



## SOCIAL SECURITY

The Commissioner

August 30, 2022

The Honorable Richard E. Neal  
Chair, Committee on Ways and Means  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Committee Chair Neal:

Thank you for your August 16, 2022 letter regarding visitors waiting for service outside Social Security field offices. I share your concerns. We have taken steps to improve service to people waiting outside our offices, which is often caused by physical distancing.

Local offices are working hard to help people who need our services. Enclosed we provide responses to your specific questions including the variety of steps we have taken to balance safety and service. We are updating our physical distancing policy for the public, which we expect will significantly address the concerns you raise. We will let you know as soon as that change is in place.

We encourage the use of our online and telephone services when possible, which saves people from having to visit an office while also allowing our in-person staff to meet the needs of people who must receive service in person, including people who face barriers to accessing other service channels.

I hope this information is helpful. If you have further questions, please contact me. Your staff may contact Tom Klouda, our Deputy Commissioner for Legislation and Congressional Affairs, at (202) 358-6030. I am providing a similar response to Ranking Member Kevin Brady.

Sincerely,

Kilolo Kijakazi, Ph.D., M.S.W.  
Acting Commissioner

Enclosures

**1) What steps is SSA taking to address the immediate safety needs of individuals who are waiting in dangerous environmental conditions? Specifically:**

**a) What steps is SSA taking to reduce the wait times for individuals who are seeking in-person service?**

We are committed to serving our visitors as quickly and efficiently as possible. We are using various strategies to reduce in-person wait times, particularly in our busiest offices. For example, we are:

- Triaging customers who can be referred for a quick express interview or for a same-day or future appointment, depending on office availability;
- Ensuring people waiting in line have the necessary information and documentation;
- Providing a drop box to drop off documents and evidence at many offices;
- Assigning some workloads to offices with less walk-in traffic, so staff in our busier offices can serve more people in person;
- Assigning agency volunteers to some of our busier offices;
- Rehiring retired employees to assist with office needs;
- Suspending telework for some office employees, so an office can help more people in person instead of answering calls remotely; and
- Increasing overtime for busier offices.

**b) What steps is SSA taking to ensure that individuals are not waiting outside without shelter in extreme weather?**

For those offices with visitors who need to wait outside, we are providing access to our bathrooms and water fountains. When possible, we are adding outdoor canopies and fans.

Additionally, we are reconfiguring our waiting areas to allow more people to enter the air-conditioned office. We are expanding the use of mobile check-in for customers with appointments and notifying them on their cell phones when we are ready to serve them, allowing them to remain in their vehicles or nearby facilities.

**2) What guidance should we provide to our constituents who are having trouble accessing SSA's services?**

We greatly appreciate you sharing the following guidance with your constituents.

Most Social Security services do not require a visit to an office. People can apply for benefits and much more online and over the phone. Throughout the pandemic, millions of people have successfully used our secure and convenient online services and received help by phone. People who have access to the internet should first try our online services before calling us or visiting an office. For a complete list of online services see [www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices/](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/onlineservices/). This blog post at <https://blog.ssa.gov/we-remain-committed-to-serving-you/> provides a summary of helpful information and links.

Please help us spread the word that while people often need to know their Social Security number, they do not always need a physical card. We encourage people to get a card only if they really need it. Most people can request a replacement card online at [www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber/](https://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssnumber/).

**3) How many and what offices have had members of the public waiting outside for more than one hour at a heat index at or above 90 degrees since reopening to the general public (April 2022)?**

We do not have wait times for people standing in line because our systems measure waiting times from the point of check-in. However, since reinstating walk-in service in April 2022, onsite employees have identified numbers for offices with lines greater than 40 people outside at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. These weekly data reveal a very low percentage of our more than 1,200 field offices experienced lines of 40 or more visitors. To date, 216 separate offices had multiple occurrences of 40 people waiting at 9 a.m. However, the numbers are much lower at 3 p.m. Specifically, 37 offices had multiple occurrences, indicating that most offices have been able to effectively balance safety and service considerations. For the week ending August 19<sup>th</sup>, 87 offices had 255 occurrences at 9 a.m. while 4 offices had 7 occurrences at 3 p.m. For more detail, see Enclosure 2.

