



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Transitional Assistance
600 Washington Street • Boston, MA 02111


DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

JULIA E. KEHOE
Commissioner

Field Operations Memo 2009-59
October 27, 2009

To: Transitional Assistance Office Staff
From:  John Augeri, Assistant Commissioner for Field Operations
Re: EAEDC and TAFDC – SSI Extension of Benefits

Background Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a program administered by the Social Security Administration (SSA) which provides income assistance to low-income seniors and persons with disabilities. A law enacted in 1996 granted refugees and certain immigrants eligibility for SSI benefits for seven years. A new law, “The SSI Extension for Elderly and Disabled Refugees Act”, has temporarily extended SSI eligibility for these refugees and immigrants for an additional two years.

In June, SSA sent a letter (Attachment A) to clients who could potentially benefit from this extension of SSI benefits.

SSI offers increased financial resources for our EAEDC and TAFDC clients. Case managers are reminded:

- EAEDC clients *must* apply for SSI as a condition of eligibility; and
 - to *encourage* TAFDC clients to apply for SSI.
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**Follow-up to
Mailing**

As a condition of eligibility EAEDC clients must apply for SSI (see 106 CMR 320.200(B)). TAFDC clients may choose to apply for SSI but are not required to do so (see 106 CMR 702.710 (A)).

Reminder: To become or remain eligible for EAEDC, anyone under age 65 with a physical and/or mental impairment(s) or anyone over age 65 must read and sign the *Authorization for Interim Assistance Reimbursement (AP-SSI-1)* or the *Authorization for Interim Assistance Reimbursemen (AP-SSI-1A)*. If the case record contains one of these forms signed within the past 12 months, the form does not need to be signed at this time.

A list of clients (EAEDC and TAFDC) who have received the SSA mailing has been compiled and will be e-mailed to TAO Directors with this Field Operations Memo.

Case managers must send a VC-1 to their EAEDC clients giving clients ten days to provide proof of the SSI application. Proof of the SSI application may include verification of an appointment for the application. EAEDC clients who fail to provide proof of this application must be closed for failure to apply for other benefits.

Note: If a client is having difficulty getting an appointment for the SSI application, he or she may be given an additional 10 days from the original due date on the VC-1 to provide proof of the SSI application.

Case managers must complete and send Attachment B to their TAFDC clients encouraging these clients to apply for SSI. For TAFDC clients who fail to respond to the letter, no action should be taken.

Questions

If you have any questions, please have your Hotline designee call the Policy Hotline.

Social Security Administration
Supplemental Security Income
Important Information

123 Main Street,
Boston, MA 02111
Date: [mailing date]
Claim Number: 123-45-6789

John Q. Public
PowderHouse Square
123 Main St.
Bldg. 9, Apt. 12
Boston, MA 02111

We are writing to tell you some important information about the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. Due to a change in the law, you may be eligible to receive benefits for an additional period of time.

You May be Eligible for Two More Years of SSI Benefits

Congress recently enacted a law that affects SSI eligibility for aliens whose benefits have been stopped due to the expiration of their seven-year period of eligibility. Our records indicate that this law may apply to you.

The new law is known as “The SSI Extension for Elderly and Disabled Refugees Act.” This law temporarily extends the seven-year SSI eligibility period for certain aliens to nine years. The extension applies from October 1, 2008, through September 30, 2011.

Who Qualifies for Additional Benefits

To qualify for the benefit extension, you must have been eligible to receive SSI for up to seven years and the seven-year period has expired.

You must also meet one of the following requirements:

- you are a Cuban or Haitian entrant as defined in the Refugee Education and Assistance Act of 1980; or
- your deportation has been withheld under Sections 241 (b)(3) or 243 (h) of the Immigration and Nationality Act; or

- you have been a Lawful Permanent Resident for less than six years and have maintained such status in good standing; or,
- you have applied to be a Lawful Permanent Resident within four years from the date you began receiving SSI and such application is still pending; or,
- you are under age 18; or
- you are age 70 or older.

In addition, unless you are awaiting naturalization or are under age 18, you must submit to us a signed declaration indicating that you have made a good faith effort to pursue U.S. citizenship. You also must meet all other applicable SSI eligibility requirements, including income and resource limitations.

What You Need to Do to Get the Benefit Extension

If your SSI benefits have been stopped due to the expiration of the seven-year period and you think you may be eligible for this benefit extension, please call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) or call or write your local Social Security office. The phone number and address are shown at top of this letter. We would be happy to schedule an appointment to speak with you. When you call or come in, please bring your immigration documents or naturalization certificate with you, along with this letter.

To learn more about SSI benefits for non-citizens, please call the Social Security Administration's toll free number or visit our websites at www.socialsecurity.gov and www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-non-citizens.htm .

[name]

Regional Commissioner



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Date _____

Client Name _____
Address _____

Dear _____,

In June the Social Security Administration (SSA) sent you a letter telling you that you may be able to get additional Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. You may be able to get these benefits until September 30, 2011.

We encourage you to apply for these benefits because SSI would give you more money than your TAFDC benefits alone. If otherwise eligible, you would still receive TAFDC for your other family members. If you do not apply for SSI, nothing will happen, your TAFDC benefits will not be reduced or closed.

To learn more about SSI benefits for non-citizens, please call the Social Security Administration's toll free number or visit our websites at www.socialsecurity.gov and www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-non-citizens.htm .

Call your case manager if you have any questions.

Case Manager Name

Case Manager Telephone Number