

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

714/744 P STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814



March 7, 1988

TO: All County Welfare Directors
All County Administrative Officers

Letter 88 - 16

SUBJECT: SYSTEMATIC ALIEN VERIFICATION FOR ENTITLEMENTS (SAVE)

I. BACKGROUND

Section 121 of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA P.L. 99-603) mandates that all applicants for public assistance declare in writing, under penalty of perjury, that they have "satisfactory immigration status (SIS)" which does not make the individual ineligible for benefits under the applicable public (or medical assistance) program. It requires that State AFDC, Food Stamp and Medicaid agencies verify an alien's immigration status through an automated or other system as designated by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). IRCA-86 mandates that this system be implemented nationwide by October 1, 1988.

The INS has designated the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) as the system through which immigration status will be verified. The SAVE program is an inter-governmental information sharing program designed to aid eligibility workers in determining an alien's immigration status prior to the granting of federally subsidized benefits. There are two verification methods: primary and secondary, which are available through SAVE. Primary verification is the automated method of verifying an alien's immigration status through SAVE. It provides an immediate response to the user indicating that either the alien is in satisfactory immigration status and thus eligible for benefits, or that secondary verification is needed. Primary verification is required for all aliens seeking benefits. Secondary verification is a manual verification process involving the copying of documents for submission to INS. It is required whenever discrepancies are identified between an alien's documents and the information received from the primary check. It is also required, when the primary verification response specifies "Institute Secondary Verification".

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cc: Medi-Cal Liaisons
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