

SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFIT

Federal Employees Who Are Covered

All federal employees newly hired after December 31, 1983, are covered by Social Security and will pay Social Security taxes. This also includes employees with previous federal service (other than rehired annuitants) if their break in service was a year or longer.

Coverage by Social Security

The old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program, is a federal program designed to protect the worker and his family against economic insecurity when the family's earnings are stopped or reduced because of the worker's disability, death, or retirement.

The program is financed through special taxes paid by workers, their employers, and self-employed people, rather than through general taxation. These taxes are based on earnings. Old-age, survivors, and disability insurance benefits are in turn based on the worker's average earnings under Social Security. Paid monthly, any one of the three kinds of benefits provided under the program means a significant and regular replacement of lost family income.

As a general rule, the amount of Social Security benefits you'll qualify to receive are based on a combination of your earnings which have been subject to Social Security tax and whether you have earned enough "credits" in your Social Security account.

We recommend that you check on your Social Security every 3 years. If there is an error you only have 3 years and 3 months to get it corrected.

Fully Insured

Being fully insured is a status achieved after a worker accumulates a specific number of "quarters of coverage" under the Social Security system. You will need 40 quarters to be fully insured for life. Therefore, an individual employed for at least 10 years in jobs covered by Social Security can normally assume that they are fully insured.

Full Benefits

In Social Security language, an individual's full (100%) old-age entitlement is referred to as their "Primary Insurance Account (PIA)". As a general rule, if you wait until reaching the age of 65 before applying for old-age benefits, the amount you receive is based on your full PIA entitlement. Note that the age at which full retirement benefits are payable will be gradually increased from age 65 to age 67 over the coming years. This will be accomplished by increasing the age for full benefits by two months per year for workers who will reach the age of 62 in the year 2000. So if you were born in 1938 or after you will need to be 67 to receive full Social Security.

Estimating Social Security Benefits

Because the computation methods are so complex, it's almost impossible for a person to accurately determine the exact amount of benefits they will qualify to receive at some future point in time. This is primarily because benefits can be computed in one of several ways and benefit entitlements are constantly changing.

FOR CURRENT INFORMATION ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS CALL 1-800-772-1213

This is an automated telephone service for participants which provides information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you call between 7 am & 7 pm Mon-Fri you may speak with a representative. You can use the 800 number for the following:

- Request a new or replacement social security card.
- A record of your earnings and an estimate of your future social security benefits.
- Proof of payments received from social security.
- How your working affects your social security payments.
- Possible payment of Medicare premium for people with limited income and resources.
- Various social security programs. 1. Social security benefits, 2. Social security disability benefits, 3. Benefits for a spouse of a disabled, retired, or deceased worker, 4. About Medicare, 5. Benefits for people with HIV infection, 6. Children with disabilities.
- For the address, hours of operation, or directions for your nearest social security office.