

Department of Social and Health Services

Olympia, Washington

EAZ Manual

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Summary

Updated the EAZ chapter with reference to the Non-Work SSN in the CSD Procedures Handbook.

Social Security Numbers (SSN)

Revised on ~~May 16~~August 24, 20222023

Purpose:

This section provides information about the social security number (SSN) requirements and instructions for obtaining SSNs for applicants and recipients for cash, food, and medical assistance.

WAC 388-476-0005 Social Security number requirements.

- **Clarifying Information and Worker Responsibilities**

Clarifying Information - WAC 388-476-0005

1. A valid Social Security Number (SSN) is required for cash, medical and Basic Food programs with the exceptions as described in Worker Responsibilities #4 (“Not required to provide/apply for SSN”)
2. Written proof from the Social Security Administration (SSA) of a submitted SSN application, typically SSA form SSA-5028 or any other SSA document, is valid for a maximum of 60 days. After 60 days the worker should request one of the following:
 - a. The client’s SSN; or
 - b. Documentation from SSA of the current SSN application status.

NOTE:

SSA offices will no longer provide printouts to verify a person's existing SSN or provide benefit verification letters. SSA asks state agencies to use interfaces when available to verify social security numbers. Someone who needs a new card must apply for a card using form SS-5 at www.ssa.gov/number-card. SSA advises people to register for a *my Social Security* account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. After registering, beneficiaries can get a benefit verification online instantly and also conduct other business with SSA

- c. A person must resubmit the SSN application with the necessary documentation, if the application is rejected by SSA.
 - d. Certain members of the household may not be eligible for benefits (e.g., the undocumented parents of citizen children). Per WAC 388-424-0009 (2) (c) SSNs are not a requirement for ineligible members when processing the application of the applying Assistance Unit (AU)
 - e. If a current and valid SSN is not available, the department must help the person apply for an SSN. Use "Good Cause-" to extend the eligibility of clients who are demonstrating a reasonable effort to comply with the SSN requirement and document in the ACES record the “Good Cause” criteria used. Don’t penalize clients if they meet any of the conditions listed in the following Worker Responsibilities subsections:
 - Applying for an SSN;
 - Newborns;
 - Good Cause; or
 - Refusing for Religious Reasons.
3. “Qualified aliens” and "Non-qualified aliens," as defined in [WAC 388-424-0001](#), who are applying for benefits but are not authorized to work in the U.S. must still apply for a Non-Work SSN. Follow the [Non-Work SSN Request Instructions desk aid procedure](#), (posted on the [CSD Training SharePoint Site under the “Immigration” topicProcedures Handbook](#)) to complete and submit the Non-Work SSN Request form 14-517. For more details see Worker Responsibilities #7 – “Aliens” Not Authorized to Work in the U.S. ”

4. Adopted children under 18 immigrating to the United States are granted “automatic” citizenship by the [Child Citizenship Act of 2000](#) effective February 27, 2001. These children are eligible to receive an SSN with [proof of their immigration status](#) issued by Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) upon their arrival into the US, or proof of their US citizenship. Parents can obtain a Certificate of Citizenship from USCIS or a US passport from the Department of State as a proof of child’s US citizenship.
5. If an individual fails to provide or apply for an SSN without Good Cause, remove the individual from the assistance unit. For more details see Worker Responsibilities #11 – Failing to Provide an SSN.

NOTE:

For Basic Food, if the household is unable to provide proof of application for an SSN for a newborn, the household must provide the SSN or proof of application at its next recertification or within 6 months following the month the baby is born, **whichever is later**. (7 CFR 273.6 (b)(4))

Worker Responsibilities - WAC 388-476-0005

1. **Documentation:**

Clearly document in the case record all actions taken to comply with SSN requirements for cash, medical and Basic Food programs eligibility as evidence of timely decisions regarding eligibility.

2. **Verifying an SSN:**

Verify the SSN by accessing State-Online Query (SOLQ). When the SSN is verified and validated in SOLQ, no additional verification is needed.

