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§ 416.105 Administration.

The Supplemental Security Income for the Aged, Blind, and Disabled program is administered by the Social Security Administration.

[51 FR 11718, Apr. 7, 1986, as amended at 62 FR 38454, July 18, 1997]

§ 416.110 Purpose of program.

The basic purpose underlying the supplemental security income program is to assure a minimum level of income for people who are age 65 or over, or who are blind or disabled and who do not have sufficient income and resources to maintain a standard of living at the established Federal minimum income level. The supplemental security income program replaces the financial assistance programs for the aged, blind, and disabled in the 50 States and the District of Columbia for which grants were made under the Social Security Act. Payments are financed from the general funds of the United States Treasury. Several basic principles underlie the program:

(a) *Objective tests.* The law provides that payments are to be made to aged, blind, and disabled people who have income and resources below specified amounts. This provides objective measurable standards for determining each person's benefits.

(b) *Legal right to payments.* A person's rights to supplemental security income payments—how much he gets and under what conditions—are clearly defined in the law. The area of administrative discretion is thus limited. If an applicant disagrees with the decision on his claim, he can obtain an administrative review of the decision and if still not satisfied, he may initiate court action.

(c) *Protection of personal dignity.* Under the Federal program, payments are made under conditions that are as protective of people's dignity as possible. No restrictions, implied or otherwise, are placed on how recipients spend the Federal payments.

(d) *Nationwide uniformity of standards.* The eligibility requirements and the Federal minimum income level are identical throughout the 50 States and the District of Columbia. This provides assurance of a minimum income base on which States may build supplementary payments.

(e) *Incentives to work and opportunities for rehabilitation.* Payment amounts are not reduced dollar-for-dollar for work income but some of an applicant's income is counted toward the eligibility limit. Thus, recipients are encouraged to work if they can. Blind and disabled recipients with vocational rehabilitation potential are referred to the appropriate State vocational rehabilitation agencies that offer rehabilitation services to enable them to enter the labor market.

(f) *State supplementation and Medicaid determinations.* (1) Federal supplemental security income payments lessen the variations in levels of assistance and provide a basic level of assistance throughout the nation. States are required to provide mandatory minimum State supplementary payments beginning January 1, 1974, to aged, blind, or disabled recipients of assistance for the month of December 1973 under such State's plan approved under title I, X, XIV, or XVI of the Act in order for the State to be eligible to receive title XIX funds (see subpart T of this part). These payments must be in an amount sufficient to ensure that individuals who are converted to the new program will not have their income reduced below what it was under the State program for December 1973. In addition, each State may choose to provide more than the Federal supplemental security income and/or mandatory minimum State supplementary payment to whatever extent it finds appropriate in view of the needs and resources of its citizens or it may choose to provide no more than the mandatory minimum payment where applicable. States which provide State supplementary payments can enter into agreements for Federal administration of the mandatory and optional State supplementary payments with the Federal Government paying the administrative costs. A State which elects Federal administration of its supplementation program must apply the same eligibility criteria (other than those pertaining to income) applied to determine eligibility for the Federal portion of the supplemental security income payment, except as provided in sec.

1616(c) of the Act (see subpart T of this part). There is a limitation on the amount payable to the Commissioner by a State for the amount of the supplementary payments made on its behalf for any fiscal year pursuant to the State's agreement with the Secretary. Such limitation on the amount of reimbursement is related to the State's payment levels for January 1972 and its total expenditures for calendar year 1972 for aid and assistance under the appropriate State plan(s) (see subpart T of this part).

(2) States with Medicaid eligibility requirements for the aged, blind, and disabled that are identical (except as permitted by § 416.2111) to the supplemental security income eligibility requirements may elect to have the Social Security Administration determine Medicaid eligibility under the State's program for recipients of supplemental security income and recipients of a federally administered State supplementary payment. The State would pay half of Social Security Administration's incremental administrative costs arising from carrying out the agreement.

[39 FR 28625, Aug. 9, 1974, as amended at 53 FR 12941, Apr. 20, 1988; 62 FR 38454, July 18, 1997]

§ 416.120 General definitions and use of terms.

(a) *Terms relating to acts and regulations.* As used in this part:

(1) *The Act* means the Social Security Act as amended (42 U.S.C. Chap. 7).

(2) Wherever a title is referred to, it means such title of the Act.

(3) Vocational Rehabilitation Act means the act approved June 2, 1920 (41 Stat. 735), 29 U.S.C. 31–42, as amended, and as may be amended from time to time hereafter.

(b) *Commissioner; Appeals Council; defined.* As used in this part:

(1) *Commissioner* means the Commissioner of Social Security.

(2) *Appeals Council* means the Appeals Council of the Office of Hearings and Appeals in the Social Security Administration or such member or members thereof as may be designated by the Chairman.

(c) *Miscellaneous.* As used in this part unless otherwise indicated:

(1) *Supplemental security income benefit* means the amount to be paid to an eligible individual (or eligible individual and his eligible spouse) under title XVI of the Act.

(2) *Income* means the receipt by an individual of any property or service which he can apply, either directly or by sale or conversion, to meeting his basic needs (see subpart K of this part).

(3) *Resources* means cash or other liquid assets or any real or personal property that an individual owns and could convert to cash to be used for support and maintenance (see § 416.1201(a)).

(4) *Attainment of age.* An individual attains a given age on the first moment of the day preceding the anniversary of his birth corresponding to such age.

(5) *Couple* means an eligible individual and his eligible spouse.

(6) *Institution* (see § 416.201).

(7) *Public institution* (see § 416.201).

(8) *Resident of a public institution* (see § 416.201).

(9) *State,* unless otherwise indicated, means a State of the United States, the District of Columbia, or effective January 9, 1978, the Northern Mariana Islands.

(10) The term *United States* when used in a geographical sense means the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and effective January 9, 1978, the Northern Mariana Islands.

(11) Masculine gender includes the feminine, unless otherwise indicated.

(12) *Section* means a section of the regulations in part 416 of this chapter unless the context indicates otherwise.

(13) *Eligible individual* means an aged, blind, or disabled individual who meets all the requirements for eligibility for benefits under the supplemental security income program.

(14) *Eligible spouse* means an aged, blind, or disabled individual who is the husband or wife of another aged, blind, or disabled individual and who is living with that individual (see § 416.1801(c)).

(d) *Periods of limitation ending on nonwork days.* Pursuant to the Act, where any provision of title XVI, or any provision of another law of the United States (other than the Internal Revenue Code of 1954) relating to or changing the effect of title XVI, or any regulation of the Commissioner issued