

EM - Emergency Message

**Effective Date:** 04/06/2022

**Identification Number:** EM-22022 SEN  
**Intended Audience:** All  
RCs/ARCs/ADs/FOs/TSCs/WSUs/PSCs/OCO/OCO  
-CSTs/ODD/DPU/CFDPS/OHO/OARO/DDS  
**Originating Office:** DCO OPSOS  
**Title:** Reentry Procedures One-Time-Only Instructions  
**Type:** EM - Emergency Messages  
**Program:** All Programs  
**Link To Reference:** See References at the end of this EM.

**SENSITIVE - NOT TO BE SHARED WITH THE PUBLIC****Retention Date: September 30, 2022****A. Purpose**

This emergency message (EM) informs you of the status of workloads, case processing, and procedures during reentry.

**B. Background**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) field offices (FO) are available to provide in-office service to the public. Staff should encourage members of the public who are able to access us online or by telephone to try those options first before visiting our offices, especially without an appointment. SSA FOs will:

- **No longer require that a customer have an appointment to enter the office.**
- No longer use the Express Interview appointment model.
- Revert to normal procedures for evidentiary requirements to adjudicate claims and retroactive benefits.
- No longer use the 499 and 318 disaster coding for all claims. A special unit code or the 499 listing code may still be relevant for other declared disasters per [GN 00410.010B.2](#) and [GN 01040.100](#).
- Revert to established procedures for Social Security Number (SSN) Verifications, original SSN card requests, and replacement cards, see [RM 10225.005](#), [GN 03325.025](#), and [RM](#)

[10205.000](#). Continue to follow secondary evidence flexibilities outlined in [EM-21018](#) for United States (U.S.) citizen replacement SSN card requests received by mail.

- Adjudicators will no longer be permitted to sign benefit applications on behalf of claimants. Continue to follow established policy for alternative signature methods in [GN 00201.015](#).
- Refer to [AM-22031](#) to view resumption instructions previously contained in EM-20010 SEN REV 8.

Continue to review and follow appropriate [COVID-19 Instructions](#) for workloads not addressed in this EM. For all other workloads, continue to follow existing procedures.

Encourage the public to use SSA's [Online Services](#). Use the [Social Security Online Employee Toolkit](#) (SSONET) to assist with answering questions about our online services.

Individuals with a *my* [Social Security](#) account can complete the following actions online:

- Get a proof of income letter (Benefit Verification)
- Get a Social Security 1099 (SSA-1099)
- Check application status
- Change an address (beneficiaries)
- Set up or change direct deposit (beneficiaries)
  
- Request a replacement Social Security card (with exceptions)
- Access Individual Representative Payee services
- Access the new Retirement Calculator
- Opt out of mailed notices for those available online

### **C. Workloads suspended during reentry**

1. SSI absence from the U.S. suspensions and Title II automated alien non-payment suspensions described in [RS 02610.001](#) generated by the Left U.S. Regular Transcript Selection and Attainment Pass selection. These workloads continue to be suspended.
2. Suspensions for failure to respond to the 2019 Foreign Enforcement Questionnaire

(FEQ) remain on hold, and the 2020 FEQ mailer continues to be suspended due to international mail delays and suspensions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. E-Verify Tentative Non-Confirmations continue to be suspended as we continue working with key stakeholders to resume this workload.

#### **D. Special handling-all workloads**

##### **1. SSA-552 Dedicated Account Use of Funds Statement**

This form must have a wet signature or electronic signature via the e552 process in lieu of returning a completed paper form by mail or in person. Please refer to [EM-21060](#) for instructions on the e552 process.

**NOTE:** Under this EM, if a representative payee alleges the beneficiary's dire need of dedicated account funds, is unable to return the signed SSA-552 timely via the methods described above, and meets the emergency exception in [GN 00602.140B](#), follow the instructions below only to satisfy the hardship.

- Read the form in its entirety to the representative payee prior to completing the names and address fields. Annotate in the signature block that you read the form over the phone.
- Store this copy in the Electronic Folder.
- Mail a copy of the telephone-completed form to the representative payee for their records, as well as a blank SSA-552 and inform them that they must in addition return a wet-signed SSA-552.
- A paper form SSA-552, with a wet signature, must be in file for any other payments to the dedicated account.
- Document this conversation on the

DROC screen in MSSICS, or SSA-5002 faxed to the Electronic Folder, if MSSICS is unavailable.

## **2. Direct Deposit Fraud Prevention (DDFP) block changes**

When beneficiaries, recipients and representative payees call the National 800 Number Network (N8NN) to process a DDFP block removal or to update direct deposit follow the guidance in [GN 02402.023I](#). After the interview:

- the Teleservice Center (TSC) manager will send the request to the servicing FO email box including “COVID-19 Emergency - Management Action - N8NN DDFP Block Request” in the subject line.
- the FO manager will assign it to an FO technician to complete the input, prepare and upload the SSA-5002 into the Claims File User Interface (CFUI). The SSA-5002 must include a statement to identify the action as, “DDFP Change Requested during COVID-19 Emergency”

## **3. International mail delays and suspensions**

International mail delays and suspensions are ongoing at this time. Please check <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/service-alerts/> for a list of affected countries. If beneficiaries in the affected countries have not received checks, do not process a non-receipt. Instead, please refer inquirers to their Federal Benefits Unit (FBU) to enroll in International Direct Deposit (IDD) or Correspondent Direct Deposit (CDD)

<https://www.ssa.gov/foreign/foreign.htm>.