3. **SSN Not Validated in SOLQ:**

- a. Recheck and re-verify the SSN to resolve any discrepancy when the ACES valid value does not show the SSN to be federally verified (FV).
- b. When SOLQ shows that the SSN does not belong to the client and the client refuses to cooperate, terminate all program benefits for which SSN is an eligibility factor.

4. **Not Required to Provide or Apply for SSN:**

Per [WAC 388-424-0009 \(2\) Citizenship and alien status – Social Security number \(SSN\) requirements](#) the following immigrants are not required to provide or apply for an SSN:

- i. Applicants for:
 - Consolidated Emergency Assistance Program (CEAP);
 - [Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance \(RCA and RMA\)](#);
 - Alien Emergency medical program;

- State-funded children’s medical program;
 - Non-citizen pregnant women program; and
 - [Detoxification services](#)
 - State-funded benefits as a [survivor of certain crimes](#).
- ii. Members of household who are not applying for benefits for themselves.

Do not refer these applicants to SSA for SSN application.

5. **Applying for an SSN:**

Use ACES letter 023-08 SSN Referral to refer households to the Social Security Administration District Office (SSADO) for:

Application for an SSN;

Application for a replacement card; or

Determination of a previously issued number.

Code “P” (Generate Referral Letter to be Printed) in SSA/SSN Referral field on the ACES DEM1 screen to print the 023-08 SSN Referral. After the letter is printed (locally or from central print), valid value “S” (Referral Letter Generated) will automatically replace “P” to provide continuous eligibility for all programs.

After 60 days, if no SSN is provided:

- i. Request an updated proof of the SSN application status from SSA.
- ii. Replace “S” (Referral Letter Generated) with “G” (SSN Good Cause) if individual is complying.

If the client refuses to cooperate, terminate all program benefits for which SSN is an eligibility factor by coding “R” (Refused to Supply SSN) on the SSA/SSN Referral field on DEM1. For more details see Worker Responsibilities #10 – Failing to Provide an SSN.

Children remain continuously eligible through their **current** medical certification period even if the SSN is not provided. Do not recertify without a valid SSN or "Good Cause" documentation.

6. **Newborns:**

If an applying family has a newborn, accept documents signed and dated by a hospital official as verification that a household has applied for an SSN for the newborn.

If a mother receiving Medicaid reports a newborn, the child is automatically eligible for categorically needy (CN) coverage through their first birthday as long as the child resides in the state.

Code “H” (Hospital Application) in SSA/SSN Referral field on the child’s DEM1 screen to continue eligibility for all programs. Set a DMS case tickle based on requirements in (d) below. ACES alert 317 will be automatically generated in 60 days to request the SSN if not already provided.

Require the parent of a newborn to provide SSN after the date of birth:

- For TANF – within 2 months

- For Basic Food – within 6 months or at the next recertification **whichever is later**.
- For Medicaid (regardless of coverage group) – within 12 months.

After 60 days, if no SSN is provided:

- i. Request an updated proof of the SSN application status from SSA.
 - ii. Replace “H” (Hospital Application) with “G” (SSN Good Cause) if the individual is complying.
- b. Children remain eligible through their current medical certification period even if an SSN is not provided. Do not recertify as eligible children without a valid SSN or “Good Cause” documentation.
 - c. If SSN is not provided within 12 months after the date of birth, terminate all program benefits for which SSN is an eligibility factor by coding “R” (Refused to Supply SSN) on the SSA/SSN Referral field on child’s DEM1. For more details see Worker Responsibilities #11 – Failing to Provide an SSN.

7. **“Aliens” not authorized to work in the U.S.:**

“Qualified aliens” as defined in [WAC 388-424-0001](#) (e.g. abused spouses and children who received a USCIS notice of “prima facie” (BA), persons who have been granted parole for at least one year (PL)), and "Non-qualified aliens," who are applying for benefits but are not authorized to work in the U.S. must still apply for a Non-Work SSN.

