

Social Security Administration

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Monthly Information Package

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Social Security Column

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

By Bob Simpson

Social Security District Manager in Traverse City



Social Security’s Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides cash payments to children with disabilities whose families have limited income and resources. A child must meet the following medical requirements to be considered disabled under Social Security rules:

- The child must have a medical condition, or a combination of conditions, that results in “marked and severe functional limitations.” This means that the condition(s) must seriously limit the child’s activities.
- The child’s disabling condition(s) must last for at least 12 months, or the condition(s) must be expected to end in death.

We also help children through our Compassionate Allowances program. Compassionate Allowances are a way to quickly identify conditions that, by definition, meet Social Security’s standard for disability benefits. The list can be found at

www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm. Compassionate Allowances help us reduce waiting time to reach a disability determination for children with the most serious disabilities. Thousands of children receive benefits because they have a condition on this list, but children with conditions not on this list can still qualify for SSI.

A child must meet additional eligibility requirements for low income and limited resources to qualify for SSI. To qualify, a child:

- Who is blind must not be working or earning more than \$2,190 a month in 2021.
- Who is not blind, must not be working or earning more than \$1,310 a month in 2021.

Earnings amounts usually change every year. Some older teenagers may have part-time jobs or be involved in work programs, which Social Security will count for financial eligibility.

In addition, if an unmarried child under age 18 is living at home, Social Security may consider some of the parents' income as the child's income. We make allowances for the parents and their other children living in the home when we consider the parents' income. You can read more about children's benefits in our publication, Benefits for Children with Disabilities at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf.

If you are a parent or know a parent, guardian, caregiver, or representative of a child you think may be eligible, visit our Disability Benefits-Apply for a Child (Under Age 18) at www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/apply-child.html to learn more and begin an application.

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Social Security Column

SOCIAL SECURITY HONORS OUR MILITARY HEROES

By Bob Simpson

Social Security District Manager in Traverse City



On Memorial Day, our nation honors military service members who have given their lives for our country. As Former President Franklin D. Roosevelt once said, "Those who have long enjoyed such privileges as we enjoy forget in time that men [and women] have died to win them." This is why families, friends, and communities come together to remember the great sacrifices of our military members and ensure their legacies live on.

The benefits we provide can help the surviving families of deceased military service members. For example, widows, widowers, and their dependent children may be eligible for Social Security survivors benefits. You can learn more about those benefits at www.ssa.gov/survivors.

We also offer support to our wounded warriors. Social Security benefits protect veterans when injuries prevent them from returning to active duty or performing other work. Both the Department of Veteran Affairs and Social Security have disability programs. You may qualify for disability benefits through one program but not the other, or you may qualify for both. Depending on your situation, some members of your family, including your dependent children or spouse, may be eligible to receive Social Security benefits.

Wounded military service members can receive expedited processing of their Social Security disability claims. If you are a veteran with a 100% Permanent & Total compensation rating from the Department of Veterans Affairs, we'll expedite your disability claim.

Want more information about how we can help? Visit www.ssa.gov/woundedwarriors for answers to commonly asked questions or to find information about the application process.

Thinking about retirement or know a veteran who is? Military service members can receive Social Security benefits in addition to their military retirement benefits. For details, visit our webpage for veterans, available at www.ssa.gov/people/veterans.

Please share this information with the military families you know. We honor and thank the veterans who bravely served and died for our country and the military service members who serve today.

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Social Security Column

REPLACEMENT OR CORRECTED SOCIAL SECURITY CARDS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

By Bob Simpson

Social Security District Manager in Traverse City



Social Security offices are currently open only for in-person appointments for limited, critical situations, depending upon local office conditions. However, you can continue to apply for a replacement Social Security card online and by mail. Before requesting a replacement card, please remember that you might not need the physical card. Most of the time, simply knowing your Social Security number is enough.

If you have a critical situation that requires you to have a physical card and you cannot apply by mail or online, you should call your local Social Security office. Please visit our Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates page for more information at www.ssa.gov/coronavirus.

