

Justification for Use of SSNs on Form CMS-R285

All Title II and Medicare entitlement is established by SSA and based on a social security number (SSN). There is no alternate method in SSA for identifying the individual or the record where entitlement exists. Therefore when information is required to establish eligibility for a benefit (e.g. Medicare Part B), the information is requested under the SSN where the benefit will be established.

When an individual requests reduction of the Medicare Part A premium to zero, he/she must meet the following requirements: (1) the individual's Part A premium is not (and will not) be paid for in whole in or part by a State, a political subdivision of the State or an agency or instrumentality of one or more States or political subdivisions; and (2) the person has received cash benefits under a qualified State or local government retirement system (REF §1881 (d) of the Social Security Act). The form CMS-R285 is used by SSA to request verification that an individual meets these requirements. Because States and local governments generally use the SSN as a means of identifying their retirees, the SSN of the individual is required on the form CMS-R285 to obtain the information necessary for SSA to determine whether the individual is eligible for the Part A premium reduction. In cases where the person requesting the reduction is not the retiree (e.g., the claimant is the spouse of the retiree), SSA will also request the SSN of the retiree.

Denise Cox
Division of Enrollment and
Eligibility Policy