

Limiting the Use of the Social Security Number in Healthcare. Appendix A: Chronological Order of SSN Legislation

Save to myBoK

1935	The Social Security Act (PL 74-271) is enacted. It did not expressly mention the use of SSNs, but it authorized the creation of some type of record-keeping scheme.
1936-1937	Approximately 30 million applications for SSNs were processed between November 1936 and June 30, 1937.
1943	Executive Order 9397 (3 CFR (1943-1948 Comp.) 283-284) required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All federal components to use the SSN "exclusively" whenever the component found it advisable to set up a new identification system for individuals • The Social Security Board to cooperate with federal uses of the number by issuing and verifying numbers for other federal agencies
1961	The Civil Service Commission adopted the SSN as an official federal employee identifier. Internal Revenue Code Amendments (PL 87-397) required each tax payer to furnish identifying number for tax reporting.
1962	The Internal Revenue Service adopted the SSN as its official tax-payer identification number. The Social Security Administration (SSA) creates the Social Security Death Index (SSDI) as a database of death records created from the SSA's master death file. As of September 2010, it contained the records, including SSNs, of more than 84 million people.
1964	Treasury Department, via internal policy, required buyers of Series H savings bonds to provide their SSNs.
1965	Internal Revenue Amendments (PL 89-384) enacted Medicare. It became necessary for most individuals age 65 and older to have an SSN.
1966	The Veterans Administration began to use the SSN as the hospital admissions number and for patient record keeping.
1969	The Department of Defense adopted the SSN in lieu of the military service number for identifying Armed Forces personnel.

1970	The Bank Records and Foreign Transactions Act (PL 91-508) required all banks, savings and loan associations, credit unions, and brokers/dealers in securities to obtain the SSNs of all of their customers.
1972	<p>Social Security Amendments of 1972 (PL 92-603):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required SSA to issue SSNs to all legally admitted aliens at entry and of anyone receiving or applying for any benefit paid for by federal funds • Required SSA to obtain evidence to establish age, citizenship, or alien status and identity • Authorized SSA to enumerate children at the time they first entered school
1973	Buyers of series E savings bonds are required by the Treasury Department to provide their SSNs.
1975	<p>Social Services Amendments of 1974 (PL 93-647) provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disclosure of an individual's SSN is a condition of eligibility for Aid for Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits; and • Office of Child Support enforcement Parent Locator Service may require disclosure of limited information (including SSN and whereabouts) contained in SSA records.
1976	<p>The Tax Reform Act of 1976 (PL 94-455) included the following amendments to the Social Security Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To allow use by the states of the SSN in the administration of any tax, general public assistance, driver's license, or motor vehicle registration law within their jurisdiction and to authorize the states to require individuals affected by such laws to furnish their SSNs to the states; • To amend section 6109 of the Internal Revenue Code to provide that the SSN be used as the tax identification number (TIN) for all tax purposes. While the Treasury Department had been using the SSN as the TIN by regulation since 1962, this law codified that requirement.
1977	<p>The Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 96-58) required disclosure of SSNs of all household members as a condition of eligibility for participation in the food stamp program.</p> <p>The Carter administration proposed that the Social Security card be one of the authorized documents by which an employer could be assured that a job applicant could work in this country but also stated that the SSN card should not become a national identity document.</p>
1978	SSA required evidence of age, citizenship, and identity of all SSN applicants.
1981	<p>The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1981 (PL 97-35) required the disclosure of the SSNs of all adult members in the household of children applying to the school lunch program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 6 required any federal, state, or local government agency to furnish the name and SSN of prisoners convicted of a felony to the Secretary of HHS to enforce suspension of disability benefits to certain imprisoned felons. <p>The Department of Defense Authorization Act (PL 97-86) required disclosure of the SSNs to the Selective Service System of all individuals required to register for the draft.</p>

