

Social Security is Changing the Way SSNs are Issued

Were you aware that the first three digits of the Social Security Number (SSN) had a geographical significance? Since the inception of SSNs, the first three digits were determined by the Zip Code of the mailing address shown on the application for an SSN -- but this is slated to change in 2011. In an effort to increase the number of SSNs available for use by the Social Security Administration (SSA) and in order to help reduce identity theft, SSA plans to change the methodology by which SSNs are issued. In June 2011, SSA will begin to issue SSNs randomly, regardless of the address on the application. As a result, SSA will have the ability to continue to issue SSNs in all areas of the country for many more years without having to make additional changes.

Your computer systems or information technology staff may need to revise their programs to account for these changes.

What will change?

- Anticipated implementation date is June 2011.
- SSA will no longer issue SSNs based on geography.
- SSA will issue SSNs with the number "8" in position 1.
- SSA will include all possible SSNs with the number "7" in position 1. Currently, SSNs that start with "7" are for certain states and other specific groups.
- Effective June 2011, SSA will no longer update the High Group List. SSA offers verification services that are more accurate than using the High Group List.

What will not change?

- SSA will not issue SSNs beginning with the number "9".
- SSA will not issue SSNs beginning with the number "666" in positions 1 – 3.
- SSA will not issue SSNs beginning with the number "000" in positions 1 – 3.
- SSA will not issue SSNs with the number "00" in positions 4 – 5.
- SSA will not issue SSNs with the number "0000" in positions 6 – 9.

Need More Information:

In September 2010, we conducted several conference calls to provide more information and answer questions regarding this new process. You can also submit your inquiry to our SSN Randomization Mailbox. More information is also available in our resource links below.

Resources

Information and Instructions to Verify Social Security Numbers Online

www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/ssnv.htm#overview

Social Security Number Allocations

www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/stateweb.htm

Social Security Number Randomization

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/employer/randomization.html>

Have questions about these links? E-mail us at ssn.randomization@ssa.gov