

TAK.00 Mission
TAK.10 Organization
TAK.20 Functions

Section TAK.00 *The Office of Policy*—(Mission): The Office of Policy (OP) serves as the focal point for the Agency to ensure that strategic policy decisions are properly translated into operational policies and procedures and are implemented in an effective manner. Coordinates the development of policies across program lines to ensure consistency in implementation. Develops, promulgates and reviews all program regulations for consistency. Reviews regulations for directly-administered programs for consistency with statutory and congressional intent and with SSA policy decisions and requirements. Directs the clearance of regulations within the Agency and with other departments and agencies and the Office of Management and Budget. Develops the Agency's Regulatory Plan and its portion of the United Agenda of Federal Regulations. Is responsible for development, review and distribution of the Agency's instructional system. Develops and publishes general and special compilations of Social Security laws, various technical issuances and program handbooks. Ensures that policies are coordinated internally and that all instructional materials developed are compatible with overall operating policies and practices. Establishes policies relating to the Agency's notices to the public and serves as the focal point for the Agency's effort to improve service to the public through the issuance of clear notices. Evaluates the effectiveness of national policies in meeting program goals and recommends necessary program modifications.

Section TAK.10 *The Office of Policy*—(Organization):

The Office of Policy, under the leadership of the Associate Commissioner for Policy includes:

A. The Associate Commissioner for Policy (TAK).

B. The Deputy Associate Commissioner for Policy (TAK).

C. The Immediate Office of the Associate Commissioner for Policy (TAK).

D. The Notice Policy Staff (TAKA).

E. The Division of Regulations and Rulings (TAKB).

F. The Division of Directives Management (TAKC).

Section TAK.20 *The Office of Policy*—(Functions):

A. The Associate Commissioner for Policy (TAK) is directly responsible to the Deputy Commissioner Programs, Policy, Evaluation and Communications for carrying out OP's mission and

provides general supervision to major components of OP.

B. The Deputy Associate Commissioner for Policy (TAK) assists the Associate Commissioner in carrying out his/her responsibilities, and performs other duties that the Associate Commissioner may prescribe.

C. The Immediate Office of the Associate Commissioner for Policy (TAK) provides the Associate Commissioner and Deputy Associate Commissioner with staff assistance on the full range of their responsibilities and helps coordinate the activities of OP components.

D. The Notice Policy Staff (TAKA) serves as the focal point for SSA's effort to improve service to the public through the issuance of clear notices. Coordinates, plans, establishes priorities and schedules all notice improvement activities for the Agency. Develops Agency-level strategies for notice improvements. Establishes the Agency's notice policy and develops and publishes the Agency's Notice Standards. Designs and writes notices and selected forms. Provides direction for notice content and design throughout SSA. Acts as a clearinghouse through which program offices submit proposed new or revised notices and selected forms. Assesses the impact of new notices on public service. Develops, plans and implements Agency efforts to get public feedback about notices. Maintains the language database for the Field Office Notice Software, both in English and Spanish. Oversees training for operations and program components to improve the quality of notices.

E. The Division of Regulations and Rulings (TAKB) plans, develops and writes SSA regulations and provides for the publication of regulations. Performs an ongoing assessment of the regulations process in SSA. Coordinates, within SSA, the review and clearance of regulations for the claims and payment processes developed for the RSDI programs, the SSI program and the Black Lung Benefits programs. Ensures that OP has input into the regulations development process. Coordinates activities with SSA's Office of the General Counsel on the issuance of regulations. Coordinates activities with other departments and agencies on the issuance of regulations. Negotiates with the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of the Federal Register on regulations matters. Plans and develops Social Security Rulings to provide interpretations and applications of the Social Security Act. Coordinates the review and clearance of Social Security Rulings with the Office of the General

Counsel, the Office of the Commissioner and other ODCPPEC components and arranges for their publication in the **Federal Register**.

F. The Division of Directives Management (TAK3) directs the review, coordination, publication and distribution of program instructions and other materials in paper and electronic form to insure uniformity, lack of duplication and compatibility of all SSA operations, instructional and informational material. Also, coordinates the publication, distribution and warehousing of all Social Security Rulings that have been published in the **Federal Register**. Participates in determining the instructional needs of SSA operating personnel. Researches and develops processes for providing instructions digitally. Directs technical review of program operating instructions to insure proper integration, organization, clearance and audience for materials prepared by various SSA components for the Program Operations Manual System and related program guides. Coordinates publication, distribution and warehousing of all program instructional and related materials and directs a quality review of new issuances to insure proper reproduction of printed materials. Indexes all program instructional materials and determines user needs in this area. Develops and publishes general and special compilations of Social Security laws, various technical issuances and program handbooks. Participates with SSA's Systems organization in the design, development and ongoing administration of a computerized system for storing, updating, publishing and distributing operational instructions and materials. Coordinates with SSA's Office of Human Resources as appropriate. Establishes policies and guidelines for the distribution of SSA's program publications to the public as required by the Freedom of Information Act.

Subchapter TAL—Office of Communications

TAL.00 Mission
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Section TAL.00 *The Office of Communications*—(Mission): The Office of Communications (OCOMM) directs a program to develop and preserve working relationships with a wide variety of national organizations, special interest and advocacy groups, the media, Members of Congress, other Federal agencies and State and local governments, for purposes of securing understanding, cooperation and acceptance of SSA programs, policies