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# The Social Security Star

## VETERANS AND ACTIVE-DUTY MILITARY MEMBERS: SOCIAL SECURITY HAS YOUR BACK!



Every year on Veterans Day, we honor the people who risk their lives to protect our country. Our disability program is part of our obligation to wounded warriors and their families.

Social Security is an important resource for military members who return home with injuries. If you know a wounded veteran, please let them know about our Wounded Warriors web page, [www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors](http://www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors).

Our Wounded Warriors web page answers many questions commonly asked about Social Security and shares useful information about disability benefits. On this page, you can learn how Social Security benefits are different from benefits available through the Department of Veterans Affairs and require a separate application. We also explain how veterans can expedite the processing of their Social Security disability claims if they become

disabled while on active military service on or after October 1, 2001, regardless of where the disability occurs.

Active-duty military service members who continue to receive pay while in a hospital or on medical leave should consider applying for disability benefits if they're unable to work due to a disabling condition. Active-duty status and receipt of military pay doesn't necessarily prevent payment of Social Security disability benefits.

We honor veterans and active-duty members of the military every day by giving them the respect they deserve. Please let these heroes know they can count on SSA when they need us most. They've earned these benefits!

**Most Social Security services are available online by visiting [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov), and by calling Social Security toll-free at**

**1 (800) 772-1213 or  
1 (800) 325-0778 TTY**

**Remember, visit [www.ssa.gov/agency/emergency/](http://www.ssa.gov/agency/emergency/) for up-to-date information about Social Security Office Closings and Emergencies.**

**Subscribe to state or territory specific updates!**

### AT HOME OR ON THE GO: SOCIAL SECURITY IS ONLINE



When you retire, if you become disabled, or if someone you depend on dies, we are there when you need us. You can access your information, benefits, and important services from just about anywhere with your personal and secure *my Social Security* account. With your *my Social Security* account, you can:

- Compare future benefit estimates for different dates or ages when you may want to begin receiving benefits.
- Check the status of your benefits application or appeal.
- Review your earnings history.
- Request a replacement Social Security card (in most states).

If you already receive benefits, you can also:

- Get a benefit verification or proof of income letter.

- Set up or change your direct deposit.
- Change your address.
- Request a replacement Medicare card.
- Get a Social Security 1099 form (SSA-1099).

You can even use my [Social Security](#) account to opt out of receiving certain notices by mail, including the annual cost-of-living adjustments notice and the income-related monthly adjustment amount notice.

These notices are now available in your Message Center when you sign into your account. We will send you an email that a new message is waiting for you, so you never miss an important update.

It's easy to sign up for my [Social Security](#) account. Please let your friends and family know that they can create their own [my Social Security](#) account today at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount).

*During the current coronavirus pandemic, we continue to provide help to you and other people in your communities.*

*Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, you can only enter our offices if you have an appointment. We remain ready and able to help you by phone and online with most Social Security business.*

*You can speak with a representative by calling your local Social Security office or our National 800 Number, 1-800-772-1213 or 1-800-325-0778 TTY. You may find local office phone numbers online by using our Social Security Office Locator at [www.ssa.gov/locator](http://www.ssa.gov/locator).*

## ACCESS YOUR NEW SOCIAL SECURITY STATEMENT ONLINE



We have exciting news to share: we've redesigned your *Social Security Statement (Statement)* to make it easier to find the information you need.

### Who gets a *Statement*?

You will get a *Statement* if you are an adult who does not receive benefits. Your unique *Statement* gives estimates of future Social Security benefits that you and your family may receive each month along with a basic overview of the Social Security program. It also provides a record of your earnings history and other valuable information. Your future benefits are based on your earnings record, so it's important to tell us when you see an error, so you can get it corrected and ensure you get all the benefits you earned. Your *Statement* explains how to report an error.

### What's New in the *Statement*?

The redesigned *Statement* is streamlined and written in plain language to make it easy to read, use, and understand. We've divided the information into sections, like different types of benefits, so you can easily find what you need. The new *Statement* provides a bar chart with your personalized retirement benefit

estimates for up to nine different ages, depending on when you may want your benefits to start. This key information can help you make educated decisions about your financial future.

Fact sheets tailored to your age group and earnings situation accompany your online *Statement*. The fact sheets can help you better understand Social Security programs, benefits, and how they fit your situation. For example, for younger workers, we provide more information about how you can save for your future; for older workers, we explain how benefits may be taxed and how to avoid a Medicare penalty. We include links in the fact sheets for easier reference and additional information.

