



Food and
Nutrition
Service

Retailer Policy and Management Division, SNAP
RPMD Policy Memorandum 2020-11

1320
Braddock
Place
Alexandria
VA 22314

Subject: **Retailer Eligibility- Social Security Number (SSN)**

Legislation: Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 405(c)(2)(C)

Regulations: [7 CFR 278.1\(b\)\(5\)](#)

Supersedes: FSP-BRD Policy Memorandum 01-03, “Verification of Social Security Numbers” and June 2003 “Clarification of Retailer Personal Identification Numbers”

Implementation: Upon Publication

OVERVIEW: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations at 7 CFR 278.1(b)(5) provide that the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) must collect certain taxpayer identification numbers of retailers who apply to participate in SNAP. Acceptable taxpayer identification numbers include both a Social Security Number (SSN) and any Employer Identification Number (EIN) assigned to the firm by the Internal Revenue Service. An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) may be used in lieu of a SSN, but not an EIN. SSNs are used to establish identity, for program compliance, and for debt collection purposes. This memorandum describes acceptable SSN documentation as well as alternative identification for certain non-citizens.

CLARIFICATION: Applicant retailers must provide SSNs with corresponding documentation when applying for SNAP authorization or reauthorization, or an ITIN, when applicable as follows:

SSN documentation:

Acceptable documentation of SSNs include one of the following:

- SSN card (a signature on the card is not required);
- Tax forms; or
- Official correspondence verifying the SSN from the Social Security Administration (SSA).

Individual Taxpayer Identification Numbers (ITINs):

Certain non-citizens, such as those who reside in another country and own businesses in the U.S., are not eligible to obtain SSNs. However, they must obtain an ITIN for tax purposes. FNS accepts ITINs in lieu of SSNs for certain non-citizens.

Failure to Provide an SSN or ITIN:

If an applicant firm owner(s) does not provide a SSN or an ITIN, FNS shall withdraw the application as incomplete. Incomplete applications are not subject to the 6-month waiting period to reapply.

If FNS determines during the reauthorization process that an owner does not have an SSN or an ITIN and refuses to obtain one, FNS shall withdraw the authorization of the owner.

Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to: SM.FN.RPMDHQ-WEB@usda.gov.

**SHELLY
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Retailer Policy and Management Division
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