

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY STATEMENT

The Social Security Administration touches the lives of virtually every person in America. We run one of the Nation's largest entitlement programs as well as the Supplemental Security Income program, which provides financial support for the Nation's aged, blind, and disabled adults and children with limited resources. While the scope, severity, and pace of future climate change are difficult to predict, it is clear that potential changes could have important effects on our operations and programs. We agree that climate change adaptation is critical to complement climate change mitigation and both are necessary to address the causes and consequences of climate change.

Through climate adaptation planning, we will identify how climate change is likely to affect our ability to achieve our mission, operate our facilities, and meet our policy and program objectives. We will develop, prioritize, implement, and evaluate actions to mitigate climate change risks and develop new opportunities that climate change may bring. We will contribute to the Federal Government's leadership role in sustainability and pursue the vision of a resilient, healthy, and prosperous Nation in the face of a changing climate.

By September 30, 2011, we will submit a preliminary high-level analysis of our vulnerability to climate change to the Council of Environmental Quality. We will submit our final high-level analysis by March 2012. These documents will provide us with a structured approach for planning and implementing necessary changes.

In our climate change adaptation planning and implementation, we will:

- Comply with all environmental and energy-related statutes, Executive Orders, and any applicable Federal, State, and local regulations;
- Consider climate change adaptation when making planning, purchasing, operating, and budgetary decisions;
- Conserve resources and prevent pollution by educating and encouraging employees and contractors to reduce energy consumption and water usage, reduce the amount of waste produced, and promote re-use and recycling whenever possible;
- Continue improving environmental stewardship by setting environmental goals, measuring progress, taking corrective action when necessary, and communicating the results;
- Communicate and reinforce this policy throughout the agency; and,
- Coordinate with other agencies including the Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Task Force on climate change adaptation.



Michael J. Astrue
Commissioner