Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Policy: 1000.0005
Effective Date: December 18, 1984 Revised Date: June 10, 2011 Version: 3

Supplemental Security Income is provided to children of any age who are disabled or blind according to criteria described in procedure. Children found eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are automatically eligible for medical assistance. Staff identify children who may be eligible in accordance with procedure to maximize the benefits available. It is essential that staff seek evaluation of every child who may be eligible due to a disability or blindness to ensure the child enjoys all of the current benefits to which he/she is entitled as well as to preserve the possibility of securing future benefits. The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), as representative payee, receives and uses SSI in the best interest of and on behalf of the child, which includes the cost of care for the child in placement. If a child is collecting SSI at the time of placement, the DCYF Management and Budget Office is alerted so that change of representative payee, if appropriate, can be initiated.

Related Procedure

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Related Policy

Retirement, Survivors, Disability Insurance (RSDI)
Veteran Administration Benefits

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Procedure from Policy 1000.0005: Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

A. If a child is blind and/or disabled and meets the age and income criteria identified below, he/she may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

1. Disability – The child suffers from
   a. A medically determinable physical or mental condition of a severity to impair his/her daily functioning and ability to participate and benefit from activities at an age appropriate level.
   b. A physical or mental impairment that results from anatomical, physiological or psychological abnormalities which are demonstrable by medically acceptable clinical and laboratory diagnostic techniques.
   c. An impairment of a severity such that he/she functions at half the level expected at his/her chronological age. Consideration is also given to such factors as age, education and work experience (if applicable).
   d. One of the impairment(s) identified by the Social Security Administration, such as musculo-skeletal, neurological, respiratory, cardiovascular, mental disorders or
   e. From an impairment that is expected to last for a continuous period of not less than twelve (12) months and is determined by the Social Security Administration to be the medical equivalent of an identified impairment.
2. The child suffers from blindness, which is defined as central vision acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the use of corrective lens, or a visual field restricted to 20 degrees or less.
3. Income / Assets:
   a. When a child is at home, the parent's income is considered in eligibility determination. When the child is in placement, only the child's personal assets and/or income is considered.
   b. The child can have assets up to $2,000 and remain eligible for SSI. These assets include savings accounts, stocks, bonds, and other valuables. Personal effects or household goods are not considered assets if their total equity value is $2,000 or less. Life insurance policies are not considered assets if their value is $1,500 or less.
   c. A disabled child of a deceased, retired, or disabled parent may continue to receive Retirement, Survivors, Disability Insurance (RSDI), based on SSI eligibility, as provided in DCYF Policy 1000.0010, Retirement, Survivors, Disability Insurance (RSDI). RSDI Benefits may change the amount of SSI a child receives.
   d. A child receiving SSI, who is subsequently adopted, does not automatically continue to be eligible. The adoptive parents' income and assets must be considered in determining eligibility. A hard-to-place child, however, may be eligible for adoption subsidy.
4. A child who is a resident of a public institution does not receive full benefits.
   a. The Social Security Administration defines a public institution as one operated by or under the direct or indirect administrative control of the federal, state, county or city government.
   b. The Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF), considers the Rhode Island Training School, institutions operated by the Department of Behavioral Healthcare, Developmental Disabilities and Hospitals or by the Department of Corrections to be public institutions.

B. ~~Determination of Eligibility:~~

1. ~~The primary worker identifying a child as a candidate for SSI prepares the information and documentation identified below and forwards it to the Management and Budget Office. This includes:~~
   a. ~~Social Security Number.~~
   b. ~~Certified Birth Certificate verified by INRHODES.~~
   c. ~~Up-to-date evaluation (within 12 months) consisting of medical, psychiatric, psychological examinations, hospital, residential treatment centers, clinic, and/or school evaluations and reports and other appropriate material.~~
2. ~~The Management and Budget Office prepares the SSI forms and submits these together with a copy of the Certified Birth Certificate and updated documentation for review by the Social Security Administration.~~
3. ~~The Disability Determination Unit of the Social Security Administration determines eligibility.~~
4. ~~The Management and Budget Office receives written notice from the Social Security Administration.~~
   a. ~~If the child is determined to be eligible, the benefits are retroactive to the date of application.~~
   b. ~~Medical Assistance is automatically provided for all eligible individuals.~~

C. ~~The DCYF is the child's representative payee.~~

1. ~~The DCYF receives and uses the SSI benefits in the best interests of and on behalf of the child.~~
2. ~~The benefits are applied toward the cost of care for the child in placement in accordance with Social Security Administration policy and procedures.~~

D. ~~Appeal of Denial of Benefits~~

1. ~~The Management and Budget Office sends a copy of the denial of SSI eligibility to the primary worker. The notification is filed in the case record.~~
2. ~~If the primary worker wishes to file an appeal, the Management and Budget Office is notified.~~
3. ~~Management and Budget Office requests that the Social Security Administration District Office file appropriate forms for "Reconsideration" within 60 days of the denial notice.~~
4. ~~The primary worker compiles any available up-to-date medical, psychological, or psychiatric documentation and electronically forwards this information to the Management and Budget Office.~~
5. ~~The reconsideration is forwarded to the Social Security Administration District Office.~~
6. ~~At the appeal hearing the primary worker, DCYF Legal Counsel, court appointed physician, psychologist, or psychiatrist may participate, supervisor or appointee from the Management and Budget Office appear before the Federal Judge.~~
7. ~~If the appeal is denied and the DCYF chooses to pursue further appeal, the Management and Budget Office files according to federal regulations.~~

E. ~~Re-determination of eligibility:~~

1. ~~Continued eligibility is re-determined annually.~~
2. ~~The Management and Budget Office completes the re-determination forms.~~
3. ~~The re-determination form is reviewed by the Social Security Administration.~~

4. ~~The DCYF receives notification in cases of overpayment or when clarification is necessary.~~

F. ~~Disposition of Assets~~

1. ~~The Management and Budget Office updates the balance in the child's Social Security Trust Account as deposits are made and benefits are paid toward the cost of care. If the balance exceeds $2000, funds over that amount must be returned to the Social Security Administration and benefits temporarily cease. The DCYF must then reinstate benefits through the Social Security Administration.~~

2. ~~The primary worker may request additional appropriate expenditures on behalf of the child when a required personal needs item or service is not provided by the child's current placement.~~

   a. ~~Appropriate expenditures may include therapeutic, recreational, or educational activities, devices not covered by medical assistance, home maker, respite care, clothing, bicycle, furniture, or any other purchases for the personal use of the child.~~

   b. ~~Appropriate expenditures may be made through the use of DCYF Form 207/SSA Spend Down Request.~~

G. ~~When an SSI eligible child is placed in a purchase of service substitute care or returns from such a placement, the primary worker notifies the Management and Budget Office.~~

H. ~~Transfer of Payment:~~

1. ~~The INRHODES system identifies a child who receives SSI and enters a DCYF placement.~~

2. ~~When a child in placement returns home:~~

   a. ~~The primary worker advises the parent~~

      i. ~~To make application with the Social Security Administration to become representative payee.~~

      ii. ~~To include the DCYF Form 206 SSA Trust Reunification/Closure Notice in their application to the Social Security Administration.~~

      iii. ~~Of the asset test (paragraph A 3, above) which can affect the amount of funds the child receives.~~

   b. ~~The Department returns any funds to the Social Security Administration which determines the proper payee for future benefits.~~