

	West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources				
	MANUAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PROCEDURES				
Section	Administration	Date	June 7, 2006	Procedure #	A-19
Subject	Social security Numbers Required for Licenses			Page	1 of 1

The purpose of this memorandum is to comply with mandates of the federal Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, commonly known as the Welfare Reform Law. This Law requires Social Security Numbers of applicants for professional and occupational licenses.

Chapter 16, Article 1, Section 18a, of the West Virginia Code used to require the SSN of applicants for any license, permit, certificate of registration, or registration issued under Chapter 16. Article 1 of the State Code was modified and Section 18a was stricken. The Secretary's authority to collect Social Security Numbers was moved to Section 3d of Article 1. With this move there was a change in the language from "...shall require every applicant...to place his social security number on the application," to "may require" as follows:

"Within the limits of applicable federal law, the secretary may require every applicant for a license, permit, certificate of registration, or registration under this chapter to place his or her social security number on the application.

In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974, unless required by federal law, state and local government cannot deny an individual any right, benefit, or privilege provided by law because of their refusal to disclose their SSN. Therefore, it is recommended that Social Security Numbers no longer be collected for permits, and certainly that no permit be denied because of an applicant's refusal to provide their SSN.

It remains permissible to request a SSN of an applicant for a permit, however the applicant must be provided notice that indicates whether the disclosure is mandatory or voluntary, by what statutory or other authority such number is solicited, and what uses will be made of it.

Social Security Numbers will still be required for all professional and occupational licenses: installers, body piercers, and sanitarian registrations.

Should you have any questions regarding the provisions of these laws, please contact the Public Health Sanitation Division at 558-2981.

References Personal Responsibility & Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
 Privacy Act of 1974
 [§ 16-1-3\(d\)](#)

History Replaces A-19 dated March 9, 1998

Attachments