

Solutions, Strategies, Answers

Newsletter of the Social Security Administration Offices in
Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton and Philadelphia counties



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Welcome to the July 2016 edition of *Solutions, Strategies, Answers*, a newsletter produced by the 18 Social Security Administration Offices in southeastern Pennsylvania.



Prepare for Your Disability Interview

When you become disabled, there are many questions and unknowns when you have to transition out of the workforce due to medical issues. Most people, faced with a disability, will file for benefits with Social Security. When applying for benefits, you should be prepared to answer a number of questions including:

- When your conditions became disabling;
- Dates you last worked;
- The names, addresses, phone numbers, and dates of visits to your doctors;
- The names of medications that you take and medical tests you've had; and
- Marital information.

If you do not know where to start, visit our website: www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityssi. Or, you can contact us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) or visit your local office if you wish to apply for disability benefits.

View our disability starter kit: www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits.htm. Also, look at our disability checklist at: <https://www.ssa.gov/hlp/radr/10/ovw001-checklist.pdf>



Securing today
and tomorrow

Recognizing 60 Years of Social Security Disability Insurance

On August 1, 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed into law this important milestone: sixty years ago, the Social Security Amendments of 1956 established disability insurance as part of Social Security.

Lawmakers originally considered establishing the disability program as early as 1935, when Congress passed the original Social Security Act. However, policymakers could not reach consensus on how to effectively administer and fund it.

Nearly 20 years later, in 1954, Congress established Social Security's first disability program. It provided a "disability freeze" for disabled workers, which protected a worker's retirement benefit by not penalizing workers who could not contribute to the Social Security program during periods of disability.

Social Security disability benefits lift three million people out of poverty each year. Among disabled workers, four out of five beneficiaries rely on their Social Security benefits for at least half of their income; for more than a third of beneficiaries, it is their only source of income.

Visit our [Faces and Facts of Disability](#) page to learn more.



Q: *When did Social Security start?*

A: The Social Security Act was signed by FDR on 8/14/35. Taxes were collected for the first time in January 1937 and the first one-time, lump-sum payments were made that same month. Regular ongoing monthly benefits started in January 1940.

Q: *Is it true that Social Security was originally just a retirement program?*

A: Yes. Under the 1935 law, what we now think of as Social Security only paid retirement benefits to the primary worker. A 1939 change in the law added survivor benefits and benefits for the retiree's spouse and children. In 1956, disability benefits were added. Keep in mind, however, that the Social Security Act itself was much broader than just the program which today we commonly describe as "Social Security." The original 1935 law contained the first national unemployment compensation program, aid to the states for various health and welfare programs, and the Aid to Dependent Children program.

Q: *Is it true that life expectancy was less than 65 back in 1935, so the Social Security program was designed in such a way that people would not live long enough to collect benefits?*

A: Not really. Life expectancy *at birth* was less than 65, but this is a misleading measure. A more appropriate measure is life expectancy after attainment of adulthood, which shows that most Americans could expect to live to age 65 once they survived childhood. ([See more detailed explanation.](#))

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Send a message to edward.lafferty@ssa.gov or richard.gaudiosi@ssa.gov



Information for School Officials

Social Security relies on school officials and teachers to help us correctly pay benefits to students.

CERTIFYING SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

We pay benefits to some students who are between 18 and 19 years old and still in full-time attendance in elementary or secondary school. We may ask you to certify that a student is in full-time attendance at your school in order to pay benefits. You can learn the details of this process on our page, [For School Officials](#).

PROVIDING INFORMATION ABOUT A CHILD'S DISABILITY

We also pay benefits to children who are disabled. To determine whether a child is eligible for disability benefits, we may ask you to provide information about his or her academic performance and day-to-day functioning in school.

<https://www.ssa.gov/schools/>

Pennsylvania Residents Can Now Use State ID Card to Obtain Replacement Social Security Card Online

Pennsylvania residents can now use their state ID card to obtain a replacement Social Security Number card online. Previously, a valid driver's license was required.

To obtain a SSN card using the online process, individuals must first create an online *my Social Security* account at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

They must also have a U.S. domestic mailing address and not require a change to their record (such as a name change). The online process allows people to replace their SSN card from the comfort of their home or office, without the need to travel to a Social Security office.