The Social Security Star

October 2026

Highlights

Protect Your Information - Guard Your Card

Scam Awareness Resources For Your Community

my Social Security

Check out your *Social Security Statement*, change your address and manage your benefits online today.

SSA.gov/myaccount

Online Services

You can access many of our services online.

SSA.gov/onlineservices

SCAN ME!

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Protect Your Information - Guard Your Card

Your Social Security number is key to your personal and financial information. Protecting it is essential to prevent identity theft and avoid scams. The following tips will help you safeguard your card and personal information:

- **Don't Carry Your Card Daily:** Keep your Social Security card in a safe place. Only bring it with you when absolutely necessary.
- **Share Only When Required:** Always remember that most situations do not require you to show your card. Just knowing your number is usually enough.
- **Ask Questions:** If someone requests your Social Security number, ask why it's needed, how it will be used, and what happens if you refuse to provide it.
- **Avoid Carrying Documents with Your Number:** Don't carry papers or cards that display your Social Security number unless absolutely necessary.

Prevent Identity Theft and Avoid Scams

- Be cautious of unsolicited requests for your Social Security number, whether by phone, email, or online.
- Never share your number or personal information with unknown sources.
- Stay informed about current scams and how to protect yourself on our Scam Alert webpage at www.ssa.gov/scam.

Need a Replacement Card? If you do need a replacement card, requesting one online is the fastest, safest, and most convenient way. Anyone can start the process online, even without a personal *my* Social Security account. Most U.S. citizens can request and receive a replacement Social Security card through our website.

The key to protecting your Social Security number is to stay vigilant and informed.

Please share these tips and resources with your friends and family to help everyone protect their information.

Social Security Number and Card

Need a replacement Social Security Card? Request one at

SSA.gov/number-card

FAQs

Get answers to frequently asked questions about Social Security.

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Scam Awareness Resources For Your Community

Scammers continue to impersonate government offices, threaten loss of benefits, and pressure individuals to quickly share personal information or send money. In this article, we are sharing best practices and resources to help you protect your personal information!

We encourage you to share these Social Security resources with your family and friends:

Scam Awareness Materials

Our **Protect Yourself from Scams** webpage at www.ssa.gov/scam provides:

- Examples of reported scams.
- Tips for recognizing fraudulent communications.
- Steps to take if you or someone you know has been targeted.
- Ways scammers are using fake social media accounts and Artificial Intelligence (AI) to trick people.

my Social Security Accounts

We also recommend creating and using your personal *my* Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. A secure online account helps you:

- Safely access your personal Social Security information.
- Review your earnings record and benefit estimates.
- Manage your benefits without relying on unsolicited contact.
- Reduce the likelihood of engaging with fraudulent outreach or fake websites.

By using an official *my* Social Security account, you will gain a trusted, secure place to handle your information, making you less vulnerable to misinformation or impersonation attempts.

How You Can Help Others

You can assist by:

- Encouraging people to rely on official SSA channels before responding to unexpected calls, emails, or texts.
- Sharing SSA's scam awareness webpage on social media.
- Helping family and friends set up their *my* Social Security accounts.
- Reporting suspicious activity to help strengthen nationwide monitoring.

We encourage you to review these resources and bookmark them for future use. Please share this information with friends and family to help us spread the word about scams.

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Social Security Accelerates Access For Individuals With Severe Disabilities

If you or someone you care about is living with a serious medical condition, you understand how crucial it is to receive timely support. We recently added 14 conditions to its Compassionate Allowances (CAL) list, which will enable faster access to disability benefits for more people.

What's the Compassionate Allowances List?

The CAL list is our way of fast-tracking help for people with the most severe health problems. If your condition is on this list, it's serious enough to qualify for disability benefits and your application is moved to the front of the line.

What's Changed?

We added these 14 conditions to the CAL list:

- Adenylosuccinate Lyase Deficiency – Neonatal Form and Type 1
- Aicardi Syndrome
- Baraitser-Winter Syndrome
- Beare-Stevenson Cutis Gyrata Syndrome
- Bohring-Opitz Syndrome
- CASK-Related Gene Disorders
- Hepatosplenic T-Cell Lymphoma
- Lafora Disease
- Malignant Migrating Partial Seizures of Infancy (MMPSI)
- OPHN1 Syndrome
- Primary Cardiac Sarcoma
- Primary Intracranial Malignant Melanoma
- Uveal Melanoma – with Metastases
- Warburg Micro Syndrome

With these additions, there are now 314 conditions on the list. That means more people than ever can get the help they need, without waiting months or even years for a decision.

Why Does This Matter?

Waiting for disability benefits can be stressful, especially when you're dealing with a life-changing diagnosis. The CAL initiative is designed to cut through red tape for individuals who need help fast. Since the initiative started, over 1.2 million people have been approved through this accelerated disability process.

How Does It Work?

When you apply for disability benefits, we will review your medical records to see if you qualify. If your condition is on the CAL list, we use technology to flag your application and speed things up. In some cases, we can even get your medical records electronically, which makes the process even faster.

For the full list of CAL conditions, visit: ssa.gov/compassionateallowances.

To start your application for disability benefits, visit: ssa.gov/apply.

