

APPENDIX B**RSDI/SSI INCREASES 2009**

In January 2009, SSI and RSDI recipients received a cost-of-living increase of 5.8%. The new maximum payment levels for SSI are:

Single - \$674 Couple - \$1,011

The Medicare premium amount is \$96.40, unchanged from 2008.

A. THE RSDI/SSI COLA UPDATE PROCESS

The annual Cost of Living (COLA) Mass Change occurred January 30, 2009 for most Assistance Groups (AGs) in RAPIDS that have RSDI and/or SSI entered on AFUI or Medicare enrollment on AFMD. Reports which identify individuals affected by the COLA update became available on MOBIUS February 2, 2009. Manual updates must be completed by February deadline, effective March 2009. Advance notice requirements apply.

For the automatic update to occur, the Social Security Number (SSN) in RAPIDS must match the SSN in the Social Security Administration file. In addition, the individual's RSDI and/or SSI income must have been entered on AFUI in RAPIDS. The automatic update is effective March 2009.

The automatic update does not occur if the income was entered, but end-dated prior to March 2009. It also does not occur if the begin date for RSDI and/or SSI income on AFUI is later than February 2009.

NOTE: The automatic update does not occur if the case is due for review. If the AG is due for a PR review, the automatic update of income and Medicare information does occur, but eligibility is not run. This prevents closure before the client has an opportunity to complete the PR review. Eligibility must be run to apply the updated income.

Two messages on the WRMC192A – Mass Change Exception Listing identify cases skipped when an AG is due for a review by PR and include:

- PR Review Due (Case has a Review Date); and
- PR Review Due (Case Has No Review Date).

For QMB, SLIMB, and QI AG's, functionality on AFUI prevents the inappropriate closure and denial of these AG's due to the COLA increase. RAPIDS uses the begin MM/YY of AFUI to determine whether to enter a COLA disregard amount on the AFUI screen for Social Security income (RSDI) using a calculation based on the percentage of the COLA increase, unless a COLA Disregard Amount other than zero is entered manually. For procedures regarding Pickle AG's see item B,9.

Any AG which becomes ineligible for a benefit because of the update will not receive that benefit after February **2009**. The appropriate notice is mailed. Workers must evaluate Medicaid AG's that fail for all other coverage groups. These AG's appear on WRMC182A - Assistance Groups Affected by Mass Change, which is described in item B,3.

If the current benefit is not confirmed, and there is no previously confirmed passing benefit for the AG, the individual's information is not updated and the case is skipped by Mass Change. These AG's are shown on WRMC182U – Mass Changes Pending AG Listing.

When the SSA file indicates the customer is receiving RSDI or SSI and the amount is zero, the information in RAPIDS is not updated. This amount may not be accurate by the time of the COLA Mass Change and an error message displays this information on the COLA Match Report. The actual SSA benefit amount can be determined on SOLQ.

The WRMC 206A COLA Match Report – Match Result, contains the same information as the WRMC202A - RSDI/SSI/Medicare COLA Match Report – Last Name. On the 206A, the individuals within a Worker's caseload are sorted by match result message. On the 202A, the individuals within a Worker's caseload are sorted by last name. By using the 206A, Workers can identify particular match results which require immediate attention.

Mass Change report, WRMC216A - Post Mass Change Participation Status Report, identifies individuals whose participation status changed as a result of the Mass Change. Workers must determine if the change is valid. An example of a valid change is an ABAWD who enters a new 36-month tracking period and is added to an ongoing Food Stamp AG.

B. REPORTS AND WORKER ACTION

Reports identifying individuals who have been affected by the COLA update became available on MOBIUS **February 2, 2009**. Manual updates must be completed by February deadline, effective March **2009**.

The Case Maintenance Process

Successfully Updated. A separate match result appears for updated information. Only the Medicare Part B premium information is updated by the COLA Mass Change.

- If there is a Medicare premium amount other than zero on AFMD and no Medicare amount on the COLA tape, one entry for the individual is on the Match Report. The match result is Person is Not Part B Entitled. To prevent possible disruption of Buy-In, the Medicare information on AFMD is not updated. Workers must determine if a change in the Medicare information is needed.
- If there is a Medicare premium amount of zero on AFMD and the COLA tape shows the individual is eligible for Medicare, the match result for the first entry is Person is Part B Entitled. The match result for the second entry is Record Successfully Updated.
- If the Medicare Payer is 510 on AFMD and Self on the COLA tape, to prevent disruption of the Buy-In process, the payer is not updated on AFMD. The match result displayed is COLA Record Has Payer As Self. Otherwise, the payer is updated and the match result for the payer update is Updated Part B Payer.
- When the RSDI/SSI/Medicare premium amount(s) in RAPIDS reflects the same amount as listed on the COLA tape, and the begin date in RAPIDS is prior to March **2009**, the match result is Record Successfully Updated. When this occurs, the same amount(s) listed in both the SSA and RAPIDS columns is seen and no action is necessary.
- The match result NO COLA Found for RSDI and No COLA Found For SSI indicates no benefit information was found for this individual's SSN on the Social Security Administration's tape, even though RSDI and/or SSI was entered by the Worker on AFUI. If the client's Social Security Number is correct, DXSA must be checked to see if SSA benefits received are based on another person's SSN.

The Case Maintenance Process

- Other entries in the match results column may require explanation. A guide of commonly found match result notations is found in item C below.

2. Report WRMC192A - Mass Change Exception Listing

This report lists the AG's with RSDI and/or SSI on AFUI, that were skipped in the eligibility run of mass change. The column titled Exception Description contains information about why the update did not occur. AG's with manual overrides and pending cases appear on the report and require evaluation. Those which did not update due to pending status do not appear on the COLA Match Report and require independent verification of income.

3. Report WRMC182A - Assistance Groups Affected by Mass Change

This report contains detailed information about AGs on which a mass change COLA update occurred and on which ED/BC was successfully run. This printout contains information by case, rather than by individual. Most of the columns are self-explanatory. The column titled Action Indicator includes one of the following: INC (Increase), DEC (Decrease) and CLO (Closure). If the column is blank, no change in benefits occurred.

NOTE: A special report is provided to notify the Long Term Care Unit of changes in nursing home contributions due to the COLA Mass Change.

4. Report WRMC 182U - Assistance Groups Pending After Mass Change

This report contains detailed information about all AGs which were in pending status before the COLA Mass Change and remain pending. Mass Change functionality sends only the previously-confirmed AG through the ED/BC process. When a case contains an AG with no previous confirmations, the case is skipped by Mass Change.

5. Report WRMC 212A - Individuals Changed from State Payer to Self

This report was discontinued. If AFMD indicates the State is paying the premium, the message, COLA Record has Payer as Self, is displayed on the COLA Match Report.