

## Change in Administration of Massachusetts State Supplement

### What is the change to the Massachusetts state supplement and when will it happen?

- Effective April 2012, Massachusetts will administer the Massachusetts Supplement Security Income (SSI) state supplement under the Massachusetts SSI State Supplement Program (SSP).
- Massachusetts will pay the April 2012 SSP benefit on March 30, 2012. Subsequent monthly payments will be made on or before the first of each month.
- Individuals who are eligible for SSI/SSP will receive 2 separate payments, the federal SSI payment from SSA and state SSP payment from Massachusetts.
- Individuals who are only eligible for an SSP benefit will receive a single monthly payment from Massachusetts.

### How will the State determine SSP eligibility and payment?

- Massachusetts will use the same eligibility requirements and computations for SSP payments as SSA used when administering the state supplement payments prior to April 2012.

### How will the State Supplement Program (SSP) payments be issued?

- Recipients will receive their SSP payments in the same way and on the same schedule that they received their SSI payments before April 2012.
  - Direct deposits, including Direct Express, will go to the same account.
  - Paper checks will go to the same address.
  - SSP payments will be issued on the same days as SSI payments.

### Will recipients receive notification about the change?

- Yes, Massachusetts mailed a letter to all recipients of a Massachusetts SSP during the second week of February describing the change.
- In working with the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind, Massachusetts mailed blind recipients a Braille version during the week of February 10 through February 17 .
- SSA sent a "Notice of Planned Action" to all recipients of Massachusetts SSP in early March indicating that Massachusetts will begin paying SSP directly to recipients starting in April 2012.
- In early March, SSA sent visually impaired individuals a notice in the format of their choice.

### How do recipients and interested parties contact the State about the state administered SSP payments?

- For SSP information they may call the Massachusetts SSP Customer Service Center's toll-free number 1-877-863-1128. The Customer Service Center's hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
- For general SSP information customers may also visit [www.mass.gov/hhs/ssp](http://www.mass.gov/hhs/ssp).
- Information and Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing: [www.mass.gov/massrelay](http://www.mass.gov/massrelay)

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### How do recipients and interested parties contact the SSA about the federally administered SSI payments?

- Those with questions regarding federally administered SSI payments may call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 or visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

### Will people have to file a separate application for SSP starting April 1, 2012?

- No, an application for federal SSI benefits will continue to serve as an application for the State SSI supplement administered under SSP.

### Who will make disability determinations for Massachusetts SSP payments?

- The Massachusetts Disability Determination Service (DDS) will continue to determine disability for all Social Security and SSI blind and disabled applicants.
- Massachusetts will adopt the DDS decision for SSP eligibility.
- If an applicant for SSP is not eligible for Social Security or SSI disability benefits, but may be eligible for SSP benefits, Massachusetts will use the University of Massachusetts Disability Evaluation Services (DES) to determine if the applicant is blind or disabled.
- DES will use Social Security's definition of disability in determining if the applicant is blind or disabled.

### Will people retain their MassHealth Coverage?

- **SSI and SSP Eligible** - Yes, if a person receives at least \$1 in federal SSI benefits, they will still be automatically deemed eligible for MassHealth.
- **SSP Eligible Only** – Massachusetts SSP recipients who receive at least \$1 in SSP payments are automatically eligible for MassHealth.

### If I need a verification of Income (benefit verification) who do I contact?

- **SSI and SSP Eligible** – Recipients will need to contact SSA at **1-800-772-1213** or visit [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) to verify their SSI payments **and** MA SSP Customer Service Center at **1-877-863-1128** to verify their SSP payments. SSA can no longer verify state supplement amounts for Massachusetts starting with the April 2012 payment.
- **SSP Eligible Only** – Recipients must call the MA Customer Service Center at 1-877-863-1128 to request a benefit verification to verify their April 2012 income. SSA can no longer verify Massachusetts state supplement amounts starting with the April 2012 payment.
- Massachusetts can verify SSP payments only. Massachusetts cannot verify Social Security SSI payments.