Social Security Card Replacement Process

In-person: Unfortunately, at this time in-person applications are not an option. COVID Office closures continue. As of 7/2/21, Social Security offices remain closed to the public and all applications for replacement SS cards continues to be done by telephone, online, and mail.

Online: The easiest and most time-efficient way to order a replacement Social Security card is to create an online account, which can be done through this link: Social Security (ssa.gov)

In order to create an online account, the SSA requires that an individual be at least 18 years old, have an assigned Social Security number, and have a well-established credit history (i.e., previous address on file, open or closed credit card accounts; auto, home, or school loans, etc.). ***Unfortunately, many of the clients that we work with do not have this credit history and creating an online account will not be an option.**

Mail: It is likely that for most of our clients we will be sending in the SS card replacement application and required documentation via mail. **It is highly recommended to conduct all mail transactions via certified mail** What is Certified Mail? (usps.com)   This way all transactions are trackable and documented. Additionally, it is imperative that the client have a secure mailing address to receive mail so that these important documents do not get lost or stolen. If your agency provides clients a secure mailing address, this is often the best option.

Telephone: Many transactions such as address changes, status updates, and general questions can be answered by your local SSA office (which are still maintaining phone operations even though closed due to COVID).**Please note, the wait time to reach a local office by phone can be significantly shorter than calling the general SSA hotline. You can find your local office number here**: Field Office Locator | SSA

Application & Required Documentation:

Application: In order to submit a Social Security replacement application, you and your client will need to first complete the application form found here:Application for Social Security Card (ssa.gov)

It is important to make sure that all information is legible. (This form can be completed online and printed out.) Additionally, the application requires clients to provide their parents' full names. It is best to provide as much accurate information as possible. Please note, inaccurate names and misspellings can cause an application to be rejected. ***You may find it helpful to call your local SS office with your client present to see if the representative can confirm the information on the application matches what the SSA has in their system.** Due to privacy concerns, this can often be a tricky game of confirm or deny, but may save considerable time in the long run by avoiding a rejected application.

Required Documentation:

This is often the most difficult hurdle for caseworkers and their clients. In order to submit an application by mail, clients must include a physical form of identification along with their application (e.g., state ID, health insurance card, or certified copy of a birth certificate). For the full list of acceptable evidence documents, please see "Evidence Documents" on page 2 of the application Application for Social Security Card (ssa.gov)

Our clients are often understandably reluctant to part with these important forms of identification, which underscores the importance of using certified mail during this process to ensure safe delivery. **Caseworkers should also make sure to photocopy all application material and upload relevant documentation to Clarity.** It is also important to communicate to our clients that it generally takes 10-14 business days to get an application approved and the client-supplied identification documents returned by mail.

Alternative Documentation:

Since many of our clients may not have the standard forms of identification on hand to submit along with their application, alternative forms of identification can be submitted. The most accessible alternative documentation for our clients is often a certified copy of a recent medical visit. Medical providers (primary care physicians, clinics, hospitals, etc.) all should have the capacity to print out certified copies documenting a recent visit. **Please note, caseworkers may have to specifically request to have the client's full name and D.O.B. included on the certified copy in order to satisfy the SSA alternative document requirements.** Medical providers should be able to provide a certified copy that identifies the client's full name and D.O.B., yet adheres to PHI/HIPPA guidelines. Nevertheless, caseworkers may find it easiest to work with clinics/providers who are familiar with the document barriers our clients face.

Caseworkers submitting alternative documentation may find it useful to include a cover letter with the application that documents the steps the caseworker and client have taken to obtain standard forms of identification and why they are still facing barriers. Caseworkers should include cellphone contact information on the cover letter, as the SSA office will sometimes reach out during processing if they have any questions.

Lastly, please remember to upload all documents and identification to Clarity during this process, especially the replacement Social Security card when it arrives.

We hope this helps you in assisting your clients with obtaining a Social Security card. If you have any questions or additional tips, please feel free to share.

Thank you!