



**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 2008- 44 (HA)

Issued: December 4, 2008

Expires: December 31, 2009

Cross References:

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

1. **Purpose:** This Notice renews with unsubstantial modifications, Notice PIH 2006-41, which expired on December 31, 2007. The notice explains the procedures public housing agencies (PHAs) are required to use for verifying social security benefits of applicants, participants and household members at the time of application for rental assistance programs and during mandatory reexamination of household income, respectively.
2. **Applicability:** This Notice applies to the following HUD-PIH rental assistance programs: public housing, Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation, and Housing Choice Voucher Programs.
3. **Background:** 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 electronically 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. Electronic benefit verification is the most efficient verification method available and allows PHAs to process family annual and interim reexaminations expeditiously.

SSA continues to receive requests for income verification from PHAs despite the electronic exchange of SS and SSI benefit information between SSA and HUD. PHAs should not refer applicants for or participants of HUD rental assistance to local SSA offices to obtain verification of the amount of their SS/SSI benefits. This Notice describes the proper procedures for verifying SS and SSI benefits of applicants, participants, and household members of HUD-assisted rental units.

4. **Effective Date:** This Notice is effective upon publication.

5. **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/tenant 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.

It is the Department's position that a SSA benefit verification letter provided by the family or an EIV income report which displays the social security benefit amount is third party verification. No additional verification is required by the PHA. PHAs should **not** submit requests to SSA to verify that a family is **not** receiving social security benefits.

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

EIV does not contain SS and SSI benefit information of applicants for HUD's rental assistance programs. PHAs should ask applicants to provide a copy of their SS and/or SSI benefit letter, dated within the last 60 days, for each household member that receives SS and/or SSI benefits. Do not send applicants to SSA offices if they do not have this information. Instead:

- While meeting with the applicant, help the applicant request a benefit verification letter from SSA's website, Social Security Online, at www.socialsecurity.gov. This service is free and SSA will send the letter to the applicant within 10 days. To access the site for requesting benefit verification letters, go to the Social Security Online front page, select *What You Can Do Online* and follow the instructions for requesting a *Proof of Income Letter*. Assist the applicant in answering questions and explain how the applicant should provide the letter to your office; **or**
- Ask the applicant to request a *Proof of Income Letter* from SSA's toll-free number (800-772-1213).

Note: SSA encourages SS and SSI recipients to use SSA's web site rather than the toll-free number to request *Proof of Income* letters.

The PHA should obtain the original SSA benefit letter from the individual, make a photocopy of the document for the PHA file and return the original document to the individual. The PHA should use the listed gross benefit amount to calculate annual income from social security benefits.

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

SS/SSI benefit information for participants and household members, who have validated personal identifiers, is available from HUD's online EIV system, which can be accessed by authorized PHA staff at: https://hudapps.hud.gov/HUD_Systems.

- PHAs are required to use EIV to verify SS/SSI benefits of current participants and household members. PHAs who do not currently have access to EIV should contact their local HUD field office to register for access to the EIV system. Information regarding HUD's EIV system is available at: www.hud.gov/offices/pih/programs/ph/rhiip/uivsystem.cfm.
- PHAs should print the EIV income report and confirm with the tenant that the current listed benefit amount is correct. If the tenant agrees with the current EIV-reported amount, the PHA should use the gross benefit amount to calculate annual income from social security benefits.
- If the tenant disputes the EIV-reported benefit amount, the PHA should request the tenant to provide a current (dated within the last 60 days) SSA benefit letter. If the tenant is unable to provide the requested document, the PHA should follow the instructions under *Third Party Verification of SS/SSI Benefits of Applicants and Household Members*.
- If benefit information is not available in the EIV system, the PHA should follow the instructions under *Third Party Verification of SS/SSI Benefits of Applicants and Household Members*.
- Photocopies of social security checks or bank statements are not acceptable forms of verification for SS/SSI benefits because the dollar amount listed may not be the gross benefit amount.

Note: SS/SSI benefit information in the EIV system is updated every three months in accordance with the below schedule. SS/SSI benefits are increased annually to reflect the SSA-approved cost of living adjustment (COLA) for all beneficiaries by December 31st in the EIV system. However, due to the large volume of data processed by the Department, there may be a delay in updating the new SS/SSI benefit amounts.

