

DSS ADMINISTRATIVE LETTER NO. ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE 18-2002

(Work First)

TO: County Directors of Social Services

ATTENTION: Work First Supervisors

Program Integrity Supervisors

DATE: November 21, 2002

RE: Social Security Cost-of-Living Increase for 2003

EFFECTIVE: January 1, 2003

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of this letter is to outline procedures for implementing the 2003 Social Security cost-of-living increase for Work First cases only.

Effective January 1, 2003, recipients of Social Security (RSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) will receive a 1.4% cost-of-living increase. In the past, these increases were budgeted in Work First cases via a State implemented mass change. The State will **not** conduct this mass change; therefore, counties will be required to add this increase in income at the household's first change in situation, application, or review on or after January 1, 2003.

II. IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES

A. Apply this policy to the next review, application, or change in situation on or after January 1, 2003. Do not key any new SSA/SSI increases prior to January 1, 2003, to avoid interference with the mass change that will be implemented in FSIS. (See D. Below.)

B. Verify the new amount of the household's SSA/SSI payments in SDX/BENDEX.

C. When the increase in SSA/SSI income is added at the household's first change in situation, application or review, no overpayment will exist for the prior months. If the increased income is not included in that first change in situation, application, or review, any overpayment that occurs in the following months is a county responsible overpayment and should not be charged to the household.

D. These instructions apply only to the Work First benefit payment and not the food stamp portion of the case. Please note that the food stamp portion of Automated Food Stamp cases will be updated to include the new increase of income during the mass change that is being completed for all food stamp cases through the FSIS System. It is important to

remember that **any** changes keyed in EIS after December 19, 2002, will overlay the previous information from FSIS with what is on the Automated Food Stamp and EIS screens and will revert to the old income amount. The new income amount must be entered at the first change in situation, i.e., changed income, address changes, district number changes, etc., application, or review so the system will not revert to the old SSA and/or SSI amounts.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact your Work First Representative.

Sincerely,

Wilbert R. Morris, Chief

Economic Independence Section

SJB/bh