

In the case of a determination that an applicant is eligible for an exemption, this notification must include the exemption certificate number for the purposes of tax administration.

(j) *Retention of records for tax compliance.* (1) An Exchange must notify an individual to retain the records that demonstrate receipt of the certificate of exemption and qualification for the underlying exemption.

(2) In the case of any factor of eligibility that is verified through use of the special circumstances exception described in §155.615(h), the records that demonstrate qualification for the underlying exemption are the information submitted to the Exchange regarding the circumstances that warranted the use of the exception, as well as records of the Exchange decision to allow such exception.

(k) *Incomplete application.* (1) If an applicant submits an application that does not include sufficient information for the Exchange to conduct a determination for eligibility of an exemption the Exchange must—

(i) Provide notice to the applicant indicating that information necessary to complete an eligibility determination is missing, specifying the missing information, and providing instructions on how to provide the missing information; and

(ii) Provide the applicant with a period of no less than 30 and no more than 90 days, in the reasonable discretion of the Exchange, from the date on which the notice described in paragraph (k)(1) of this section is sent to the applicant to provide the information needed to complete the application to the Exchange; and

(iii) Not proceed with the applicant's eligibility determination during the period described in paragraph (k)(2) of this section.

(2) If the Exchange does not receive the requested information within the time allotted in paragraph (k)(1)(ii) of this section, the Exchange must notify the applicant in writing that the Exchange cannot process the application and provide appeal rights to the applicant.

[78 FR 39523, July 1, 2013, as amended at 81 FR 12346, Mar. 8, 2016; 83 FR 17064, Apr. 17, 2018]

§ 155.615 Verification process related to eligibility for exemptions.

(a) *General rule.* Unless a request for modification is granted under paragraph (i) of this section, the Exchange must verify or obtain information as provided in this section in order to determine that an applicant is eligible for an exemption.

(b) *Verification related to exemption for religious conscience.* For any applicant who requests an exemption based on religious conscience, the Exchange must verify that he or she meets the standards specified in §155.605(c) by—

(1) Except as specified in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, accepting a form that reflects that he or she is exempt from Social Security and Medicare taxes under section 1402(g)(1) of the Code;

(2) Except as specified in paragraphs (b)(3) and (4) of this section, accepting his or her attestation of membership in a religious sect or division, and verifying that the religious sect or division to which the applicant attests membership is recognized by the Social Security Administration as an approved religious sect or division under section 1402(g)(1) of the Code.

(3) If information provided by an applicant regarding his or her membership in a religious sect or division is not reasonably compatible with other information provided by the individual or in the records of the Exchange, the Exchange must follow the procedures specified in paragraph (g) of this section.

(4) If an applicant attests to membership in a religious sect or division that is not recognized by the Social Security Administration as an approved religious sect or division under section 1402(g)(1) of the Code, the Exchange must provide the applicant with information regarding how his or her religious sect or division can pursue recognition under section 1402(g)(1) of the Code, and determine the applicant ineligible for this exemption until such time as the Exchange obtains information indicating that the religious sect or division has been approved.

(c) *Verification related to exemption for hardship*—(1) *In general.* For any applicant who requests an exemption based

§ 155.615

on hardship, except for the hardship exemptions described in § 155.605(d)(1)(i) and (iv), the Exchange must verify whether he or she has experienced the hardship to which he or she is attesting.

(2) *Lack of affordable coverage based on projected income.* (i) For any applicant who requests an exemption based on the hardship described in § 155.605(g)(2), the Exchange must verify the unavailability of affordable coverage through the procedures used to determine eligibility for advance payments of the premium tax credit, as specified in subpart D of this part, including the procedures described in § 155.315(c)(1), and the procedures used to verify eligibility for qualifying coverage in an eligible employer-sponsored plan, as specified in § 155.320(d), except as specified in § 155.615(f)(2)(ii).

(ii) The Exchange must accept an application filer's attestation for an applicant regarding eligibility for minimum essential coverage other than through an eligible employer-sponsored plan, instead of following the procedures specified in § 155.320(b).

(3) [Reserved]

(4) To the extent that the Exchange is unable to verify any of the information needed to determine an applicant's eligibility for an exemption based on hardship, the Exchange must follow the procedures specified in paragraph (g) of this section.

(d) *Inability to verify necessary information.* Except as otherwise specified in this subpart, for an applicant for whom the Exchange cannot verify information required to determine eligibility for an exemption, including but not limited to when electronic data is required in accordance with this subpart but data for individuals relevant to the eligibility determination for an exemption are not included in such data sources or when electronic data is required but it is not reasonably expected that data sources will be available within the time period as specified in § 155.315(f), the Exchange—

(1) Must make a reasonable effort to identify and address the causes of such inconsistency, including typographical or other clerical errors, by contacting the application filer to confirm the ac-

45 CFR Subtitle A (10–1–23 Edition)

curacy of the information submitted by the application filer;

(2) If unable to resolve the inconsistency through the process described in paragraph (g)(1) of this section, must—

(i) Provide notice to the applicant regarding the inconsistency; and

(ii) Provide the applicant with a period of 90 days from the date on which the notice described in paragraph (g)(2)(i) of this section is sent to the applicant to either present satisfactory documentary evidence via the channels available for the submission of an application, as described in § 155.610(d), except for by telephone, or otherwise to resolve the inconsistency.

