

NDB, excluding that portion within the Omaha, NE Class C and E airspace areas.

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Issued in Kansas City, MO, on December 18, 2003.

Paul J. Sheridan,

Acting Manager, Air Traffic Division, Central Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 71

[Docket No. FAA-2003-16409; Airspace Docket No. 03-ACE-78]

Modification of Class E Airspace; Sidney, NE

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

ACTION: Direct final rule; confirmation of effective date.

SUMMARY: This document confirms the effective date of the direct final rule which revises Class E airspace at Sidney, NE.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 0901 UTC, February 19, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Brenda Mumper, Air Traffic Division, Airspace Branch, ACE-520A, DOT Regional Headquarters Building, Federal Aviation Administration, 901 Locust, Kansas City, MO 64106; telephone: (816) 329-2524.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The FAA published this direct final rule with a request for comments in the **Federal Register** on November 20, 2003 (68 FR 65389). The FAA uses the direct final rulemaking procedure for a non-controversial rule where the FAA believes that there will be no adverse public comment. This direct final rule advised the public that no adverse comments were anticipated, and that unless a written adverse comment, or a written notice of intent to submit such an adverse comment, were received within the comment period, the regulation would become effective on February 19, 2004. No adverse comments were received, and thus this notice confirms that this direct final rule will become effective on that date.

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SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

20 CFR Part 404 and 422

[Regulations No. 4 and 22]

RIN 0960-AF52

Filing of Applications and Related Forms

AGENCY: Social Security Administration (SSA).

ACTION: Final rule.

SUMMARY: These final regulations revise our rules relating to the filing of an application for Social Security benefits. They inform the public of the option of filing Internet applications on our Web site for several types of Social Security benefits. These changes explain that we will accept Internet applications completed on our Web site as prescribed applications for filing for Social Security benefits. We have added cross-references to several sections to describe what makes an application a claim for benefits; and we updated the list of related forms with other forms that are currently used in the application process.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These rules are effective on February 5, 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Martin Sussman, Regulations Officer, Office of Regulations, Social Security Administration, 100 Altmeyer Building, 6401 Security Boulevard, Baltimore, MD 21235-6401, (410) 965-1767 or TTY (410) 966-5609. For information on eligibility or filing for benefits: Call our national toll-free number 1-800-722-1213, or TTY 1-800-325-0778 or visit our Internet Web site, Social Security Online at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov>.

Electronic Version

The electronic file of this document is available on the date of publication in the **Federal Register** at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>. It is also available on the Internet site for SSA (*i.e.*, Social Security Online): <http://www.ssa.gov/regulations>.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background

An individual must file an application in order to receive benefits under title II of the Social Security Act (the Act). In part 404 of our regulations, we have established rules for filing a claim for old-age, disability, dependents', and survivors' insurance benefits, which define the criteria for determining when an application is a claim for benefits. Similarly, we include the names of places where an application may be filed, and explain

what makes an application form acceptable as a claim for benefits. Our rules state that individuals must either sign the application or have someone who can act on their behalf sign for them. Except in limited situations, individuals must be alive at the time the application is filed.

In part 404, we further state that a claim filed with the Railroad Retirement Board on one of its forms for an annuity is an application for title II benefits, unless the individual states otherwise. We state that a claim filed with the Department of Veterans Affairs on one of its forms for survivors' dependency and indemnity compensation is also an application for Social Security dependents' and survivors' benefits (except for the lump sum death payment).

The types of applications currently prescribed by SSA are described in part 422 of our regulations. SSA's application process has evolved from its primary use of the traditional pre-printed application form for claims-taking to SSA employees who input information provided by the applicant into a computer terminal for processing. Computer printouts of the data are generated for the applicant to review the information and to sign the application.

We are committed to providing the public with the option to conduct business electronically by adding more Internet services on SSA's Web site, Social Security Online <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/>.

Toward this objective, we developed an Internet Retirement Insurance Benefit application for national implementation in the fall of 2000. Since then, we have expanded Internet applications to encompass spouses' and disability insurance benefits. Statistics confirm that Internet usage has increased among older Americans, and as a result they have requested that more online services be made available to them. Internet applications for other benefits categories will be available in the future. As applications become available on our Web site, an explanation of our approved signature method for the application will be incorporated as part of the Internet application process. In the interim, individuals who use the Internet application process must physically sign the printed application and submit it to us.

The main purpose for these revisions is to inform the public of the option of filing an Internet application on our Web site for several types of Social Security benefits. These revisions include updating the list of related forms in section 422.505(b) to reflect only those forms that are currently in