

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT REGULATIONS

In accordance with the provisions of subsection (a) of section 4-168 of the Connecticut General Statutes, notice is hereby given that the Commissioner of Social Services, pursuant to sections 17b-3 and 17b-104 of the Connecticut General Statutes, intends to amend sections 6505 and 6505.05 of the Department of Social Services' Uniform Policy Manual.

Statement of Purpose:

(A) The purpose of the regulation: To require recipients of state supplementation to the Supplemental Security Income Program (State Supplement) who do not reside in rated facilities to receive such benefits by direct deposit into a personal account at a financial institution or an electronic benefit transfer account, with certain limited exceptions for recipients who were born before May 1, 1921, suffer from a mental impairment or live in a disaster area.

(B) The problems, issues or circumstances that the regulation proposes to address: Issuing State Supplement benefits by paper check is unnecessarily costly and leads to complications when benefit checks are lost, mutilated or destroyed prior to being cashed or deposited by the recipient. For similar reasons, as of March 1, 2013, the United States Department of Treasury began issuing all federal benefits, with limited exceptions, by electronic means. As a result, the vast majority of Connecticut's State Supplement recipients already receive their federal Supplemental Security Income benefits by direct deposit into a personal financial account or an EBT account. Accordingly, continued issuance of State Supplement benefits by paper check is not only unnecessarily costly, but also out of step with the federal model for issuing benefits.

(C) The legal effects of the regulation, including all of the ways that the regulation would change existing regulations or other laws: The proposed regulation requires each State Supplement recipient who does not reside in a rated facility to receive benefit payments by direct deposit into a personal account at a financial institution or an EBT account, with limited exceptions. These exceptions, which are adapted from similar exceptions set forth in the Department of Treasury's regulations, allow a recipient to receive benefits by paper check if such recipient was born before May 1, 1921, or has a mental impairment that results in the recipient being unable to manage a personal account at a financial institution or an EBT account. In addition, the proposed regulation allows the department to issue benefits by check to any recipient who lives in a federal disaster area for a period not to exceed 120 days after the disaster is declared.

A copy of the complete text of this regulation is available on the Connecticut eRegulations System website at <https://eregulations.ct.gov/eRegsPortal/>, and on the Department of Social Services' website at <http://www.ct.gov/dss> by selecting "Publications," then "Policies and Regulations," then "Notices of Intent, Operational Policies, and Proposed Regulations." In addition, copies of the proposed regulation, as well as the small business impact and regulatory flexibility analysis, may be obtained at

no cost by request to the Office of Legal Counsel, Regulations and Administrative Hearings, Department of Social Services, 55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06105; email: Graham.Shaffer@ct.gov.

All written comments, questions, and concerns regarding this regulation may be submitted within thirty days of the publication of this notice to the Department of Social Services, Office of Legal Counsel, Regulations & Administrative Hearings, 55 Farmington Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut, 06105. Attention: Brenda Parrella, Director. Comments may also be submitted electronically on the eRegulations System website referenced above. A hearing will be scheduled on the proposed regulation if requested by fifteen persons, by a governmental subdivision of an agency or by an association having not less than fifteen members, if notice of the request is received by DSS within fourteen days after the date of publication of this notice.

When submitting comments, please refer to Regulation Tracking Number PR2015-158.