



JOHN A. WAGNER
DIRECTOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street • Sacramento, CA 95814 • www.cdss.ca.gov



ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
GOVERNOR

December 17, 2008

ALL COUNTY INFORMATION NOTICE NO. I-95-08

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
ALL FOOD STAMP COORDINATORS
ALL CalWORKs PROGRAM SPECIALISTS
ALL COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS
ALL CONSORTIUM PROJECT MANAGERS
ALL QUALITY CONTROL PROGRAM COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: CalWORKs AND FOOD STAMP: IMPACTS OF SOCIAL SECURITY (SSA) COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2008

REFERENCE: ACIN 1-80-06, ACIN I-72-07

Social Security recipients will receive a 5.8 percent cost-of-living increase in their Social Security benefits effective December 1, 2008, which is payable January 2009. The new Social Security benefit amount can be determined by multiplying the former benefit amount by 1.058. This increase will affect California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) cash aid and Food Stamp (FS) allotment amounts. When cash aid or FS allotment amounts are adjusted due to the SSA COLA benefit increase, the requirements for a timely and adequate Notice of Action shall apply pursuant to FS Manual of Policies and Procedures (MPP) section 63-504.26 and CalWORKs MPP sections 22-071 and 22-072.

NEW APPLICANTS

For new applicants in both the CalWORKs and FS programs, the actual amount of the Social Security benefit, including the increase, shall be used for eligibility and budgeting purposes beginning with the month of January 2009.

TREATMENT OF THE SSA COLA IN THE CURRENT QUARTER (OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER)

For CalWORKs and FS households currently in the October, November, and December quarter, the County Welfare Department (CWD) will reasonably anticipate the increase in the SSA income in accordance with CalWORKs MPP section 44-315.3 and FS MPP section 63-509(a) (2). The amount of the SSA COLA will be considered known to the county, per MPP section 63-509(h)(3), upon receipt of this ACIN and will be reasonably anticipated to be received by recipients of SSA benefits beginning in January 2009 and thereafter. Therefore, starting with the Quarterly Reporting (QR) Data month of

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- State Law Change
- Federal Law or Regulation Change
- Court Order
- Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- Initiated by CDSS

November 2008, the SSA COLA will be reasonably anticipated to be received in the QR Payment Quarter of January/February/March 2009.

COUNTY INITIATED MID-QUARTER CHANGES FOR ALL OTHER CalWORKs AND FOOD STAMP HOUSEHOLDS

MPP sections 44-316.33 and 63-509(h) provide that counties shall take mid-quarter actions based on SSA COLAs. Since the SSA COLA is effective December 2008 and payable in January, counties are to take a mid-quarter county-initiated action to decrease benefits effective January 1, 2009.

FS CHANGE REPORTING HOUSEHOLDS

Pursuant to MPP section 63-504.46, CWDs are required to automatically adjust FS benefits to reflect the SSA COLA no later than the second allotment issued after the month in which the change becomes effective for non-quarterly reporting households.

PAYMENT VERIFICATION SYSTEM (PVS) COLA NOTIFICATION

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) will not be providing additional notification of the SSA COLA through the Payment Verification System (PVS). However, upon request, a cost-of-living file will be provided to the counties. The file will be available through county consortia or electronic file transfer via Tumbleweed. The PVS COLA file will be subject to the 45-day timeline requirements of the Income Eligibility Verification System (IEVS). If you wish to receive your county's file, please contact the CDSS's Fraud Bureau at (916) 263-5728 no later than December 19, 2008.

ACCESSING INFORMATION ON SSA COLAS

The CWDs may obtain annual updates on SSA COLAs through the following web link: <http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/COLA>.

CONTACTS

If you have any FS questions regarding this ACIN, please contact Alicia Thomason at (916) 657-2630 or call your CalWORKs County Consultant for CalWORKs questions.

Sincerely,

Original Document Signed By:

CHARR LEE METSKER
Deputy Chief
Welfare to Work Division