



**Legal Opinion L-2006-10**  
**May 12, 2006**

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**TO:** Ronald Russo  
Director of Policy and Systems

**FROM:** Steven A. Bartholow  
General Counsel

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Use of the Social Security Administration's Master  
Beneficiary Record Database as Proof of Age

This is in response to your memorandum dated May 1, 2006, regarding use by RRB claims examiners and contact representatives of the Social Security Administration's Master Beneficiary Record (MBR) database in order to prove age. The MBR shows the date of birth of a social security beneficiary and the type of proof used to establish the date of birth. You inquire whether it is permissible for the RRB initial claims processing to establish age by reference to the MBR.

As you point out, section 219.6(c) of the RRB's regulations provides, in pertinent part, as follows:

Certified copies of original records. The Board will accept copies of original records or extracts from records if they are certified as true and exact copies of the original by—

\* \* \* \* \*

(3) A Social Security Administration employee, if the evidence was given to that agency to obtain social security benefits \* \* \*.

It is the intent of the RRB's regulation that an RRB examiner be entitled to rely on information obtained by the Social Security Administration. Although it would appear from the wording of the regulation that it was contemplated that such information would take the form of paper copies of records with a certification attached or imprinted, the recording of the information in a Social Security Administration database would seem to constitute the equivalent both of a certification of that information and of "extracts of records." Accordingly, we concur with your opinion that it is permissible for the RRB to establish the age of an applicant or beneficiary by reference to the MBR.