



**U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Public and Indian Housing**

Special Attention of:

Public Housing Agency Directors; Section 8,
and Public Housing Administrators; Public
Housing Hub Office Directors; Public Housing
Field Office Directors; Program Center
Coordinators; Section 8 Financial Management Center;
Resident Management Corporations;
Resident Councils

Notice PIH 2006- 41 (HA)

Issued: December 19, 2006

Expires: December 31, 2007

Cross References:

Subject: **Verification of Social Security (SS) and Supplemental Security
Income (SSI) Benefits**

Purpose: This Notice renews and revises Notice PIH 2004-18, which expired on September 30, 2005. The notice explains the *required* procedures Public Housing Agencies (PHAs) are to use for verifying social security benefits of applicants, participants and household members during mandatory reexamination of household income.

Applicability: This notice applies to HUD-PIH rental assistance programs, including: Public Housing, Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation, Housing Choice Voucher and Section 8 Project-Based Certificate Programs.

Overview: It has been the standard practice of PHAs to verify social security benefits of applicants, participants and household members by either contacting the local office of the Social Security Administration (SSA) by phone or in writing, reviewing an original social security benefit check, or accepting tenant-provided benefit verification letters.

In an ongoing effort to eliminate time consuming manual requests for benefit verification from PHAs, SSA provides HUD with benefit information on all current participants and household members who have disclosed a valid social security number. HUD makes this information available to administrators of Public Housing and Section 8 programs through the Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system. Effective September 22, 2006, the Tenant Assessment Subsystem (TASS) is no longer be available. The TASS functionality was incorporated into EIV in March 2006.

Despite this convenient data exchange between SSA and HUD, SSA continues to receive a large volume of requests for income verification from PHAs. The SSA has taken the position that local SSA offices will no longer furnish verification of social security benefits via phone, mail, or fax *for free*. This Notice describes the *required* procedures for verifying Social Security (SS) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits of applicants, participants, and household members of HUD-assisted rental units.

Effective Date: This notice is effective upon publication.

Third Party Verification Requirement

PHAs are required to comply with admission and occupancy requirements for Public Housing under 24 CFR §960.259(c)(1) and Section 8 under 24 CFR §982.516(a)(2), which requires PHAs to obtain and document in the family file third party verification of the following factors, or document in the file why third party verification was not available: (1) reported family annual income; (2) the value of assets; (3) expenses related to deductions from annual income; and (4) other factors that affect the determination of adjusted income or income-based rent.

Third Party Verification of SS/SSI Benefits of Applicants and Household Members

Third party verification of SS/SSI benefits of applicants and household members is available from SSA **for a fee**. SSA will charge PHAs a fee for third party verification of social security benefits. The fee may vary in each jurisdiction. To avoid incurring third party verification costs, PHAs should request a current (dated within the last 60 days) SSA benefit verification letter for each household member that receives social security benefits. If the applicant and/or household member are unable to provide the requested document(s), ask the applicant/household member to call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to request a current benefit verification letter. The request for a benefit verification letter can also be made at the SSA Internet Website at www.ssa.gov. There is no cost for this verification letter. From the front page of the website (Social Security Online), under the applicable header — Retirement, Disability and SSI, or Widowers, Widows and other survivors — click on *Already receiving* benefits, which is located in the center column of the page. From the right side of the page under *Things You Can Do Online*, click on *Get a “Proof of Income Letter.”* Follow the instructions on the page to complete the request for a benefit verification letter. Upon receipt, the applicant/household member should provide the PHA with the original benefit verification letter. The PHA should make a photocopy of the original benefit verification letter, return the original benefit verification letter to the applicant/household member, and maintain the photocopy of the benefit verification letter in the tenant file.

Third Party Verification of SS/SSI Benefits of Participants and Household Members

Third party verification of SS/SSI benefits of participants and household members is available through HUD’s Enterprise Income Verification (EIV) system. ***All PHAs are required to use EIV to verify SS/SSI benefits of current participants and household members.*** Effective October 13, 2005, HUD’s EIV system became available to all PHAs nationwide. PHAs who do not

currently have access to EIV should contact their local HUD field office to register as soon as possible for access to the EIV system. Information regarding HUD's EIV system is available at www.hud.gov/pih/rhiip/uivsystem. If benefit information is not available in the EIV system, the PHA should request a current SSA benefit verification letter from each household member that receives social security benefits. If the participant and/or household members are unable to provide the requested document(s), ask the participant/household member to call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to request a benefit verification letter. The request for a benefit verification letter can also be made at the SSA Internet Website at www.ssa.gov. There is no cost for this verification letter. From the front page of the website (Social Security Online), under the applicable header — Retirement; Disability and SSI; or Widowers, Widows and other survivors — click on *Already receiving* benefits, which is located in the center column of the page. From the right side of the page under *Things You Can Do Online*, click on *Get a "Proof of Income Letter."* Follow the instructions on the page to complete the request for a benefit verification letter. Upon receipt, the participant/household member should provide the PHA with the original benefit verification letter. The PHA should make a photocopy of the original benefit verification letter, return the original benefit verification letter to the participant/household member, and maintain the photocopy of the benefit letter in the tenant file.

