DEPARTMENT OF BENEFIT PAYMENTS
744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

February 26, 1976

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 76-42

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: AFDC - SSI/SSP REFERRAL POLICY

REFERENCE:

This letter is to clarify referral procedures for those AFDC cases which include a disabled or blind child, or adult relative caretakers who are potentially eligible for SSI/SSP payments. These procedures do not apply to BHI recipients. A separate letter clarifying procedures for BHI cases will follow.

General Provisions

According to federal policy, individuals who qualify for both the SSI/SSP and AFDC are to be given their choice of programs. The county welfare department should, therefore, attempt to identify all potentially eligible SSI/SSP children, or their needy adult caretakers, and assist them in making this choice. This can be done at the time of application or redetermination. A complete canvassing of current AFDC recipients is not required.

Procedures

At the time of the application or redetermination interview, the county should attempt to identify any blind or disabled family members who appear to meet one of the following SSA criteria:

Blindness: Visual acuity of the individual is 20/200 or less or visual fields are limited to 20 degrees.

Disability: The individual is unable to engage in substantial gainful activity because of a medically determinable physical or mental impairment which has lasted or can be expected to last at least 12 consecutive months. In identifying disabled children under age 18, the severity of the impairment should be considered in relation to its limiting effect on the child's normal growth and/or development and constitute more than a slight departure from normal for a lengthy period of time.

If a family member appears to meet either of these criteria, the county should then advise the individual, or the adult caretaker, of the effect of SSI/SSP upon total benefits under the AFDC Program. Consideration should be given to both the cash grant and to adjunct benefits, such as the parent's Medi-Cal linkage under AFDC. The county should encourage application for SSI/SSP if it appears advantageous to the recipient.

The following schedule indicates the current benefit levels under SSI/SSP. Since the income of an ineligible spouse or parent(s) who is an AFDC recipient will not be deemed to the SSI/SSP applicant, the county can generally assume that in the absence of any individual income these payment amounts would be granted:

Eligible Individual	Benefit Level
Aged or Disabled	$259
Blind	292
Disabled Minor under 18	222

It will usually be advantageous to the recipient to apply for SSI/SSP benefits if the AFDC family unit includes more than one child or one child with an SSI eligible parent. The county should exercise caution, however, in referring cases that involve one parent and a single blind or disabled child. Currently a parent with one child would receive a maximum of $237 in AFDC benefits. In comparison, benefits under SSI/SSP would total $222 for a disabled child living with a parent or guardian and $292 for a blind child. However, the parent would retain noncategorical linking to Medi-Cal with no liability only if his or her personal countable income is less than $155.

Referral to SSA

If the applicant elects to apply for SSI/SSP, the county shall make a referral by mailing two copies of Form SSA 1610 to the local SSA DO, noting the purpose of the referral. The county should also note on the form the recipient's incremental share of the AFDC grant (the dollar difference between including the individual in and excluding the individual from the FBU, less the individual's income), since that amount will be considered income by SSA. The county should document the referral by retaining one copy of the completed SSA 1610 in their files.

Application for SSI/SSP by Referral

When the applicant or recipient of AFDC contacts his local SSA office, an application will be taken and the claim processed. SSA will notify the county of the approval or denial of the SSI/SSP application by returning the second copy of the SSA 1610 with the appropriate notation. The county will also be advised at that time of the date the SSI eligible should receive his initial payment. The county will continue AFDC payments to the SSI/SSP eligible until the county is notified of the receipt of the initial payment from SSA.

Application for SSI/SSP Without Referral

An AFDC recipient may apply for SSI/SSP without prior consultation with the county. In such a case, SSA will accept an application and, assuming the applicant identifies himself as an AFDC recipient, will send Form SSA 1610 to the county requesting immediately the above grant information. SSA will then determine the amount of the SSI/SSP grant, taking into account the AFDC income.

Recomputing the AFDC Grant Amount

The recipient should be instructed to notify the county immediately when he/she receives the initial SSI/SSP payment. Upon this notification, the county will recompute the AFDC budget (effective the month of receipt) excluding the SSI/SSP eligible family member. In redetermining the AFDC grant amount, all of the SSI/SSP eligible's income will be excluded since it was taken into consideration when computing the SSI/SSP payment amount. The county shall initiate a Form SSA 1610 informing SSA of the recomputation and the actual payment reduction date. SSA will then adjust the SSI/SSP as necessary.

Any questions regarding this letter should be directed to the AFDC Program Management Branch, (916) 445-4458, or Adult Program Management Branch, (916) 445-0813, as appropriate.

Sincerely,

Kyle S. McKinsey

KYLE S. McKINSEY
Deputy Director

cc: CWDA