

Change Request for Form SSA-8001-BK
Application for Supplemental Security Income
20 CFR 416.305-416.335, Subpart C
OMB No. 0960-0444

SSA is requesting a change to Form-SSA-8001-BK (Application for Supplemental Security Income) to obtain permission to contact financial institutions on both the paper form and the Modernized Supplemental Security Income Claims System (MSSICS).

Background:

- Since November 2006, we have been obtaining permission to contact financial institutions on all full applications and redeterminations involving personal contact with the recipient or deemor. We currently obtain permission to contact financial institutions on the SSA-8000-BK (0960-0229), the SSA-8010-BK (0960-0124), the SSA-8202-BK (0960-0145), and the SSA-8203-BK (0960-0341).
- The primary reason for this request is we need to move quickly in anticipation of a Congressional demand that we rapidly expand the scope and functionality of our electronic financial account verification process. This process is a web-based application that can electronically verify financial accounts held by SSI applicants, recipients, and deemors. This electronic process allows SSA to more efficiently verify financial account balances by reducing the processing time compared to the paper-based method. Moreover, the electronic process is more effective at preventing SSI overpayments because it allows SSA to search for undisclosed financial accounts. Currently, financial accounts are one of the leading causes of overpayments in the SSI program. In addition, electronic financial account verification on deferred applications will help to decrease SSA's disability backlog by reducing the case processing time in the State Disability Determination Services (DDS) agencies.
- Under our proposed change, we also want to obtain permission to contact financial institutions on the deferred applications (SSA-8001-BK). The purpose of adding this question to the deferred application is to improve program integrity by electronically verifying the financial account balances of SSI applicants, recipients, and deemors. Currently, financial accounts are one of the leading causes of overpayments in the SSI program. In addition, electronic financial account verification on deferred applications will help to decrease SSA's disability backlog by reducing the case processing time in the State Disability Determination Services (DDS) agencies.
- SSA has worked with a private vendor to develop a web-based application that can electronically verify financial accounts held by SSI applicants, recipients, and deemors. This electronic process allows SSA to more efficiently verify financial account balances by reducing the processing time compared to the paper-based method. Moreover, the electronic process is more effective at preventing SSI overpayments because it allows SSA to search for undisclosed financial accounts. We

are currently using the electronic financial account verification process in field offices in California, New Jersey, and New York.

- In October of 2009, SSA expects to receive a \$34 million appropriation to expand the electronic financial account verification process nationwide. Current legislation stipulates that SSA must use all of these funds in FY 2010. In order to comply with Congressional intent and maximize the program integrity savings, we need to immediately begin collecting financial permissions on deferred applications so that these claims can be processed using the electronic financial account verification process.

Outlined below is an explanation of the proposed changes:

- We will add the following questions to the MISSICS and paper versions:
 - o MISSICS Screens (see attached screen):
 - PERMISSION TO CONTACT FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS (Y/N): X
 - IF NO, GOOD CAUSE ESTABLISHED (Y/N): X
 - PERMISSION AND / OR GOOD CAUSE CHANGED, DATE (MMD-DYY): 999999
 - INELIGIBILITY NOTICE DATE (mmdyy): 999999
 - PERMISSION STATUS CHANGE (y): x
 - REMARKS (Y): X
 - o Paper Form:
 - We will add a new question #26, and reorder the remainder of the form accordingly. We will also add an additional statement to reordered #31 (currently #30). See below:
 - o New Question #26:
Do you give us permission to obtain any financial records from any financial institution?
You Yes No
Your Spouse, if filing Yes No
 - Additional Statement Inserted in #31:
 - o We have asked you for permission to obtain, from any financial institution, any financial record about you that is held by the institution. We will ask financial institutions for this information whenever we think it is needed to decide if you are eligible or if you continue to be eligible for SSI benefits. Once authorized, our permission to contact financial institutions remains in effect until one of the following occurs: (1) you or your spouse notify us in writing that you are cancel-

ing your permission, (2) your application for SSI is denied in a final decision, (3) your eligibility for SSI terminates, or (4) we no longer consider your spouse's income and resources to be available to you. If you or your spouse do not give or cancel your permission you may not be eligible for SSI and we may deny your claim or stop your payments.

- Section 1631(e)(1)(B) of the Social Security Act requires that SSA explain how we will use the financial permission and how long the permission lasts. Recognizing this, the below statement will be added to the Important Information section of the deferred application summary for MSSICS claims:

We have asked you for permission to obtain, from any financial institution, any financial record about you that is held by the institution. We will ask financial institutions for this information whenever we think it is needed to decide if you are eligible or if you continue to be eligible for SSI benefits. Once authorized, our permission to contact financial institutions remains in effect until one of the following occurs: (1) you or your spouse notify us in writing that you are canceling your permission, (2) your application for SSI is denied in a final decision, (3) your eligibility for SSI terminates, or (4) we no longer consider your spouse's income and resources to be available to you. If you or your spouse do not give or cancel your permission you may not be eligible for SSI and we may deny your claim or stop your payments.

- The below statements will be added to the deferred application summary for MSSICS claims:

A) Applicant/Spouse - Yes to permission

I give SSA permission to contact any financial institution and request any financial records that financial institution may have about me.

B) Applicant - No to permission

I do not give SSA permission to contact any financial institution and request my financial records. I understand that refusing to give this permission will cause me to be ineligible for SSI.

C) Spouse - No to permission

I do not give SSA permission to contact any financial institution and request my financial records. I understand that refusing to give this permission may cause the SSI applicant to be ineligible for benefits.