**4) Please provide SSA's current field office COVID-19 safety policy and protocols.**

Our Workplace Safety Plan 2.0 is available here: [Workplace-Safety-Plan-2.0.pdf \(ssa.gov\)](https://www.ssa.gov/workplace-safety-plan-2.0.pdf).

| Sites with Over 40 People Waiting Outside at 9 AM |  |
|---|--|
| Site  | Number of occurrences<br>Apr 2022-Aug 2022 |
| 00G - ORLANDO SSCC - FL                           | 94   |
| 00L - TWIN CITIES SSCC - MN                       | 94   |
| 036 - Worcester - MA                              | 6  |
| 059 - Lancaster - CA                              | 11   |
| 062 - Chatsworth - CA                             | 8  |
| 064 - Watts - CA                                  | 17   |
| 093 - Lakewood - CO                               | 16   |
| 136 - Patchogue - NY                              | 2  |
| 150 - Flushing - NY                               | 1  |
| 151 - Freeport - NY                               | 6  |
| 182 - Hackensack - NJ                             | 11   |
| 190 - Bellevue - WA                               | 34   |
| 191 - Kent - WA                                   | 12   |
| 248 - Walnut Creek -                              | 1  |
| 249 - Anaheim - CA                                | 10   |
| 251 - Riverside - CA                              | 31   |
| 260 - South Broward - FL                          | 87   |
| 261 - Perrine - FL                                | 94   |
| 262 - Hialeah - FL                                | 93   |
| 264 - Allapattah - FL                             | 67   |
| 267 - Wilmington - DE                             | 1  |
| 318 - Fairfax - VA                                | 35   |
| 320 - Charlotte - NC                              | 41   |
| 322 - Raleigh - NC                                | 12   |
| 366 - Ann Arbor - MI                              | 1  |
| 383 - Richmond - CA                               | 1  |
| 411 - Cincinnati North - OH                       | 1  |
| 436 - Chula Vista - CA                            | 45   |
| 491 - Waukegan - IL                               | 2  |
| 510 - Chicago-Near NW - IL                        | 1  |
| 532 - Mount Prospect - IL                         | 35   |
| 562 - Norwalk - CA                                | 1  |
| 566 - Memphis - TN                                | 1  |
| 619 - Marietta - GA                               | 5  |
| 620 - Gwinnett - GA                               | 92   |
| 622 - Birmingham DT - AL                          | 1  |
| 624 - Mobile - AL                                 | 1  |
| 656 - Tampa - FL                                  | 40   |
| 661 - West Palm Beach - FL                        | 92   |
| 667 - Sarasota - FL                               | 1  |
| 669 - Miami North - FL                            | 87   |
| 674 - Ocala - FL                                  | 6  |
| 677 - St Paul - MN                                | 1  |
| 687 - Beaverton - OR                              | 8  |

|                                |    |
|--------------------------------|----|
| 690 - Des Moines - IA          | 1  |
| 722 - North Broward - FL       | 12 |
| 723 - Miami South - FL         | 94 |
| 738 - Springfield - MO         | 26 |
| 769 - Wichita - KS             | 6  |
| 783 - Oklacity - OK            | 4  |
| 784 - Tulsa - OK               | 76 |
| 813 - Austin - TX              | 92 |
| 814 - Dallas North - TX        | 75 |
| 815 - San Antonio Central - TX | 66 |
| 816 - Houston Southwest - TX   | 94 |
| 817 - El Paso - TX             | 92 |
| 821 - Fortworth - TX           | 37 |
| 827 - Lubbock - TX             | 8  |
| 834 - Odessa - TX              | 48 |
| 838 - Temple - TX              | 13 |
| 841 - Mcallen - TX             | 31 |
| 850 - Pasadena - TX            | 94 |
| 852 - San Antonio NW - TX      | 43 |
| 853 - Dallas Oak Cliff - TX    | 41 |
| 855 - Houston Northwest - TX   | 94 |
| 856 - Houston Northeast - TX   | 92 |
| 857 - Houston Southeast - TX   | 55 |
| 863 - Las Cruces - NM          | 7  |
| 873 - Mid Cities - TX          | 90 |
| 887 - Colorado Springs - CO    | 15 |
| 900 - Salt Lake City Utah - UT | 1  |
| 906 - Hemet - CA               | 21 |
| 907 - Phoenix North - AZ       | 4  |
| 908 - Tucson - AZ              | 8  |
| 913 - Phoenix Downtown - AZ    | 85 |
| 915 - Spokane - WA             | 4  |
| 916 - Seattle Metro - WA       | 1  |
| 917 - Tacoma - WA              | 5  |
| 922 - Everett - WA             | 2  |
| 931 - San Marcos - CA          | 2  |
| 943 - West Covina - CA         | 1  |
| 945 - Reno - NV                | 47 |
| 946 - Las Vegas - NV           | 94 |
| 949 - Carrollwood - FL         | 94 |
| 952 - Fresno - CA              | 7  |
| 954 - San Diego - CA           | 2  |
| 958 - Long Beach - CA          | 1  |
| 959 - San Bernardino - CA      | 28 |
| 962 - Stockton - CA            | 1  |
| 963 - Bakersfield - CA         | 7  |
| 965 - Glendale - CA            | 1  |

