the district must monitor the A/R's SSI application status. For additional information regarding the district's responsibilities related to identifying and referring TA A/Rs for SSI consideration can be found in [08-ADM-05](#).