

Social Security

Official Social Security Website

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Program Operations Manual System (POMS)

TN 4 (10-09)

RM 10205.125 Entering NH's Name in SSNAP

A. Acceptable characters

You may use the following to enter the NH's name in SSNAP:

- letters,
- spaces,
- hyphens, or
- apostrophes.

The NH's name is printed on the SSN card as it is entered in SSNAP. However, the name is displayed on the Numident as follows:

- In the first name, spaces, apostrophes and hyphens are removed. For example, MARY JANE is displayed as MARYJANE; D'BRICKASHAW is displayed as DBRICKASHAW; and JO-ANNE is displayed as JOANNE.
- In the middle and last names, spaces remain; hyphens are replaced with a space; and apostrophes are removed along with the resulting space. For example, RANDLE EL remains RANDLE EL; JONES-DREW is displayed as JONES DREW; and O'SULLIVAN is displayed as OSULLIVAN

B. Identifying first, middle, and last names

Beginning with cards printed on 09/08/07, the NH's first and middle name are always printed on the first name line on the SSN card, and the last name and suffix, if any, are always printed on the second name line on the SSN card. Therefore, it is important to ensure that the first name, middle name, last name, and suffix, if any, are entered in the correct fields in SSNAP. Do not show an initial as the first name.

The first and middle name fields allow 16 characters each and the last name allows 21 characters. When a name (including compound names) is too long to fit into its respective field, show as much of the name segment as possible. Use the “Name to be Shown on Card” field on the NH Info screen in SSNAP to elongate names that do not fit in the individual first name, middle name, or last name fields. For instructions on entering name information into SSNAP, see the SSNAP User Guide.

C. Nicknames/temporary names

Do not enter a “nickname” as the NH’s name (e.g. Bill, Bob, Dick, Ray, Betsy, Lucy, Patty) unless it is the applicant’s legal name.

EXCEPTION: In rare instances, the name shown on the accepted proof of identity document may not be applicant’s legal name, but it matches the name on the applicant’s SSA records. Generally, these cases will involve a replacement SSN card request for an original SSN card application processed prior to 12/17/2005. If no change to the name on the SSA record is requested a replacement card request can be processed per RM 10212.005.

When a nickname is entered as the name to be shown on card, you must enter the applicant's full name at birth on the Additional Info screen of SSNAP. If an application is submitted for a child who has a temporary given name, (e.g., Baby, Baby Boy, Unnamed Infant, Baby Doe), do not process the application. Advise the applicant to reapply for the SSN when the child has a permanent name.

D. Titles, married women, or religious names

Titles (e.g., Mrs., M.D., or Dr.) are not part of a NH’s legal name. Do not key a NH’s title into SSNAP. Adding a title at the end of a last name is customary in certain cultures. Be alert for situations where a non-citizen may show his or her title as part of the last name.

Likewise, if a married woman enters her husband's given name preceded by the designation “Mrs.”, explain that the SSN card must show her own legal first and last name and no title.

If a NH furnishes a religious name (e.g., Sister Mary Elizabeth or Brother Paul Vincent), do not enter the religious title into SSNAP. Explain that the birth name or other legal name must be shown on the SSN card.

E. Use of single name only

People in some cultures use only one name. The evidence of identity or legal name submitted must support the applicant’s use of a single name.

If the individual has only one name, answer “yes” to the question “Is this a single name?” on any SSNAP screen that collects names. One name field and the suffix field will appear.

NOTE: A single name may include spaces, dashes, apostrophes, or multiple parts.

F. Name shown on card

When the first, middle, or last name segments in the “Number holder (NH) name” field is longer than the space allotted in those segments, you can elongate the names, as appropriate, using the “Name to be shown on card” field in SSNAP.

If the combination of first and middle names exceed 26 spaces, SSNAP reduces the middle name to an initial in the “Name to be shown on card” field and shows as much of the first name as possible, followed by the middle initial. If you need to elongate the first name to show as much of the first name as possible and the middle initial is taking up needed room, you should delete the middle name shown in the middle name segment of the “Number holder (NH) name” field.

If the combination of last name and suffix exceeds 26 spaces, you should remove the suffix from the suffix portion of the “Number holder (NH) name” field so that you can include as much of the last name as possible in the “Name on card” field.

For additional instructions, see SSNAP Users Guide .

G. Reference

- RM 10205.120, How the NH’s Name is Shown on SSN card

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