|                                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| 968 - Hollywood - CA             | 1  |
| 970 - L.A. Westwood - CA         | 1  |
| 971 - Inglewood - CA             | 3  |
| 972 - Santa Ana - CA             | 1  |
| 975 - Panorama City - CA         | 3  |
| 981 - Pomona Valley - CA         | 1  |
| A00 - Henderson - NV             | 92 |
| A39 - Manassas - VA              | 37 |
| A70 - Orl West - LA              | 1  |
| A72 - Angleton - TX              | 1  |
| A74 - Conroe - TX                | 42 |
| A76 - Mckinney - TX              | 55 |
| B58 - Mission Viejo - CA         | 15 |
| B67 - Oxnard - CA                | 1  |
| C07 - Greenbelt - MD             | 24 |
| C18 - Naples - FL                | 46 |
| C19 - Ft. Lauderdale W - FL      | 38 |
| C24 - Little River - FL          | 46 |
| C29 - Little Havana - FL         | 93 |
| D24 - Aurora - CO                | 18 |
| D44 - Wilshire Center - CA       | 33 |
| D49 - North Las Vegas - NV       | 90 |
| D51 - Puyallup - WA              | 32 |
| E08 - Southeast Fresno - CA      | 1  |
| E24 - El Paso Downtown - TX      | 27 |
| E28 - North Sacramento - CA      | 11 |
| E35 - Fort Worth South - TX      | 11 |
| E45 - Georgetown - TX            | 84 |
| E77 - Roseville - CA             | 2  |
| 253 - University Village - CA    | 1  |
| 655 - Jacksonville South - FL    | 76 |
| 858 - Albuquerque - NM           | 16 |
| 983 - Torrance - CA              | 10 |
| E64 - Dallas Pleasant Grove - TX | 40 |
| 109 - Ny Downtown - NY           | 1  |
| 177 - Clifton - NJ               | 3  |
| 198 - Toa Alta - PR              | 2  |
| 380 - San Patricio - PR          | 1  |
| 914 - Glendale - AZ              | 10 |
| 929 - Mesa - AZ                  | 15 |
| 966 - Huntington Park - CA       | 9  |
| B69 - Fontana - CA               | 13 |
| 272 - Ponce - PR                 | 21 |
| 281 - Caguas - PR                | 2  |
| 499 - Chicago North - IL         | 1  |
| 665 - Ft. Lauderdale East - FL   | 20 |
| 889 - Louisville - CO            | 1  |

|                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| 137 - Brooklyn New Utrecht - NY | 9  |
| C43 - Farmington - MI           | 1  |
| 279 - Mayaguez - PR             | 11 |
| 978 - Modesto - CA              | 6  |
| A31 - Carolina - PR             | 4  |
| 439 - Lexington - KY            | 1  |
| 670 - Fort Myers - FL           | 43 |
| 168 - Guam - GU                 | 1  |
| 937 - Medford - OR              | 1  |
| B73 - Moreno Valley - CA        | 16 |
| 880 - San Antonio South - TX    | 17 |
| 385 - San Jose East - CA        | 11 |
| 294 - Alexandria - VA           | 39 |
| D38 - Campbell - CA             | 1  |
| 045 - Malden - MA               | 3  |
| 792 - Moore - OK                | 17 |
| B89 - Manati - PR               | 38 |
| 803 - Baton Rouge - LA          | 8  |
| 187 - New Brunswick - NJ        | 10 |
| 476 - Ontario - CA              | 4  |
| 825 - Corpus Christi - TX       | 12 |
| A73 - Denton - TX               | 14 |
| A87 - Victorville - CA          | 2  |
| 330 - Fayetteville - NC         | 5  |
| 660 - Pensacola - FL            | 1  |
| C27 - Fairhope - AL             | 1  |
| 694 - Ottumwa - IA              | 4  |
| 828 - League City - TX          | 3  |
| 347 - Grand Rapids - MI         | 4  |
| 919 - Yakima - WA               | 8  |
| 725 - Omaha - NE                | 1  |
| D36 - Garden Grove - CA         | 12 |
| 824 - Brownsville - TX          | 1  |
| A33 - Rockville - MD            | 37 |
| 282 - Silver Spring - MD        | 2  |
| 280 - Arecibo - PR              | 9  |
| 442 - FlorenceKY - KY           | 1  |
| 997 - Anchorage - AK            | 1  |
| B56 - Virginia Beach - VA       | 1  |
| B60 - Fremont - CA              | 4  |
| 256 - Port St. Lucie - FL       | 22 |
| 089 - Torrington - CT           | 1  |
| 270 - DC Downtown - DC          | 2  |
| 117 - Ny Uptown - NY            | 3  |
| 11A - Mission - TX              | 1  |
| 287 - Norfolk - VA              | 1  |
| 323 - Asheville - NC            | 2  |