## **4. Medicare Part B Supplemental Medical Insurance (SMI) processing**

Qualified applicants (working beneficiaries aged 65 or older who qualify for a Special Enrollment Period (SEP)) may apply for Medicare Part B during an SEP via our online or fax options. However, the online option requires beneficiaries to provide an eSignature (electronic signature) and a

valid email address. Refer to [AM-20023 SEN REV](#) and [OB 20-012 SEN REV 2](#) for descriptions of the fax and online options available.

Offices can accept the Form [CMS-40B](#) (Application for Enrollment in Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance)) and the Form [CMS-L564](#) (Request for Employment Information), including those from beneficiaries requesting enrollment under the SEP for International Volunteers provisions, without a wet signature. See [HI 00805.350](#) for SEP for International Volunteers provisions.

If the beneficiary is unable to obtain evidence from the employer group health plan (GHP) or large group health plan (LGHP), refer to [HI 00805.295](#) and [HI 00805.355](#) for alternative documentation.

**IMPORTANT:** Upon reentry, TSCs will resume mailing the CMS-40B and CMS-L564 to beneficiaries requesting the forms along with enclosing an envelope addressed to their TSC, refer to [TC 24001.060](#) and [TC 24001.050](#). However, if a beneficiary is unable to mail the CMS application or evidence through the mail, you can accept copies of the evidence through fax for processing. If a beneficiary does not have access to a fax machine, email, or the Internet and the individual is unable to print the necessary forms, e.g., CMS-40B and CMS-L564, the individual can send a written statement paired with appropriate documentation to the servicing FO, refer to [HI 00805.060](#). The statement must request SMI coverage and be signed, dated, and postmarked before the end of the SEP, refer to [HI 00805.130](#).

## 5. Representative payee workloads

### a. Representative payee

**applications**

Suspend requirements for in-person interviews for representative payee applicants and follow telephone procedures explained in [GN 00203.020A.2.b.](#)

**b. Capability interviews**

Please follow [GN 00502.030](#) for developing other lay evidence in lieu of a face-to-face interview and [GN 00502.113](#) for guidance in conducting the interview by telephone.

**c. Monitoring conducted by State Protection and Advocacy (P&A) grantees**

P&A reviewers resumed conducting all types of payee monitoring reviews starting August 3, 2020. P&A reviewers conduct onsite reviews when State and local conditions allow, and all parties involved in the review are comfortable with in-person interactions.

The P&A reviewers conduct reviews via telephone or video when State or local conditions do not allow for in-person interactions, or when any party involved in the review is uncomfortable with in-person interactions.

Continue to follow [GN 00605.662](#) to verify the legitimacy of P&A grantees when a payee

or beneficiary questions the legitimacy of a P&A reviewer.

Regional Office (RO) staff and payee cadre members may continue to work on P&A conducted payee reviews and develop misuse investigations.

## **E. General procedures**

### **1. Extend good cause**

Continue to apply maximum flexibility when deciding whether to extend good cause provisions based on examples in [GN 03101.020](#) related to the submission of evidence, appeals, hearings, redeterminations, and continuing disability reviews.

Continue to extend good cause by considering unusual, unexpected, or unavoidable circumstances beyond the claimant's control that prevent timely action. Consider extending these good cause provisions for information due when processing adverse actions.

Due to mail handling and delays with timely mailing of and receiving Goldberg Kelly (GK) notices, continue to apply the good cause provisions with maximum flexibility in individual circumstances. Follow instructions in [EM-21064](#) and [EM-20050 REV](#). Continue to process appeals and follow due process guidance per [SI 04010.020](#) and [SI 04005.012](#).

### **2. Failure to Cooperate (FTC) and Failure to Provide Information Determinations**

#### **a. Initial Claims**

DDS employees should continue to follow FTC guidance in [EM- 20019 SEN REV 4](#).

COVID-19 concerns remain a good reason for failure to cooperate with requests for evidence or action. For example, if a claimant contacts the DDS and indicates he or she needs assistance completing forms, and does not believe he or she can safely receive assistance due to COVID-19 concerns:

- Offer to collect the information by telephone; or
- If the claimant objects to completing the forms by telephone, hold case processing until the claimant receives assistance completing the forms

**b. Post Entitlement (PE)**

For SSI and Concurrent PE actions, including Redeterminations (RZs) and medical Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRs), follow instructions in [EM-21079](#).

**F. Obtaining evidence and extending timeframes**

In initial claims and PE situations, SSA will obtain necessary evidence to adjudicate claims and follow FTC instructions (See Section E.2. above).

