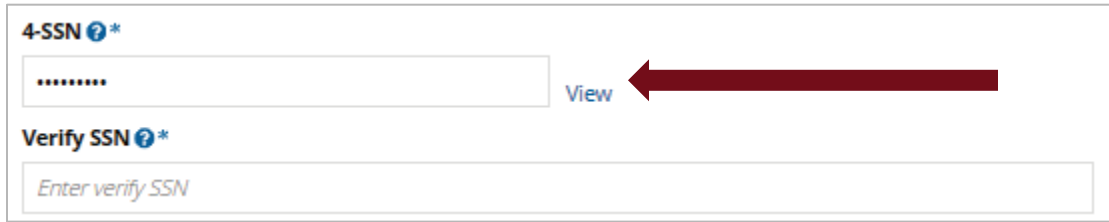


SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

Reentry Employment Opportunities (REO) programs should request social security numbers (SSN) from all individuals during the intake process. * Grantees should only obtain an individual's SSN directly from the individual. Due to PII (Personally Identifiable Information) policies, grantees should not request SSNs from partner organizations. This information is collected in GPMS on the first intake screen, labeled "Program and Participant," at Item 4 "SSN" and, once entered, must be verified by entering it a second time.



A Social Security Number enables REO programs to:

- Verify participants' Selective Service Registration,
- Obtain other forms of ID for participants,
- Assist participants applying for public benefits, housing and financial services,
- Complete employment applications with participants,
- Support participants in filing taxes, and
- Facilitate wage record matching to support WIOA Performance Metrics.

The Social Security Number is collected in the Grants Performance Management System (GPMS) during the intake process. It is a 9-digit numerical string. If the participant is unable or unwilling to provide their SSN, *do not make up a SSN*, there are many built-in edit checks that are likely to reject a falsified SSN. If you do not have the SSN, you must enter "999999999" for the SSN, which is a valid value reserved for when the actual SSN is not known.

REO Programs may not deny enrollment or services to participants because they decline to provide their SSN! There are many reasons why an individual may choose not to disclose their SSN. You can provide the individual with additional information about how you will use their SSN to support program services and assist in collecting data. You should also let them know what steps you will take to ensure their privacy. Ultimately, the individual has the right to decline disclosure, and they should be reminded that this is their choice. Keep in mind that because REO is a reentry program, many participants may be coming from situations where they lacked autonomy and do not believe they have the right to deny information to anyone in a position of authority.

As a program, there are steps you can take to build trust with the participant and complete the intake process without requiring an individual to directly disclose their SSN to you during intake.

- Let participants know that they can provide you with their SSN at a later date. (You can edit the intake record in GPMS to add a SSN if necessary.)

- Encourage male participants to enter their SSN directly into the Selective Service registration website (www.sss.gov) to verify Selective Service registration. Or print the registration form, assist them in completing it, and confirm it has been mailed. The SSN can be left blank on the print form **only if they do not have a SSN**.

Employers must verify that employees are eligible to work in the United States. They do this by completing an [Employment Eligibility Verification Form](#) (an I-9 Form) for new hires. Employers will request a Social Security Card (or evidence you have applied for one) to process an I-9 form.

- Show the participant the [Employment Eligibility Verification Form](#) that employers use and discuss alternate forms of documentation they must provide employers to complete the required forms.
- Collect supplemental data from participants about job placements, job retention, and earnings. This may include pay stubs, performance evaluations, leave and earnings statements, tax records, or self-employment forms, and it will inform WIOA Performance Indicators for outcomes in the 2nd and 4th quarters after exit. Information on supplemental data for performance can be found in [TEGL 26-16](#).

It is always important to protect participants' sensitive information!

- Remind participants that REO tracks participants by an alternate unique identifier **and not their SSN**.
- Allow participants to enter their SSN independently in computer systems.
- Do not require a written SSN or store SSN in paper files.
- Discuss personal information in a private location.

***To learn more about the collection and use of Social Security Numbers in WIOA programs, see [TEGL 10-23 on Reducing Administrative Barriers to Improve Customer Experience in Grant Programs](#).**