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| 563 - Bakersfield East Hills - CA | 1  |
| 709 - New Port Richie - FL        | 1  |
| A16 - Kissimmee - FL              | 1  |
| A80 - Burbank - CA                | 1  |
| 122 - Gloversville - NY           | 1  |
| 163 - Riverhead - NY              | 2  |
| D63 - Columbus North - OH         | 1  |
| C65 - Waterville - ME             | 1  |
| 167 - Kapolei - HI                | 1  |
| 985 - El Centro - CA              | 14 |
| 266 - East Hillsborough - FL      | 4  |
| 583 - ColumbiaSC - SC             | 13 |
| 657 - Orlando - FL                | 10 |
| 940 - Portland-East O - OR        | 4  |
| C41 - Indianapolis Northeast - IN | 3  |
| SSCC-MANHATTAN                    | 1  |
| 350 - Pontiac - MI                | 2  |
| 257 - Clearwater - FL             | 2  |
| 621 - DecaturGA - GA              | 1  |
| 801 - Shreveport - LA             | 1  |
| 203 - Reading - PA                | 1  |
| C63 - Burien - WA                 | 1  |
| A43 - Winter Haven - FL           | 1  |
| 527 - Camp Springs - MD           | 1  |
| 844 - Eagle Pass - TX             | 1  |
| B47 - Cleburne - TX               | 1  |
| B63 - Antioch - CA                | 1  |
| 325 - Greensboro - NC             | 8  |
| E29 - West Sacramento - CA        | 3  |
| 173 - Paterson - NJ               | 1  |
| 271 - San Juan - PR               | 1  |



| Sites with Over 40 People Waiting Outside at 3 PM |  |
|---|--|
| Site  | Number of occurrences<br>Apr 2022-Aug 2022 |
| 00G - ORLANDO SSCC - FL                           | 40   |
| 00L - TWIN CITIES SSCC - MN                       | 23   |
| 00X - PHILADELPHIA SSCC - PA                      | 2  |
| 109 - Ny Downtown - NY                            | 1  |
| 120 - Jamaica - NY                                | 1  |
| 191 - Kent - WA                                   | 1  |
| 249 - Anaheim - CA                                | 1  |
| 260 - South Broward - FL                          | 13   |
| 261 - Perrine - FL                                | 33   |
| 262 - Hialeah - FL                                | 12   |
| 294 - Alexandria - VA                             | 1  |
| 318 - Fairfax - VA                                | 2  |
| 620 - Gwinnett - GA                               | 1  |
| 655 - Jacksonville South - FL                     | 7  |
| 661 - West Palm Beach - FL                        | 2  |
| 665 - Ft. Lauderdale East - FL                    | 1  |
| 669 - Miami North - FL                            | 21   |
| 709 - New Port Richie - FL                        | 1  |
| 723 - Miami South - FL                            | 26   |
| 782 - SSCC-Brooklyn - NY                          | 8  |
| 816 - Houston Southwest - TX                      | 31   |
| 817 - El Paso - TX                                | 3  |
| 834 - Odessa - TX                                 | 2  |
| 850 - Pasadena - TX                               | 2  |
| 853 - Dallas Oak Cliff - TX                       | 1  |
| 855 - Houston Northwest - TX                      | 27   |
| 856 - Houston Northeast - TX                      | 2  |
| 857 - Houston Southeast - TX                      | 27   |
| 931 - San Marcos - CA                             | 1  |
| 946 - Las Vegas - NV                              | 3  |
| 959 - San Bernardino - CA                         | 1  |
| A74 - Conroe - TX                                 | 1  |
| C29 - Little Havana - FL                          | 37   |
| D24 - Aurora - CO                                 | 2  |
| D44 - Wilshire Center - CA                        | 1  |
| E45 - Georgetown - TX                             | 1  |
| SSCC-MANHATTAN                                    | 2  |