



Social Security is Changing the Way Social Security Numbers 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 in 1936, the first three digits were determined by the state 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 of SSN Randomization 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 issue SSNs with the number “7” in position 1 to the general population. These are currently reserved for people in the Railroad Retirement system and people applying for SSNs from outside the country.
- Effective June 2011, SSA will no longer update the High Group List, which reflects the highest group number (positions 4-5) of SSNs issued within each geographical area number (positions 1-3). SSA offers verification services (see below) 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.

For More Information:

In September 2010, SSA will conduct conference calls to provide more information and answer questions regarding this new process. Please e-mail Irene.C.Saccoccio@ssa.gov to participate in one of these calls. 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

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