

INTERIM ASSISTANCE

Frequently Asked Questions

If you are a temporary assistance (TA) recipient and have recently applied for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits and are awaiting a decision from the Social Security Administration (SSA) on your application, you need to know that you may be required to repay some or all of the Interim Assistance that you received from the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) while you were waiting for a decision on your SSI application. The following questions will help you understand the interim assistance process.

Q. What is Interim Assistance?

Interim Assistance refers to payments you received from the New York City Human Resources Administration's Safety Net Assistance (SNA) program during the period in which your application for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits is pending. Generally, this period begins from the date you became eligible for SSI and ends in the month in which the initial SSI payment is received. Interim Assistance can also refer to SNA benefits that you received because SSI payments were stopped incorrectly.

Q. Do I have to repay Interim Assistance?

Yes, you must repay Interim Assistance if you are determined eligible for SSI. You received TA benefits in the SNA category while your application for SSI benefits was pending. If SSA finds you eligible for SSI benefits, it will issue an initial payment to cover the SSI application period. When you applied for TA benefits, you authorized SSA to send this initial payment directly to HRA. The law allows this repayment to HRA to prevent the receipt of both SNA benefits and SSI benefits for the same period.

Q. How much of the Interim Assistance will be deducted from my initial SSI payment?

If you received SNA benefits while your SSI application was pending, you must repay HRA for the benefits you received for the period beginning with the first month you became eligible for SSI and ending with the month your SSI payments began.

Q. What happens after SSA determines that I am eligible to receive SSI benefits?

A series of steps will occur:

1. SSA electronically notifies the Assistance Reimbursement Unit (ARU) at HRA that you were determined eligible for SSI benefits.
2. ARU reviews the benefit history of your case(s) to determine the amount of Temporary Assistance you received in the Safety Net category while you were waiting for an eligibility determination from SSA.
3. ARU electronically notifies SSA of the amount of Interim Assistance benefits that HRA issued to you.

4. SSA deducts the amount of Interim Assistance benefits that it determines that HRA is entitled to recover from your initial payment and electronically transfers it to HRA. Any remaining balance is sent to you.
5. Within 10 business days, ARU will send you a notice indicating:
 - a. the initial date of your eligibility for SSI;
 - b. the amount of the initial payment received by ARU;
 - c. the period of time during which Interim Assistance was provided, the total amount of Interim Assistance provided and a monthly accounting of Interim Assistance benefits; and
 - d. the amount deducted by ARU as reimbursement of Interim Assistance.

Q. What if the Interim Assistance recovery amount I received is greater than my initial SSI payment?

If the amount of Interim Assistance you received exceeds your initial SSI payment and SSA determines that HRA is entitled to that amount, your entire initial SSI payment will be paid to HRA.