(3) May extend the period described in paragraph (g)(2)(ii) of this section for an applicant if the applicant demonstrates that a good faith effort has been made to obtain the required documentation during the period.

(4) During the period described in paragraph (g)(1) and (g)(2)(ii) of this section, must not grant a certificate of exemption based on the information subject to this paragraph.

(5) If, after the period described in paragraph (g)(2)(ii) of this section, the Exchange remains unable to verify the attestation, the Exchange must determine the applicant's eligibility for an exemption based on any information available from the data sources used in accordance with this subpart, if applicable, unless such applicant qualifies for the exception provided under paragraph (h) of this section, and notify the applicant of such determination in accordance with the notice requirements specified in § 155.610(i), including notice that the Exchange is unable to verify the attestation.

(e) *Exception for special circumstances.* For an applicant who does not have documentation with which to resolve the inconsistency through the process described in paragraph (g)(2) of this section because such documentation does not exist or is not reasonably available and for whom the Exchange is unable to otherwise resolve the inconsistency, the Exchange must provide an exception, on a case-by-case basis, to accept an applicant's attestation as to the information which cannot otherwise be verified along with an explanation of circumstances as to why

Dept. of Health and Human Services

§ 155.620

the applicant does not have documentation.

(f) *Flexibility in information collection and verification.* HHS may approve an Exchange Blueprint in accordance with §155.105(d) or a significant change to the Exchange Blueprint in accordance with §155.105(e) to modify the methods to be used for collection of information and verification as set forth in this subpart, as well as the specific information required to be collected, provided that HHS finds that such modification would reduce the administrative costs and burdens on individuals while maintaining accuracy and minimizing delay, and that applicable requirements under §§155.260, 155.270, and paragraph (j) of this section, and section 6103 of the Code with respect to the confidentiality, disclosure, maintenance, or use of such information will be met.

(g) *Applicant information.* The Exchange may not require an applicant to provide information beyond the minimum necessary to support the eligibility process for exemptions as described in this subpart.

(h) *Validation of Social Security number.* (1) For any individual who provides his or her Social Security number to the Exchange, the Exchange must transmit the Social Security number and other identifying information to HHS, which will submit it to the Social Security Administration.

(2) To the extent that the Exchange is unable to validate an individual's Social Security number through the Social Security Administration, or the Social Security Administration indicates that the individual is deceased, the Exchange must follow the procedures specified in paragraph (g) of this section, except that the Exchange must provide the individual with a period of 90 days from the date on which the notice described in paragraph (g)(2)(i) of this section is received for the applicant to provide satisfactory documentary evidence or resolve the inconsistency with the Social Security Administration. The date on which the notice is received means 5 days after the date on the notice, unless the individual demonstrates that he or she did not re-

ceive the notice within the 5 day period.

[78 FR 39523, July 1, 2013, as amended at 78 FR 42322, July 15, 2013; 81 FR 12346, Mar. 8, 2016]

§ 155.620 Eligibility redeterminations for exemptions during a calendar year.

(a) *General requirement.* The Exchange must redetermine the eligibility of an individual with an exemption granted by the Exchange if it receives and verifies new information reported by such an individual, except for the exemption described in §155.605(g)(2).

(b) *Requirement for individuals to report changes.* (1) Except as specified in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, the Exchange must require an individual who has a certificate of exemption from the Exchange to report any change with respect to the eligibility standards for the exemption as specified in §155.605, except for the exemption described in §155.605(g)(2), within 30 days of such change.

(2) The Exchange must allow an individual with a certificate of exemption to report changes via the channels available for the submission of an application, as described in §155.610(d).

(c) *Verification of reported changes.* The Exchange must—

(1) Verify any information reported by an individual with a certificate of exemption in accordance with the processes specified in §155.615 prior to using such information in an eligibility redetermination.

(2) Notify an individual in accordance with §155.610(i) after redetermining his or her eligibility based on a reported change.

(3) Provide periodic electronic notifications regarding the requirements for reporting changes and an individual's opportunity to report any changes, to an individual who has a certificate of exemption for which changes must be reported in accordance with §155.620(b) and who has elected to receive electronic notifications, unless he or she has declined to receive such notifications.

(d) *Effective date of changes.* The Exchange must implement a change resulting from a redetermination under this section for the month or months