HUD-SSA Computer Matching Schedule	
PHA State	Month Matched
AL, FL, GA, ID, IL, KY, MD, MI, MO, ND, NY, VA	January, April, July, October
AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, MA, MN, MS, MT, NM, OK, OR, PA, RQ, SC, WA, WI	February, May, August, November
AK, DC, DE, GQ, HI, IA, IN, KS, LA, ME, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NV, OH, RI, SD, TN, TQ, TX, UT, VQ, VT, WV, WY	March, June, September, December

8. How to Ensure Availability of Social Security Benefit Information in the EIV System

The availability of SS and SSI benefit information in the EIV system depends on PHA data quality and timely submission of form HUD-50058 to the Public and Indian Housing Information Center (PIC). PHAs must ensure that data entered in section 3 of the form HUD-50058 (i.e. household members' name, date of birth and social security number) is complete and accurate. If a family's form HUD-50058 is not successfully submitted to PIC, income information will not be available in EIV.

PHAs should use EIV's *Failed Verification and Failed EIV Pre-screening reports* to improve the availability of income information in EIV. Below is a summary of how these two reports can be beneficial to the PHA.

- Failed Verification Report:** informs the PHA of any tenant whose identity can not be confirmed by the SSA due to incorrect personal identifiers (DOB, surname, and/or SSN) recorded in section 3 of the form HUD-50058. PHA staff should review this report on a monthly basis, obtain appropriate documentation from the tenant, update section 3 of the form HUD-50058, accordingly, and transmit a revised form HUD-50058 into PIC.
- Failed EIV Pre-screening Report:** informs the PHA of any tenant who has failed HUD's EIV pre-screening process due to incorrect personal identifiers (DOB, surname, and/or SSN) or invalid form HUD-50058 transmitted (e.g. effective date of action is more than 16 months ago). Staff should review this report on a monthly basis, obtain appropriate documentation from the tenant, update section 3 of the form HUD-50058, accordingly, and transmit a revised form HUD-50058 into PIC. For invalid form HUD-50058s, staff should review the error description and take appropriate action to correct the error and transmit a revised form HUD-50058 into PIC.

Below is a summary of EIV failed verification error descriptions, explanations, and corrective actions PHAs should take in order to ensure the availability of social security benefit information in EIV.

Failed Verification Report Error Messages			
	Error Message Description	Explanation	Corrective Action
1	No benefits reported by SSA MM/DD/YYYY	No benefits reported by SSA. The date of birth recorded on line 3e of the form HUD-50058 is not the same DOB reflected in SSA's records.	Update line 3e of form HUD-50058 with the SSA-provided DOB.
2	SSN is verified; individual is deceased Or SSN is verified;	The tenant's SSN has been verified by SSA and the individual is deceased. If a date follows the error message, this is the date of	Contact tenant's adult family member or next of kin to confirm death. Upon confirmation of death, update family composition

Failed Verification Report Error Messages			
	Error Message Description	Explanation	Corrective Action
	individual is deceased MM/DD/YYYY	death as reflected in SSA records.	accordingly. If a single member deceased household, take appropriate action in accordance with program requirements and PHA-established policies, including termination of HAP contract (Section 8 only) and transmit an End of Participation (EOP) (action type) form HUD-50058.
3	3 – Surname matched, but DOB did not match NUMIDENT	The date of birth recorded on line 3e of the form HUD-50058 is not the same DOB reflected in SSA's records.	Ask the tenant to provide documentation (birth certificate or state issued identification card) of his/her DOB. Update line 3e of form HUD-50058 with the correct DOB.
4	Verification failed - Date of birth matched, but surname did not match with SSA records or 5 - Surname does not match; DOB was checked	The surname recorded on line 3b of the form HUD-50058 is not the same surname reflected in SSA's records.	Ask the tenant to provide documentation (SSN card, birth certificate, state issued identification card, marriage license or court documents) of the other name he/she is using. Update line 3b of form HUD-50058 with the correct surname.
5	Verification failed – SS/SSI benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in date of birth MM/DD/YYYY	The tenant is receiving SS/SSI benefits; however, SSA can not disclose the benefit amount because the date of birth recorded on line 3e of the form HUD-50058 is incorrect. However, the DOB reflected in SSA records is listed at the end of the error message.	Request the tenant to provide a current SS/SSI benefit letter. Update line 3e of form HUD-50058 with the SSA-provided DOB.
6	Verification failed – SS/ SSI benefits cannot be disclosed due to discrepancy in name	The tenant is receiving SS/SSI benefits; however, SSA can not disclose the benefit amount because the surname recorded	Request the tenant to provide a current SS/SSI benefit letter.