SSA will apply Good Cause if claimant is unable to submit evidence due to COVID-19 concerns (See Section E.1. above).

Outstanding development is controlled locally on the development worksheet (DW01). Continue to monitor



workload control listings and assist the claimant in obtaining evidence where needed.

Direct all program-related and technical questions to your RO support staff or Program Service Center (PSC) Operations Analysis (OA) staff. RO support staff or PSC OA staff may refer questions, concerns or problems to their Central Office contacts.

**References:**

[GN 00410.010](#) Application and Evidence Procedures in Disasters  
[GN 01040.100](#) Listing Codes

[RM 10225.005](#) Requests for Social Security Number (SSN) Printouts  
[GN 03325.025](#) Requests for Numident Records  
[RM 10205.000](#) Social Security Number (SSN) Applications  
[EM-21018](#) Enumeration: Temporary Option for Accepting Secondary Level Documents as Proof of Identity for U.S. Citizens in Limited Situations

[GN 00201.015](#) Alternative Signature Methods  
[COVID-19 Instructions](#)

[RS 02610.001](#) Alien Nonpayment Provisions  
[SM 01005.525](#) Case Related Data  
[EM-20014 REV 4](#) Effect of COVID-19-Related Financial Assistance on SSI Income and Resources  
[SI 01130.601](#) Dedicated Accounts for Past-Due Benefits Due to Individuals Under 18 Who Have a Representative Payee  
[SM 01311.667](#) Processing Dedicated Account Payments from an SSI Underpayment  
[GN 00602.140](#) Permitted Expenditures from Dedicated Accounts  
[EM-21060](#) New Instructions for the Processing of the Electronic SSA-552  
[GN 02402.023](#) Direct Deposit Fraud Prevention Policy  
[GN 02406.1135](#) Processing Reports of Nonreceipt, Loss, Theft, or Destruction of Payments -- Checks Due and Not Due  
[GN 02406.201](#) Nonreceipt of Title II Critical Payment System (CPS) Checks  
[RS 02801.010](#) Immediate Payment (IP) Criteria and Process  
[AM-20023 SEN REV](#) Online Process for Medicare Part B Enrollment for Special Enrollment Period--COVID-19 INFORMATION  
[OB 20-012 SEN REV 2](#) Online Medicare Part B Enrollment Processing for Special Enrollment Period - COVID-19 – INFORMATION  
[HI 00805.295](#) Evidence of GHP or LGHP Coverage Based on

## Current Employment Status

[HI 00805.355](#) Evidentiary Requirements for the SEP or Premium-Surcharge Rollback for International Volunteers

[TC 24001.060](#) General Enrollment Period (GEP)

[TC 24001.050](#) Special Enrollment Period (SEP) For the Aged and Disabled

[HI 00805.060](#) Voluntary Request for Enrollment

[HI 00805.130](#) When an Enrollment Received by Mail Is Considered Filed

[GN 00203.020](#) Identity of Claimants

[GN 00502.030](#) Developing Lay Evidence of Capability

[GN 00502.113](#) Interviewing the Payee Applicant

[GN 00605.662](#) Questions on the Legitimacy of a Protection and Advocacy Agency

[GN 03101.020](#) Good Cause for Extending the Time Limit to File an Appeal

[EM-21064](#) Goldberg Kelly Payment Continuation Period

[EM-20050 REV](#) The Goldberg Kelly (GK) Notice, Request for Reconsideration, and GK Payment Continuation during the COVID-19 Pandemic

[SI 04010.020](#) SSI Appeals Considerations

[SI 04005.012](#) Time Limit for Filing Appeal

[GN 01010.410](#) Failure to Submit Essential Evidence

[DI 11018.005](#) Field Office Responsibilities in a Failure to Cooperate-Insufficient Evidence Decision (FTC)

[DI 13015.001](#) Failure to Cooperate-Insufficient Evidence Decision (FTC) Policy for Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRs) - Field Office

[DI 23007.000](#) Failure to Cooperate

[DI 28075.005](#) Failure to Cooperate (FTC) and Whereabouts Unknown (WU) During a Medical Continuing Disability Review (CDR)

[SI 00601.110](#) Closeout - Failure to Cooperate (N18) - Initial Claims

[SI 02301.235](#) Failure to Provide Information (N20)

[EM-20019 SEN REV 4](#) Disability Determinations Services (DDS) Procedures - Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Crisis

[EM-21079](#) Temporary Hold on N20 (Failure to Provide Information) Suspensions—One—Time Only Instructions

[GN 01070.228](#) Modes of Requesting Assistance

[TC 00101.027](#) eMailer

[DI 11005.056](#) Signature Requirements for Form SSA-827

[EM-20022 REV 3](#) Temporary Instructions for the Bundled Receipt and Processing of an Electronically Signed SSA-1696 and Certain Other Forms

EM-22022 SEN - Reentry Procedures One-Time-Only Instructions - 04/06/2022

Link to this document:

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