

GN 00203.10

### C. POLICY - CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (GENERAL)

1. The following interviewing policy was developed out of health concerns involved in daily public contact (e.g., exposure to contagious diseases like tuberculosis). Everyone who works or visits FOs will be treated with dignity and respect in a safe and healthy environment.

2. The public should always be treated compassionately and professionally and not be discriminated against for any reason. In addition, every reasonable effort will be made to reduce the public health risk involved in transacting business in SSA FOs.

3. The preferred method for interviewing members of the public with contagious diseases (e.g., diagnosed with untreated or inadequately treated active TB, etc.) is to schedule interviews by telephone. If the claimant does not have a telephone, attempt to establish a third-party contact to handle Social Security business by telephone.

4. Immediately notify a member of management if during the course of a face-to-face interview, or at any time, it is discovered that a claimant has a contagious disease. For example, the interviewee may have active TB which has not been treated or inadequately treated or he/she exhibits all the symptoms as outlined in D.2 below, including vigorous coughing.

### D. POLICY - TUBERCULOSIS

#### 1. Acronym TB

The acronym TB is short for Mycobacterium Tuberculosis. TB disease is an illness in which TB bacteria are multiplying and attacking different parts of the body.

#### 2. Symptoms of TB

Symptoms of TB disease include weakness, weight loss, fever, lack of appetite, chills and night sweats. If TB is in the lungs (pulmonary disease), the symptoms may include a bad cough, chest pain and coughing up blood.

#### 3. Untreated TB

Untreated or inadequately treated TB refers to that of persons who have been diagnosed as having active TB or TB disease but who have not received therapy or who have stopped taking anti-tuberculosis drugs before being released from treatment. Follow the policy in C. above.