Our *Social Security Statement* web page at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount/statement](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/statement) has samples of the *Statement*, as well as copies of the new fact sheets (in English and Spanish). Please share these resources with your friends and family.

### Get Your Personalized *Statement* Online Today

The best way to access your new *Statement* is by using your personal [my Social Security](#) account. If you don't have an account, be sure to create one today. Your account also lets you access other services online, such as requesting a replacement Social Security card and getting a letter proving you do not receive Social Security benefits.

Get started by signing in to or creating your [my Social Security](#) account today at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount)!

## SOCIAL SECURITY CAN HELP YOU START OR RETURN TO WORK



If you rely on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits and want to start or return to work, we can help.

Ticket to Work (Ticket) is a program that supports career development for SSDI beneficiaries and SSI recipients who want to work and progress toward financial independence. The Ticket program is free and voluntary. Learn more about the Ticket to Work program at [www.ssa.gov/work](http://www.ssa.gov/work) or call the Ticket to Work Help Line at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY) Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET.

In addition to the Ticket to Work program, the Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) program also helps people with disabilities return to work. A PASS allows you to set aside resources and other income besides your SSI for a specified period. With a PASS you can pursue a work goal that will reduce or eliminate your need for SSI or SSDI benefits.

How does a PASS help someone return to work?

- We base SSI eligibility and payment amounts on income and resources (items of value that the person owns).

- PASS lets a person with a disability set aside money and items they own to pay for items or services needed to achieve a specific work goal.
- The objective of the PASS is to help people with disabilities find employment that reduces or eliminates the need for SSI or SSDI benefits.

You can read all about the PASS program at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11017.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11017.pdf).

The PASS must be in writing and we must approve the plan. To start, contact your local [PASS Cadre](#) or [local Social Security office](#) for an application (Form SSA-545-BK). You can also access the form at [www.ssa.gov/forms/ssa-545.html](http://www.ssa.gov/forms/ssa-545.html). Ticket to Work service providers, vocational counselors, or a representative or relative can help you write a PASS.

For more information about PASS, read *The Red Book - A Guide to Work Incentives* at [www.ssa.gov/redbook](http://www.ssa.gov/redbook).

Your job isn't just a source of income — it can be a vehicle to independence or the beginning step to fulfilling your dreams. Let our Ticket to Work program or PASS program help you achieve your goals.

## SOCIAL SECURITY SURVIVORS' BENEFITS EXPLAINED



We are here for surviving family members when a worker dies. In the event of your death, certain members of your family may be eligible for survivors' benefits. These include widows and widowers, divorced widows and widowers, children, and dependent parents.

The amount of benefits your survivors receive depends on your lifetime earnings. The higher your earnings, the higher their benefits. That's why it's important to make sure your earnings history is correct in our records. That starts with creating a [my Social Security](#) account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount). A [my Social Security](#) account is secure and gives you immediate access to your earnings records, Social Security benefit estimates, and a printable *Social Security Statement*. The *Statement* will let you see an estimate of the survivors benefits we could pay your family.

You may also want to visit our Benefits Planner for Survivors to help you better understand Social Security protections for you and your family as you plan for your financial future at [www.ssa.gov/planners/survivors](http://www.ssa.gov/planners/survivors).

Please visit [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov) or read our publication Survivors Benefits at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10084.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10084.pdf) for more information. You can also help us spread the word by sharing this information with your family and friends.

DO YOU SUSPECT SOMEONE OF  
COMMITTING FRAUD, WASTE, OR  
ABUSE AGAINST  
SOCIAL SECURITY?

REPORTING FRAUD TO THE SSA  
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR  
GENERAL IS EASY, SAFE, AND  
SECURE.

REPORT SOCIAL SECURITY SCAMS  
AT  
[HTTPS://SECURE.SSA.GOV/IPFF/HO](https://secure.ssa.gov/ipff/ho)  
[ME](https://secure.ssa.gov/ipff/ho)

REPORT OTHER SOCIAL SECURITY  
FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE AT  
[HTTPS://SECURE.SSA.GOV/PFRF/HO](https://secure.ssa.gov/pfrf/ho)  
[ME](https://secure.ssa.gov/pfrf/ho)

OTHER WAYS TO  
REPORT FRAUD

U.S. MAIL:

SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD  
HOTLINE  
PO BOX 17785  
BALTIMORE, MD 21235

FAX:  
(410) 597-0118

PHONE:  
(800) 269-0271

10:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M. ET,  
MONDAY TO FRIDAY,  
EXCEPT FEDERAL HOLIDAYS

(866) 501-2101 TTY