1982	The Debt Collection Act (PL 97-365) required that all applicants for loans under any federal loan program furnish their SSNs to the agency supplying the loan.
1983	The Interest and Dividend Tax Compliance Act (PL 98-67) requires SSNs for all interest-bearing accounts and provides a penalty of \$50 for all individuals who fail to furnish a correct TIN (usually the SSN).
1984	<p>The Deficit Reduction Act of 1984 (PL 98-369)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amended the Social Security Act to establish an income and eligibility verification system involving state agencies administering the AFDC, Medicaid, unemployment compensation, food stamp programs, and state programs under a plan approved under title I, X, XIV, or XVI of the act. States were permitted to require the SSN as a condition of eligibility for benefits under any of these programs. • Amended section 6050I of the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) to require that persons engaged in a trade or business file a report (including SSNs) with the IRS for cash transactions over \$10,000. • Amended section 215 of the IRC to authorize the Secretary of HHS to publish regulations that require a spouse paying alimony to furnish IRS with the tax-payer identification number (i.e., the SSN) of the spouse receiving alimony payments.
1986	<p>The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (PL 99-603) provides that the Social Security card may be used to establish the eligibility of a prospective employee for employment.</p> <p>The Tax Reform Act of 1986 (PL 99-514) required individuals filing a tax return due after December 31, 1987, to include the tax-payer identification number-usually the SSN-of each dependent age 5 or older.</p> <p>The Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986 (PL 99-750) authorized the Secretary of Transportation to require the use of the SSN on commercial motor vehicle operators' licenses.</p> <p>Higher Education Amendments of 1986 (PL 99-498) required that student loan applicants submit their SSN as a condition of eligibility.</p>
1987	SSA initiated a demonstration project on August 17 in the state of New Mexico enabling parents to obtain Social Security numbers for their newborn infants automatically when the infant's birth was registered by the state. The program was expanded nationwide in 1989. Currently, all 50 states participate in the program, as well as New York City, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico.

1988	<p>The Housing and Community Development Act of 1987 (PL 100-242) authorized the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to require disclosure of a person's SSN as a condition of eligibility for any HUD program.</p> <p>The Family Support Act of 1988 (PL 100-485)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 125 required, beginning November 1, 1990, a state to obtain the SSNs of the parents when issuing a birth certificate. • Section 704(a) required individuals filing a tax return due after December 31, 1989, to include the tax-payer identification number-usually the SSN-of each dependent age 2 or older. <p>The Technical and Miscellaneous Revenue Act of 1988 (PL 100-647):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authorized a state and/or any blood donation facility to use SSNs to identify blood donors (205(c)(2)(F)). • Required that all title II beneficiaries either have or have applied for an SSN in order to receive benefits. This provision became effective with dates of initial entitlement of June 1989 or later. Beneficiaries who refused enumeration were entitled but placed in suspense.
1989	<p>Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1989 (PL 101-239) required that the National Student Loan Data System include, among other things, the names and SSNs of borrowers.</p> <p>The Child Nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children Reauthorization Act of 1989 (PL 101-147) requires the member of the household who applies for the school lunch program to provide the SSN of the parent of the child for whom the application is made.</p>
1990	<p>The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (PL 101-508)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 8053 required an SSN for eligibility for benefits from the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA). • Section 11112 required that individuals filing a tax return due after December 31, 1991, include the tax-payer identification number-usually the SSN-of each dependent age 1 or older. <p>The Food and Agricultural Resources Act of 1990 (PL 101-624), Section 1735:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required an SSN for the officers of food and retail stores that redeem food stamps. • Provided that SSNs maintained as a result of any law enacted on or after October 1, 1990, will be confidential and may not be disclosed.
1994	<p>The Social Security Independence and Program Improvements Act of 1994 (PL 103-296)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 304 authorized the use of the SSN for jury selection. • Section 314 authorized cross-matching of SSNs and Employer Identification Numbers maintained by the Department of Agriculture with other federal agencies for the purpose of investigating both food stamp fraud and violations of other federal laws. • Section 318 authorized the use of the SSN by the Department of Labor in administration of federal workers' compensation laws.
2002	<p>The 2002 Supplemental Appropriations Act for Further Recovery From and Response to Terrorist Attacks on the United States (PL 107-206)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I, Chapter 11, provides funds to the Department of Transportation to be used for purposes of coordinating driver's license registration and SSN verification.

2004	<p>The Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (PL 108-458)</p> <p>Section 7213:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notwithstanding section 205(r) of the Social Security Act and any agreement entered into thereunder, requires the Commissioner to add death indicators to the Social Security number verification systems used by employers and state agencies issuing driver's licenses and identity cards. The Commissioner may also add death indicators to other verification routines as determined appropriate. The death indicators must be added no later than 18 months after enactment.
2005	<p>The Real ID Act, (PL 109-13) establishes state driver's license and identification security standards, which requires states to confirm with Social Security an SSN for issuance of a driver's license or identity card.</p>

Adapted from the Social Security Administration's "Social Security Number Chronology," available at www.ssa.gov/history/ssn/ssnchron.html.

Article citation:
 AHIMA. "Limiting the Use of the Social Security Number in Healthcare. Appendix A: Chronological Order of SSN Legislation." *Journal of AHIMA* 82, no.6 (June 2011): expanded online version.

Driving the Power of Knowledge

Copyright 2022 by The American Health Information Management Association. All Rights Reserved.