

Health Care Finance and Administration	Section: General Administrative Procedures and Compliance
Policy Manual Number: 200.015	Chapter: Application for Other Program Benefits

APPLICATION FOR OTHER PROGRAM BENEFITS

Legal Authority: 42 CFR 435.608

1. Policy Statement

As a condition of eligibility, individuals are required to take all necessary steps to obtain benefits to which they are entitled, except for public assistance programs to which the individual is entitled, unless the individual can show good cause for failure to apply. If the individual cannot demonstrate good cause for failure to apply for other benefits, he or she is not eligible for benefits.

2. Definitions

Benefits: Benefits include financial benefits in the form of annuities, pensions, retirement, and disability benefits, including but not limited to:

- Veterans' compensation, pension and Veterans Affairs (VA) contract payments (but not VA benefits or Aid and Attendance benefits);
- Old Age, Survivors and Disability (OASDI) benefits (Social Security);
- Railroad Retirement benefits;
- Unemployment compensation; and
- Workers' Compensation benefits.

Public Assistance: Public Assistance includes Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Families First/Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF).

3. Possible Entitlement Hints

a. Black Lung Benefits

An individual is:

- A coal miner and who is totally disabled due to pneumoconiosis; or
- The dependent spouse, surviving or divorced spouse, or the child (under 18) of an eligible miner (or eligible at death).

b. Railroad Retirement Benefits

The individual or his Financially Responsible Relative (FRR) worked for the railroad or a company closely connected to the railroad, and he or she is at least age 60 or disabled.

c. Social Security Benefits

An individual or his or her FRR is:

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- At least age 62; or
- Disabled based on Social Security criteria; or
- Is a child under 18 of a deceased, retired or disabled worker; or
- Is the child who became disabled before age 22 of a deceased, retired or disabled worker.

d. SSI

An individual who is:

- At least age 65; or
- Disabled or blind based on Social Security criteria; and
- Has monthly income limited to the amount of the current SSI Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) or less, if living in the household of another; and
- Has resources limited to \$2,000 for an individual or \$3,000 for a couple.

e. Veterans' Benefits

An individual who is:

- A veteran of services in the U.S. Armed Forces and discharged under conditions other than dishonorable; or
- A dependent or surviving spouse of a veteran.

f. Workers' Compensation

An individual:

- Injured or disabled on the job; or
- The surviving dependent of a worker who was killed on the job.

4. Good Cause

An individual is considered to have good cause for failure to apply for other benefits if he or she does not have someone available to act on his or her behalf AND he or she cannot apply. Examples of good cause include, but are not limited to, the following:

- The individual is not able to apply for benefits due to his or her own illness (explain that the Social Security Administration (SSA) can have a telephone interview); OR
- The individual applied for benefits at one time, was denied, and he or she remains ineligible for the same reason.

The individual is considered to have good cause for failure to apply if HCFA failed to advise them of the availability of other benefits.

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5. Application of Good Cause Provision

Once good cause has been established, take one of the following actions depending on the circumstances of the case:

a. Hold the Application Pending

If the TennCare Medicaid application is held pending, give the individual a specific deadline for filing an application for other benefits.

If the deadline exceeds the processing time limits and the TennCare Medicaid application becomes overdue, document the case record with an explanation of the reasons the application continues in a pending status. An Eligibility Specialist is not considered at fault in this situation if the case record is well-documented.

If at expiration of the deadline the individual has failed to apply, and does not have good cause for his or her failure to apply, the application is denied.

6. Approve the Application

If the individual is otherwise eligible, approve his or her application for benefits. Inform the applicant that the requirement to apply for other benefits has been temporarily waived, and he or she has an obligation to apply in the future. The time limit for that application and acceptable evidence of application for other benefits must be provided.

Set up a case worker alert to follow up on the individual's application for other benefits, and upload evidence of his or her application for other benefits to the case.

7. Applying the Provision at Redetermination

If all other conditions and eligibility criteria are satisfied, consider the redetermination complete and document the Case Notes with an explanation of the waiver of this requirement. Set up a case worker alert to follow-up on the individual's application for other benefits if the requirement has been temporarily waived.

8. Verification

At application, self-attestation by an individual regarding application for other programs is accepted.