

Aged, Blind and Disabled Manual	Section: Categories of Eligibility
Policy Manual Number: 115.025	Chapter: SSI Cash Recipient

## SSI CASH RECIPIENT

**Legal Authority:** 20 CFR 416.260; 20 CFR 416.903; 20 CFR 416.974; 42 CFR 435.120; Title XVI of the Social Security Act; Tenn. Comp. R. & Regs. 1200-13-20

### 1. The SSI Program and Medicaid Eligibility

The Social Security Act, as amended, established a national program, effective January 1, 1974, to provide Supplemental Security Income (SSI) to individuals who have attained age 65 or are blind or disabled and meet financial requirements. The program is intended to assure a minimum level of income for individuals who are aged, blind, or disabled that have insufficient income and resources to maintain a standard of living at the established federal minimum income level.

Individuals who are eligible for SSI are entitled to Medicaid. SSI eligibility is determined by the Social Security Administration (SSA) in Tennessee. Applications for SSI benefits may be filed at the Social Security office.

TennCare does not conduct an independent evaluation of income and resource eligibility before issuing regular TennCare Medicaid benefits to an SSI recipient.

### 2. Policy Statement

TennCare Medicaid is provided to aged, blind or disabled individuals eligible for SSI under Section 1602 of the Social Security Act. Tennessee residents determined eligible for SSI benefits are automatically enrolled in TennCare Medicaid.

SSI recipients who are enrolled in TennCare Medicaid also receive automatic buy-in for Medicare Parts A & B.

### 3. Date of TennCare Medicaid and SSI Eligibility

TennCare Medicaid coverage for SSI cash recipients begins according to data TennCare receives from the SSA regarding SSI eligibility.

### 4. SSI Benefit and TennCare Medicaid Termination

SSA alerts TennCare when an SSI recipient's SSI payments end. At that time, TennCare will review the enrollee for eligibility in all other categories prior to termination.

**Note:** SSI payments may be suspended for an Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) account owner if his ABLE account balance exceeds \$100,000 or distributions from his ABLE account for housing-related qualified disability expenses (QDEs) are retained past the month of receipt and exceed the SSI resource limit. If the individual's SSI was suspended for no other reason, the ABLE account owner remains eligible for SSI Medicaid.

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## 5. Financial Eligibility Requirements

### a. Income Standard

The SSA uses the Federal Benefit Rate. For 2022 the income standard is:

- i. \$841 for an individual; or
- ii. \$1,261 for a couple.

### b. Resource Test

Resource limits used by the SSA are:

- i. \$2,000 for an individual; or
- ii. \$3,000 for a couple.

## 6. Additional Criteria for TennCare Medicaid Coverage

As a condition of receiving TennCare Medicaid coverage, SSI cash recipients are subject to the following additional requirements:

### a. Cooperation with Third Party Liability

SSI cash recipients must provide TennCare with any and all information necessary to obtain medical support or payment including, but not limited to, names of parties responsible for payment, address, and policy, account or claim numbers. See *Assignment of Third Party Medical Support* policy.

### b. Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Requirements

SSI recipients who are requesting LTSS, either in a nursing facility or through Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), must have an approved Preadmission Evaluation (PAE) or meet continuous confinement requirements. In addition, SSI recipients requesting LTSS in a nursing facility must complete a resource assessment and have asset transfers made within the look back period evaluated. In order to comply with the resource assessment requirements, SSI cash recipients seeking LTSS may be required to submit additional information to TennCare.

## 7. Cluster Daniels and SSI Terminations SSI Medicaid Only

SSI Medicaid Only recipients, also known as the Cluster Daniels individuals, are those individuals that remain eligible for TennCare Medicaid because they received a minimum of one SSI check in Tennessee since November 1987 and had their SSI terminated while a resident of Tennessee. The Daniels injunction was lifted on January 8, 2009 and reverification of this group of enrollees began in

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June 2009. Any SSI Medicaid Only recipients who have not yet been processed are reviewed for eligibility in open categories of Medicaid.

## **8. SSI Cash Recipient Enrollment Procedure**

TennCare receives a file directly from the SSA that contains all SSI eligibility determinations. TennCare automatically loads the State Data Exchange (SDX) file to TEDS to enroll SSI cash recipients in TennCare Medicaid.

SDX data may also be used as needed for verification of SSI benefit information.

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