Failed Verification Report Error Messages			
	Error Message Description	Explanation	Corrective Action
		on line 3b of the form HUD-50058 is not the same surname reflected in SSA records.	Ask the tenant to provide documentation (SSN card, birth certificate, state issued identification card, marriage license or court documents) of the other name he/she is using. Update line 3b of form HUD-50058 with the correct surname.
7	Verification failed - SSN not found in SSA records or 1 – SSN is not in file or * The input SSN was not verified	The tenant's SSN recorded on line 3n of the form HUD-50058 is not a valid number issued by SSA or listed in SSA records.	Request original SSN card from tenant. Confirm SSN displayed on the card matches the SSN reported on line 3n of form HUD-50058. If the numbers do not match, make the necessary correction on line 3n of form HUD-50058. For continued SSN failures, notify HUD OIG or other law enforcement agency.
8	Verification failed - SSN not found in SSA records XXXXXXXXXX	The tenant SSN recorded on line 3n of the form HUD-50058 is not a valid number issued by SSA. However, the SSN reflected in SSA records is listed at the end of the error message.	Update line 3n of form HUD-50058 with the SSA-provided SSN.
9	Verification failed - Surname matched, but date of birth did not match with SSA records MM/DD/YYYY	The date of birth recorded on line 3e of the form HUD-50058 is incorrect. However, the DOB reflected in SSA records is listed at the end of the error message.	Update line 3e of form HUD-50058 with the SSA-provided DOB.

Note: If the SSA's records are wrong, only the tenant can request SSA to correct his/her record.

Failed EIV Pre-screening Report Error Messages			
	Error Message Description	Explanation	Corrective Action
1	Failed DOB check.	The date of birth is blank or null.	Enter DOB on line 3e of the form HUD-50058. Ensure only numbers are recorded.
2	Failed last name check.	The last name is blank or null.	Enter last name on line 3b of the form HUD-50058. Ensure only alpha characters are recorded.
3	Failed SSN check.	The SSN is not numeric or all 9s or LIKE {000%} or LIKE {__00%} or LIKE {%0000}.	Enter valid SSN on line 3n of the form HUD-50058. Do not use repetitive numbers, as directed in the current Form HUD-50058 Instruction Booklet, if tenant has not disclosed a SSN. An alternate ID should be generated for all household members without an SSN (using the alternate ID Generator Module in PIC).
4	Failed effective date check.	The effective date of action is more than 15 months old.	Enter a current effective date on line 2b of the form HUD-50058.

9. 2009 Social Security & Medicare Changes

The SSA announced on October 16, 2008, that monthly SS and SSI benefits will increase by 5.8 percent in 2009. The 5.8 percent cost of living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits that SS beneficiaries receive in January 2009. Increased payments to SSI will begin on December 31, 2008. Additional information is available at www.socialsecurity.gov.

For families with income less than \$85,000, the standard Medicare Part B monthly premium will be \$96.40 in 2009, the same as the Part B premium for 2008. Additional information about Medicare changes for 2009 is available at www.medicare.gov.

The Department expects to update the COLA for all SS/SSI beneficiaries reported in the EIV system by December 31, 2008. However, due to the large volume of data processed by the Department, there may be a delay in updating the new SS/SSI benefit amounts. PHAs who are processing annual and interim reexams now, which will be effective January 1, 2009, and later, may apply the COLA rate of 5.8% to the current verified SS/SSI benefit amount to calculate annual income. The PHA should include in the tenant file either the EIV income report showing the current SS or SSI benefit amount or current SSA benefit verification letter with an indication of “+ 5.8%” on the document or within PHA interim or annual reexam work papers.

10. **For inquiries about this Notice contact:** your local HUD field office or Nicole Faison of HUD Headquarters' Office of Public Housing and Voucher Programs at (202) 708-0744.
11. **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/

Paula O. Blunt, General Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Public and Indian Housing