

ARTICLE XVI

- (1) A written application for benefits filed with an agency of one Contracting State shall protect the rights of the claimants under the laws of the other Contracting State if the applicant: (a) requests that it be considered an application under the laws of the other Contracting State; or (b) in the absence of a request that it not be so considered, provides information at the time of application indicating that the person on whose record benefits are claimed has completed periods of coverage under the laws of the other Contracting State.
- (2) An application for benefits under the laws of one Contracting State which is filed with the agency of the other Contracting State in accordance with paragraph (1) of this Article, shall be adjudicated by the agency of the first Contracting State under the applicable provisions of its laws.
- (3) An applicant may request that an application filed with an agency of one Contracting State be effective on a different date in the other Contracting State within the limitations of and in conformity with the laws of the other Contracting State.
- (4) The provisions of Part III of this Agreement shall apply only to an application for benefits which is filed on or after the date this Agreement enters into force.

ARTICLE XVII

- (1) A written appeal of a determination made by the agency of one Contracting State may be validly filed with an agency of either Contracting State. The appeal shall be dealt with according to the appeal procedure of the laws of the Contracting State whose decision is being appealed.
- (2) Any claim, notice or written appeal which, under the laws of one Contracting State, must have been filed within a prescribed period with the agency of that Contracting State, but which is instead filed within the same prescribed period with the agency of the other Contracting State, shall be considered to be filed on time and shall be forthwith transmitted to the agency of the first Contracting State.

ARTICLE XVIII

Unless disclosure is required under the national statutes of a Contracting State, information about an individual which is transmitted in accordance with the Agreement to that Contracting State by the other Contracting State is confidential and shall be used exclusively for the purposes of implementing this Agreement. Such information received by a Contracting State shall be governed by the national statutes of that Contracting State for the protection of privacy and confidentiality of personal data.