Applying Online

If you don't need any changes to your Social Security Number record (such as a name or date of birth change), applying for a replacement card online is your most convenient option. You don't need to mail proof or visit an office.

You can use our online application if you are an adult, have a State-issued drivers' license or non-driver identification card, and live in the District of Columbia or one of the 45 States that verifies State-issued documents for us. All you need to do is create a *my Social Security* account to access and complete the online application at www.ssa.gov/myaccount/replacement-card.html.

If you live in one of the five States that do not participate — Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, and West Virginia — know that we are working hard to bring this service to you as soon as possible.

Applying by Mail

We require proof of your identity with your replacement card application (www.ssa.gov/forms/ss-5.pdf), usually a State-issued drivers' license or non-driver identification card, or U.S. passport. We call these documents “primary” identity proofs. We understand mailing primary identity proofs with your replacement card application can be challenging. To help, we are temporarily expanding our policy to accept alternative identity documents—or what we call “secondary proofs” — when you cannot mail primary proof.

Acceptable secondary proofs include, but are not limited to:

- Employee identification card.
- School identification card.
- Health insurance card (not a Medicare card).
- U.S. military identification card.

These proofs must be current (not expired), show your name and identifying information (such as your date of birth or age), and be an original or a certified copy.

If you need to change your name, when you mail your replacement card application, you will need to submit proof of identity plus proof of the name change. The proof of identity can be primary or secondary proof. Proof of the name change could be a marriage certificate, divorce

decree, Certificate of Naturalization showing the new name, or a court order approving the name change.

You may be able to submit one document to serve as proof of your name change and identity. For example, you may submit a marriage certificate as proof of name change and identity if the certificate shows the marriage occurred within the prior two years and:

- Includes your prior name.
- Includes your age, birth date or parents' names.
- This information matches your Social Security Number record.

We will return any documents you send us.

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Social Security Column

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FRAUD AND SOCIAL SECURITY

By Bob Simpson

Social Security District Manager in Traverse City



Scammers are using the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to file fraudulent unemployment claims, often using someone else's identity. Scammers may even use the identity of someone who is receiving or applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

SSI applicants and recipients who begin receiving — or appear to begin receiving — State Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits could appear to be ineligible for SSI benefits. They could even appear to be overpaid because of an unemployment claim filed in their name.

These UI fraud schemes are widespread and affect most states. The United States Secret Service is investigating more than 500 claims in over 40 states related to unemployment fraud.

At Social Security, we're taking steps to verify whether SSI applicants and recipients are victims of UI fraud. We will not reduce or terminate your payments due to a fraudulent unemployment claim filed on our behalf. If you suspect you may be a victim of fraud, report it to your state

fraud hotline at www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/UIIDtheft. You may also report suspicions of fraud to your local unemployment office.

Remember that scammers always look for a chance to exploit your fears. Don't fall for their tactics — and guard your personal information. Please share this information with your friends and family — and let's help each other stay vigilant.

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Social Security Column

SOCIAL SECURITY SUPPORTS TEACHERS ONLINE

By Bob Simpson

Social Security District Manager in Traverse City



The past year has been difficult for everyone, including educators and their students. Our nation's teachers have adapted, pivoted, and provided for their students in ways they had never imagined possible. This year, we celebrate Teacher Appreciation Week from May 2 through May 8, and honor all educators who prepare our children for the future.

We know that well-informed instructors can have a powerful and positive influence on their students. That's why we created an Educator Toolkit. It's a shareable online resource for teachers to engage students and educate them on Social Security. The toolkit includes:

- Lesson plans with objectives.
- Infographics and handouts for each lesson plan.
- Links to Social Security web pages.
- Talking points.
- Quiz questions and answers.

You can access the toolkit at www.ssa.gov/thirdparty/educators.html.

We value and welcome the efforts all teachers make to educate America's young people. We want to help spark discussion with students about Social Security. Please share our toolkit with the educators in your communities, today!

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