Documentation of Unavailability of Third Party Verification of SS/SSI Benefits

In the event that third party verification is not available, the PHA must document the tenant file as to why third party verification was not available. Below are some examples of acceptable file documentation:

- New admission, information not available in EIV
- New tenant, information not available in EIV
- Current tenant, information not available in EIV due to identity validation error (name, date of birth, and/or social security number on 50058 does not match data in SSA file)
- Current tenant, information not available in EIV, reason unknown

How to Ensure Availability of Social Security Benefit Information in HUD-Provided Systems

The availability of social security benefit information in HUD-provided systems is dependent upon data quality and timely submission of HUD Form 50058 to the Public and Indian Housing Information Center (PIC). PHAs must ensure that data entered on HUD Form 50058 (i.e. household member's name, date of birth and social security number) is accurate and complete. If a family's HUD Form 50058 is not successfully submitted to PIC, social security benefit information will not be available in HUD systems. Below is a summary of error descriptions, explanations, and corrective actions to take in order to ensure the availability of Social Security Benefit information in HUD systems.

Error Description	Explanation	Corrective Action
<p>Not verified</p> <p>or</p> <p>Member SSN not sent to SSA – invalid SSN</p>	<p>HUD did not submit the SSN to SSA based on the invalid characteristics of the SSN. For example, 999-99-9999, 111-11-1111, etc.</p>	<p>Enter a valid SSN on HUD Form 50058, or request original social security card from tenant. Confirm SSN displayed on the social security card matches the SSN reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the numbers do not match, make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.</p>
<p>Failed</p> <p>SSN not found in SSA records</p>	<p>The tenant’s SSN is not a valid number issued by SSA.</p>	<p>Request original social security card from tenant. Confirm SSN displayed on the card matches the SSN reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the numbers do not match, make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.</p>
<p>Failed</p> <p>SSN was not verified by SSA</p>	<p>The tenant’s SSN is not a valid number issued by SSA.</p>	<p>Request original social security card from tenant. Confirm SSN displayed on the social security card matches the SSN reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the numbers do not match, make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.</p>
<p>Failed</p> <p>Surname matched, but date of birth did not match with SSA records</p>	<p>The tenant’s identity was not verified because while the Surname matched with SSA records, the date of birth did not match. However, based on the SSN/last name combination, SSA has indicated that the tenant does not receive SS/SSI benefits.</p>	<p>Request original birth certificate from tenant. Confirm date of birth displayed on the birth certificate matches the date of birth reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the date of birth does not match, make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.</p>
<p>Failed</p> <p>Date of birth matched, but surname did not match with SSA records</p>	<p>The tenant’s identity was not verified because while the date of birth matched with SSA records, the surname did not</p>	<p>Request birth certificate and social security card of tenant/household member; or current letter or printout from</p>

Error Description	Explanation	Corrective Action
	match. However, based on the SSN/date of birth combination, SSA has indicated that the tenant does not receive SS/SSI benefits.	SSA, which reflects current name. Confirm surname on all documents matches the surname reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the surname does not match, verify the change in surname (court order, marriage license, etc.) and make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.
SS benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in date of birth	The tenant's identity was verified by SSA based on the SSN/last name combination and the <u>tenant is receiving SS benefits</u> . However, due to the discrepancy in the date of birth, the benefit information cannot be disclosed.	Request original birth certificate from tenant. Confirm date of birth displayed on the birth certificate matches the date of birth reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the date of birth does not match, make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.
SS benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in name	The tenant's identity was verified by SSA based on the SSN/date of birth combination and the <u>tenant is receiving SS benefits</u> . However, due to the discrepancy in the last name, the benefit information cannot be disclosed.	Request birth certificate and social security card of tenant/household member; or current letter or printout from SSA, which reflects current name. Confirm surname on all documents match. If the surnames do not match, verify the change in surname (court order, marriage license, etc.) and make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.
SSI benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in date of birth	The tenant's identity was verified by SSA based on the SSN/last name combination and the <u>tenant is receiving SSI benefits</u> . However, due to the discrepancy in the date of birth, the benefit information cannot be disclosed.	Request original birth certificate from tenant. Confirm date of birth displayed on the birth certificate matches the date of birth reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the date of birth does not match, make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.

Error Description	Explanation	Corrective Action
SSI benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in name	The tenant's identity was verified by SSA based on the SSN/date of birth combination and the tenant <u>is receiving SSI benefits</u> . However, due to the discrepancy in the last name, the benefit information cannot be disclosed.	Request birth certificate and social security card of tenant/household member; or current letter or printout from SSA, which reflects current name. Confirm surname on all documents match. If the surname does not match, verify the change in surname (court order, marriage license, etc.) and make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.
SS and SSI benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in date of birth	The tenant's identity was verified by SSA based on the SSN/last name combination and the tenant <u>is receiving both SS and SSI benefits</u> . However, due to the discrepancy in the date of birth, the benefit information cannot be disclosed.	Request original birth certificate from tenant. Confirm date of birth displayed on the birth certificate matches the date of birth reported on the HUD Form 50058. If the date of birth does not match, make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.
SS and SSI benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in name	The tenant's identity was verified by SSA based on the SSN/date of birth combination and the tenant <u>is receiving both SS and SSI benefits</u> . However, due to the discrepancy in the last name, the benefit information cannot be disclosed,	Request birth certificate and social security card of tenant/household member; or current letter or printout from SSA, which reflects current name. Confirm surname on all documents match. If the surname does not match, verify the change in surname (court order, marriage license, etc.) and make the necessary correction to the HUD Form 50058.

For inquiries about this Notice contact: your local HUD Field Office or Nicole Faison of HUD Headquarters, Office of Public and Indian Housing on (202) 708-0744

Paperwork Reduction. The information collection requirements contained in this notice have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3520) and assigned OMB control number(s) 2577-0220.

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, HUD may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless the collection displays a currently valid OMB control number.

/s/

Orlando J. Cabrera, Assistant Secretary
for Public and Indian Housing