

APPENDIX C**SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR RSDI/SSI COLA INCREASES**

Recipients of federal benefits such as RSDI, SSI, Black Lung or VA Benefits may receive periodic cost-of-living (COLA) increases. RSDI and SSI increases are handled in accordance with instructions in Appendix B of this Chapter. All other federal benefit cost-of-living increases are treated as any other change, except that the client is not required to report the change nor is repayment required when the client fails to do so.

NOTE: SOLQ may display the updated SSI and RSDI amounts based on the COLA at the end of the current year. See Section 3.3.C. The Worker must determine the correct income to use for any benefits with eligibility beginning prior to the January. This applies to all programs, including LIEAP.

The following provides procedures for use of RSDI and SSI COLA information for applicants and recipients.

A. APPLICANTS

For applications with eligibility beginning in November or December, the Worker must use the current year's amount and allow the RAPIDS Mass Change to update the income. The Worker must not enter an anticipated income amount for January's benefits.

EXAMPLE: An application for SNAP benefits is made on December 15, 2008. The client reports his SSI is \$637 for December and \$674 for January. The Worker enters \$637 as the client's income and does not code RAPIDS to anticipate the \$674 for January's benefits. He records this in case comments. The SSI is updated when the RAPIDS mass change occurs.

For applications with eligibility beginning in January, the Worker must use the new amount of SSI and/or RSDI which is effective in January and not wait for the RAPIDS COLA mass change to update the income.

EXAMPLE: An application for Medicaid is made on January 5, 2009. The client reports his RSDI is currently \$674. The Worker must use this amount in determining his eligibility for Medicaid.

B. RECIPIENTS

The Worker must not act on reported income changes due solely to an SSI and/or RSDI COLA. These changes are made during the RAPIDS Mass Change or shown on one of the COLA Exception Reports.

EXAMPLE: A WV WORKS recipient reports in January, prior to the RAPIDS COLA mass change, that his RSDI amount has increased. The Worker notes this in case comments, but does not change the income. The income is updated when the RAPIDS COLA mass change occurs.

For redeterminations completed prior to the RAPIDS Mass Change, the Worker must use the previous amount, even if the redetermination is completed in January. For redeterminations completed in the month before the RAPIDS COLA mass change, use the new amount.

EXAMPLE: A SNAP recipient completes a redetermination in January. The RAPIDS COLA mass change is scheduled to occur in March, effective April. He reports that his SSI increased in January. The Worker notes this in case comments, but completes the redetermination using the previous year's amount of SSI income. The SSI income is updated during the RAPIDS COLA mass change.

EXAMPLE: A redetermination for SNAP benefits is completed in March and the RAPIDS COLA mass change is scheduled to occur in March, effective for April benefits. The Worker must use the new SSI/RSDI amount, since the change is effective for April benefits.

C. CHANGES NOT RELATED TO COLA

Changes in RSDI and SSI for applicants and recipients which are not related to the COLA, must be acted on according to the program of assistance. The RAPIDS mass change will not automatically update these AGs. See the program specific sections in this Chapter and Section 3.3 for data exchange.

EXAMPLE: A client reports on December 2nd that his SSI is ending that month and he will not receive any SSI income in January. The Worker takes action to update his January benefits based on this change.

EXAMPLE: A client reports on January 9th that her SSI is being reduced effective February due to an error made by SSA not related to the COLA. The Worker takes action to update her February benefits based on this change.