



SOCIAL SECURITY

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November 8, 2005

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Important information about Requests for Verification of Income from the Social Security Administration

Regulations published in the Federal Register permit the Social Security Administration (SSA) to charge a fee for providing information from our records. Third parties (including, but not limited to, mortgage companies, financial institutions, apartment complexes, landlords, person funds or pension administrators, insurance companies, and others) requesting verification of benefits, copies of records or other information from the Social Security Administration for purposes other than the administration of programs under the Social Security Act must pay a fee commensurate with the time and resources needed to provide the information.

Why do We Charge?

Social Security Field Offices and Teleservice Centers receive numerous requests every day from third parties requesting information from Social Security records. Providing this information costs a great deal in terms of time and agency resources. This service is not related to our core mission, which is to administer the programs contained in the Social Security Act. Periodically, we send all beneficiaries mailings containing information about their Social Security or Supplemental Security Income benefits. So, in most cases, the beneficiaries already have the necessary information in their possession.

When verification of benefits is needed and a beneficiary or customer cannot provide these documents, they may call 1-800-772-1213 between 7:00 A.M. and 7:00 P.M. on business days, to request a benefit verification letter. The benefit verification letter can also be requested at the SSA Internet Website at www.socialsecurity.gov. *Click under Online Claims and Services and look under If you get benefits you can and select **Request a Benefit Verification Letter.***

Social Security will provide a benefit verification letter directly to a beneficiary for free. In the event that a beneficiary is unable to obtain or request a benefit verification letter,

we will provide the information to the requesting third party with written authorization from the beneficiary, and a fee will be charged. Third-party requests for information must include a **signed** SSA specific consent from the number holder (**SSA form 3288**), or a general release that **specifies** that it is for release of SSA information and indicates the **exact type** of information being released.

The cost will be \$46 for a verification request. A check or money order payable to "Social Security Administration" will need to be included with a signed and dated consent.

What to Do for Re-certification Applications for Housing Assistance

HUD has a computer-based system called the Tenant Assessment Subsystem (TASS). TASS replaced the Tenant Eligibility Verification System used to verify public housing and Section 8 tenant incomes. For tenant recertification, HUD program administrators can use the TASS to verify the tenant's income from SSA benefits or the Supplemental Security Income program. TASS does not provide benefit information for new applicants to HUD rental assistance programs.

Public Housing Agencies, private owners, and management agents administrating HUD rental assistance programs may obtain registration information about HUD'S TASS program by calling 1-888-245-4860 or by logging on the Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) web page: <http://www.hud.gov/offices/react/index.cfm>. On the REAC web page, on the left side, click on "Online Systems". For a description of the registration process, click on "Quick Tips for Registration" at the bottom of the page under Helpful Tools.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Schneider
District Manager