

Social Security Inquiry Procedure

Letter Forwarding

Social Security (SSA) will attempt to forward a letter to a missing person under circumstances involving a matter of great importance, such as a death or serious illness in the missing person's immediate family, or a sizeable amount of money that is due the missing person. Also, the circumstances must concern a matter about which the missing person is unaware and would undoubtedly want to be informed. (Generally, when a son, daughter, brother, or sister wishes to establish contact, SSA writes to the missing person, rather than forward a letter from the relative.) Because this service is not related in any way to a Social Security program, its use must be limited so that it does not interfere with our regular program activities.

There is no charge for forwarding letters that have a humanitarian purpose. However, SSA must charge a \$25 (effective July 1, 2001) fee to cover costs when the letter is to inform the missing person of money or property due him or her. This fee is not refundable. The fee should be paid by a check that is made payable to the Social Security Administration.

SSA must read each letter they forward to ensure that it contains nothing that could prove embarrassing to the missing person if read by a third party. They do not believe that it would be proper to open a sealed letter; therefore, a letter that is sent to SSA for forwarding should be in a plain, unstamped, unsealed envelope showing only the missing person's name. Nothing of value should be enclosed.

To try to locate an address in the records, they need the missing person's Social Security number or identifying information to help find the number. The identifying information needed is the person's date and place of birth, the father's name, and the mother's full birth name.

Usually, they forward a letter in care of the employer who most recently reported earnings for the missing person. They normally would have the current home address only if the person is receiving benefits. Therefore, SSA cannot assure that a letter will be delivered or that a reply will be received. Also, they cannot send a second letter.

Requests for letter forwarding should be sent to:

Social Security Administration

Letter Forwarding

P.O. Box 33022

Baltimore, MD 21290-3022