



Department of Health

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HOWARD A. ZUCKER, M.D., J.D.
Commissioner

SALLY DRESLIN, M.S., R.N.
Executive Deputy Commissioner

December 3, 2018

DAL: DAL 18-26
Subject: SSI Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA)

Dear Adult Care Facility Operator/Administrator:

The purpose of this letter is to inform Operators/Administrators of adult homes and enriched housing programs of impending increases in the 2019 Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Safety Net benefits provided to residents of such facilities as a result of the 2.8% federal cost of living increases scheduled for January 1, 2019.

Chapter 59 of the Laws of 2018 authorized a pass through of the January 1, 2019 cost of living increases to SSI recipients. The January 1, 2019 increases will result in increases of \$21.00 per month for individuals and \$42.00 per month for couples. The law also requires that SSI residents receive a \$6.00 increase in their Personal Needs Allowance, effective January 1, 2019.

Benefit changes will be effective January 1, 2019 and paid monthly as described below:

<u>Status</u>	<u>SSI Income Only*</u>	<u>SSI Income Plus Social Security or other unearned Income not counted by Social Security</u>
Individuals	\$1,465.00	\$1,485.00
Couples	\$2,930.00	\$2,950.00

*Includes Federal and State portions

Adult Home and Enriched Housing Program residents who receive SSI benefits will also be entitled to receive \$204.00 per month as a Personal Needs Allowance in 2019.

Residents who receive Safety Net payments from local Departments of Social Services also will receive the \$1,465 per month as outlined above, which includes \$1,261 for cost of care and \$204 for the resident's Personal Needs Allowance.

Enclosed is a notice for residents who receive SSI. The notice describes the changes in SSI which go into effect on January 1, 2019. The notice is to be conspicuously posted where it is accessible to residents. Recommended places for posting are residence bulletin boards, next to the activities schedule and/or next to the daily menu. You should also make copies for residents who would like to have a copy of the notice. We will not be mailing individual copies to the residents receiving SSI in your facility.

If you intend to increase the rate you charge residents, you are required to give residents a written notice specifying the new rate at least 30 days prior to the date of the increase. In addition, Assisted Living Residences (ALRs) must provide 45 days' notice before increasing the rate for residents who receive SSI. The operator may increase the rate with less than the 30-day notice (45 days for ALRs) if the resident voluntarily agrees to such a rate increase in writing. In either case, you are required to amend the admission/residency agreement. In addition, you are required to offer eligible residents, in writing, an opportunity to place Personal Needs Allowance funds in a facility maintained account, if they do not already have a facility maintained account for Personal Needs Allowance.

The SSI and Safety Net Assistance increases are effective January 1, 2019 and will be included in regular SSI and Safety Net Assistance checks beginning with the January SSI check. SSI recipients with questions about their SSI benefits should contact the Social Security Administration by calling the national toll-free hotline at 1 (800) 772-1213 or by contacting their local Social Security Office in person or by phone.

Please be advised that this letter and attachments will be available on the Department's website at:

https://www.health.ny.gov/facilities/adult_care/dear_administrator_letters/

If you have any questions about the posting of this notice, please contact the Department's Regional Office representative in your area as listed on the enclosed notice.

Sincerely,

Valerie A. Deetz, Director
Division of Adult Care Facilities and
Assisted Living Surveillance

Enclosures

NOTICE

TO: Residents of Adult Homes and Enriched Housing Programs who are eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Effective January 1, 2019 the benefits for a resident eligible for SSI will be increased. For individual residents, the total increase will be \$21 per month. For couples, the total increase is \$42 per month.

The law increases the required amount of your personal needs allowance by \$6.00 per month.

Residents who receive SSI are entitled to receive at least \$204 per month as a Personal Needs Allowance. The Personal Needs Allowance is money which you may use for personal items such as clothing, magazines, etc.

The following chart shows the new benefit amount effective January 1, 2019 for residents receiving SSI. The increases will be included in regular SSI checks beginning with the January 2019 SSI check.

New SSI Benefit Amounts

<u>Status</u>	<u>SSI Income Only*</u>	<u>SSI Income Plus Social Security or other unearned Income not counted by Social Security</u>
Individuals	\$1,465.00	\$1,485.00
Couples	\$2,930.00	\$2,950.00

*Includes Federal and State portions

Admission Agreement Changes

The operator of the facility where you live may increase the rate you are charged effective January 1, 2019. In order to do this, the operator is required to give you at least 30 days' written notice (about amending your admission agreement) prior to the date of the rate change. Assisted Living Residences (ALRs) must provide 45 days' notice before increasing the rate for residents who receive SSI. The operator may increase the rate with less than the 30-day notice (45 days for ALRs) if you voluntarily agree to such a rate increase in writing. Either way, your admission agreement must be amended to reflect this rate increase, and you should receive a copy of this amendment to your admission agreement. If you have questions about

the new SSI benefit amounts or the information contained in this notice, you may contact the Department of Health Regional Office in your area. The phone number and address of each Regional Office are attached to this notice.

REGIONAL OFFICES
ADDRESS AND TELEPHONE LISTING

Adult Care Facility Program Manager
Capital District Regional Office
875 Central Avenue
Albany, NY 12206
Phone: (518) 408-5287

Adult Care Facility Program Manager
Western Regional Office
335 East Main Street, 1st Floor
Rochester, NY 14604
Phone: (585) 423-8185

Adult Care Facility Program Manager
Central New York Regional Office
217 South Salina Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: (315) 477-8472

Adult Care Facility Program Manager
Metropolitan Area Regional Office
90 Church Street
New York, NY 10007
Phone: (212) 417-4440