- a. Assist with the application as described in the EA-Z Manual, [Citizenship and Alien Status Chapter- Social Security Number \(SSN\) Requirements for Legal Immigrants](#).
- b. Use the [Non-Work SSN Request Letter DSHS form 14-517](#) (see [Non-Work SSN Request Instructions Procedure desk aid, posted on the CSD Training SharePoint Site under the "Immigration" topic](#)) to refer them to a SSN office for a Non-Work SSN. Please inform clients to bring this letter, verification of their identity, immigration status, and their date of birth with them when they go to the SSN office.
- c. Consider using Good Cause if a victim of domestic violence is not able to apply or provide proof that they have previously received an SSN.

8. **Adoption Cases:**

- a. Effective February 27, 2001 adopted children born outside of the U.S. are granted “automatic” citizenship upon their arrival. Code “P” (Generate Referral Letter to be Printed) in SSA/SSN Referral field on DEM1 screen to print the ACES letter 023-08 (SSN Referral) to refer the household to SSA to apply for SSN for the child.
- b. Valid value “S” (Referral Letter Generated) will automatically appear in the SSA/SSN Referral field on the child’s DEM1 screen after the SSN Referral letter is printed.
- c. After 60 days, if no SSN is provided, request proof of the SSN application status and process case as usual.

9. **Good Cause:**

- a. Any individual who provides written proof has "Good Cause", if they are:
 - i. Making substantial and reasonable efforts to supply the Social Security Administration with the necessary information; or
 - ii. A victim of domestic violence and are unable to supply an SSN.
- b. Good Cause may also exist if the SSA offices are closed to in-person activities. (See Note Above in "Applying for an SSN.")
- c. Existence of Good Cause must be clearly documented in the case narrative and in Remarks behind the DEM1 screen.
- d. Code "G" (Good Cause) in the SSA/SSN Referral field on the individual's DEM1 screen.
- e. If "Good Cause" has been used to extend a person's eligibility, after an initial grace period of 2 months, which includes the month of application, proof of good cause must be provided for every month that the SSN application is delayed (WAC 388-476-0005 (5)).
- f. Good Cause doesn't include delays due to illness, lack of transportation, temporary absence, or failure to respond to the SSN request.
- g. Children remain eligible through their current medical certification period even if an SSN is not provided. Do not recertify as eligible children without a valid SSN or "Good Cause" documentation.
- h. Battered Aliens who meet the definition of Abused spouses or children provided in [WAC 388-424-0001 Citizenship and alien status – Definitions, Qualified Aliens, \(2\), \(a - i\)](#) are qualified aliens with 5 year bar on federal benefits. Every effort should be made to help them to obtain or validate their SSN as they might not be able to apply or provide proof that they have previously received an SSN.
- i. If proof of Good Cause not provided monthly, as required, consider an individual as Failing to Provide an SSN and terminate all program benefits for which SSN is an eligibility factor.

10. **Refusing to Provide an SSN for Religious Reasons:**

- a. Personal, cultural, or political beliefs do not qualify as a religious objection to providing an SSN.
- b. If the individual claims religious grounds for refusing to provide or apply for an SSN:
 - i. No negative action should be taken.
 - ii. Use an existing SSN for verification and matching purposes without further notice to the client, if one is already known to the Department.

- iii. Document the client's statement regarding the religious objection. No further verification is necessary. Continue to ask and document at subsequent eligibility reviews.
- iv. Code "X" (Refused for Religious Reasons) in the SSA/SSN Referral field on the Client Screen to provide continued eligibility for all programs. Do not use the SSN Application Date field.

11. **Failing to Provide an SSN:**

- a. If an individual, who is an applicant for assistance, fails to provide or apply for SSN and doesn't claim Good Cause, they are not eligible for assistance, except as it is described in Worker Responsibility #4 - Not required to provide/apply for an SSN.
- b. If an individual, who is a recipient of assistance, fails to provide or apply for an SSN and doesn't claim Good Cause:
 - i. Check the case records and any available systems for a valid SSN.
 - ii. If no valid SSN is found, remove the individual from the assistance unit by updating their DEM1 screen with "R" (Refused to Supply SSN) in the SSA/SSN Referral field.
 - iii. Do not override the ACES letter to the client telling about change in benefits due to no SSN provided.
 - iv. Children remain eligible through their current medical certification period even if the SSN is not provided. Do not recertify as eligible children without a valid SSN or "Good Cause" documentation.