

18.5 SYSTEMATIC ALIEN VERIFICATION OF ENTITLEMENT (SAVE) AND 40 QUALIFYING QUARTERS OF COVERAGE

A. SYSTEMATIC ALIEN VERIFICATION OF ENTITLEMENT (SAVE)

At the time of application, all individuals who apply for benefits are required to declare in writing whether they are citizens or nationals of the United States or aliens. This is accomplished by the completion of the Declaration of Citizenship/Alienage.

NOTE: If the applicant satisfies the eligibility requirements for the benefits requested and, if the applicant provides documentation of his status as a qualified alien and completes the written declaration, under penalty of perjury, that he is a qualified alien, the applicants eligibility for benefits must not be delayed, denied, reduced or terminated under the program on the basis of the applicant's immigration status during the period of time it takes to verify his or her immigration status through the SAVE verification request to the Division of Family Assistance (DFA).

If the applicant is an alien, he must present original documentation of alien registration. Aliens without documentation must be referred to the INS Office in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

NOTE: Acceptable verification may consist of the applicant or DFA submitting a request to a Federal agency for verification of information, which bears on the status of the alien. The individual must be certified pending the results of the investigation for up to six months from the date of the original request for verification.

1. Determining Alien Eligibility

The Worker should make every attempt to determine the clients benefit eligibility prior to a request for alien status verification.

2. Verified Immigration Status

Immigration status must be verified for WV WORKS, **SNAP** benefits, and Medicaid benefits. If any member of the household is an alien, a copy of the front and back of the Immigration identification documentation must be forwarded to the SAVE Coordinator.

The documentation is verified by INS through automated or manual methods. All INS responses are sent to the requesting Worker with information regarding alien's eligibility for benefits.

However, when the automated responses reads “Initiate Secondary Verification” an e-mail is sent to the Worker advising that an additional request has been sent for information.

When the response is received from SAVE the information will be forwarded to the Worker.

B. 40 QUALIFYING QUARTERS OF COVERAGE

Only certain excepted classes of qualified aliens are eligible for **SNAP** benefits. This exception includes aliens who are lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence and who have worked or can be credited with 40 Qualifying Quarters. Under certain conditions the Qualifying Quarters of parents or spouses can be added to the alien’s record to achieve the needed 40 Qualifying Quarters. Each noncitizen immigrant in the household is considered an applicant. Qualifying Quarters earned after December 31, 1996, cannot be counted if the noncitizen spouse or parent received certain federal means-tested public benefits during the period for which the Qualifying Quarters were credited.

NOTE: A Consent of Release of Information from Social Security number holders other than the applicant must be obtained.

1. Determining The Number Of Qualifying Quarters

a. Individuals Whose Qualifying Quarters Are Used

The Worker must determine which individuals with SSNs can be included in the Qualifying Quarters count. The following are individuals and the conditions under which their Qualifying Quarters are counted:

- The applicant: Always use his Qualifying Quarters;
- The applicant’s natural parents, unless the child was adopted by others, consider only quarters earned from the time of birth through the calendar quarter the applicant attains age 18.
- The applicant’s adoptive parents, but consider only quarters earned from time of birth through the calendar quarter the applicant attains age 18;
- The applicant’s stepparent if the step relationship still exists. Death of the stepparent does not terminate the relationship. Consider quarters earned only while the relationship was in existence and through the calendar quarter the applicant attains age 18;

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