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What You Need To Know About The Ticket To Work Program

Starting or returning to work while receiving Social Security disability benefits can feel overwhelming, especially if you are unsure where to begin. The good news is that you don't have to navigate the process alone.

Whether you are just beginning to consider working or are ready to take the next step, the Ticket to Work (Ticket) Program can be a powerful partner on your path to financial independence.

What Is the Ticket to Work Program?

The Ticket Program is a free and voluntary Social Security program that supports career development for adults ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and want to work. The program connects participants with approved service providers who offer career development, job placement assistance, and ongoing support.

Authorized service providers offer a wide range of supports — including career counseling, vocational rehabilitation, job placement assistance, and training — to guide you along the way. The providers you choose become part of your personal "employment team," working with you to build confidence, develop skills, and move closer to financial independence through work.

The goal is to make it easier to explore working without immediately losing the benefits you rely on.

How it Works

Through the program, your employment team will help you:

- Clarify your work goals.
- Build a resume or update existing experience.
- Identify job opportunities.
- Receive ongoing support after employment begins.

You choose who you work with, and the support you receive can evolve as your needs change over time.

Key Benefits of Participating

One of the biggest concerns people have is losing their benefits as soon as they begin working. The Ticket Program and other Work Incentives provide safeguards designed to ease that worry:

- **Trial Work Period (TWP):** You can test working for at least nine months while still receiving full SSDI benefit, regardless of how much you earn from your job. See choosework.ssa.gov/library/fact-sheet-trial-work-period-twp for more information.
- **Extended Period of Eligibility (EPE):** After the TWP, you have a 36-month window where benefits can restart if your income drops below a certain level.
- **Continued Medicare or Medicaid coverage:** Health coverage can continue even after

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benefits stop, often for several years. Learn more at choosework.ssa.gov/library/fact-sheet-medicare-and-medicaid-employment-supports.

- **Protection from Medical Continuing Disability Reviews:** As long as you make timely progress in the program, medical reviews of your disability will be paused. Find out more at choosework.ssa.gov/about/work-incentives.

These Work Incentives are important safety nets, but they can be complex, depending on which benefits you receive, and your specific situation. This listing is just a general overview. It is important to learn how each rule applies to you personally by talking to a service provider before making decisions about work and benefits. Take time to review the fact sheets linked above and consider taking some of the next steps listed below.

Who Should Consider the Ticket Program?

This program may be a good fit if you:

- Want to work but aren't sure how it will affect your benefits.
- Need help finding a job or gaining new skills.
- Prefer ongoing guidance rather than navigating the process on your own.

Things to Keep in Mind

While Ticket Program service providers offer strong support, it is important that you stay informed and organized to ensure you can take advantage of the full benefits of the program. Make sure you:

- Keep records of your work earnings.
- Report earnings and income changes to Social Security.
- Stay in contact with your service provider.
- Ask questions whenever something is unclear.

Final Thoughts

The Ticket Program is about more than employment; it's about creating options. Whether your goal is a transition to work, a new career path, or greater financial independence, the program provides tools and protections to help you explore those possibilities.

If work has been on your mind, understanding how the program operates can open the door to opportunities that are manageable and sustainable.

Ready to Learn More?

- Attend a free WISE webinar to learn how the program works and get answers to common questions. Learn more at choosework.ssa.gov/wise.
- Visit the Ticket to Work website at choosework.ssa.gov/library/fact-sheets to explore resources and read more about your options.
- Use the Find Help tool at choosework.ssa.gov/findhelp to connect with service providers that match your goals.

For personalized support, you can contact the Ticket to Work Help Line at 1-866-968-7842, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.- 8 p.m. ET. Specially trained representatives are available to answer many of your questions about disability benefits and Social Security Work Incentives. For callers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities, you can call our TTY at 1-866-833-2967. You can also email us at TicketToWork@ssa.gov.

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We invite you to learn more at choosework.ssa.gov—and share this resourcewith those who may benefit.

Did You Know That Certain Changes Can Affect SSI Payments?

If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), staying informed about your reporting responsibilities is essential. Changes in your income, resources, or living arrangements can directly affect your eligibility and the amount of your SSI payment. By reporting these changes to Social Security as soon as they happen, you help ensure your payment stays correct and avoid overpayments, underpayments, or penalties.

This article walks you through the types of changes you must report, why it matters, and how to keep your information up to date.

Changes You Must Report When You Receive SSI

Whether you're applying for or already receiving SSI, you are required to let us know when certain aspects of your life change. Reporting helps prevent incorrect payments and reduces the risk of having to pay money back later. If you are married and living with your spouse, you must also report changes affecting your spouse. Likewise, if you are applying for SSI for a child, you must report changes involving the child's parents.

Examples of changes that must be reported include:

- Any change in income (such as wages, pensions, or unemployment benefits).
- Any change in resources (like bank accounts, vehicles, or property).
- Changes in employment status (starting, stopping, or changing jobs).
- Any change to your address. Keeping your address current helps us contact you when we need important information, reducing the risk of payment interruptions.
- Changes in living arrangements, such as entering or leaving a nursing home or correctional institution or someone moving in or out of your household.
- Any change in citizenship or immigration status.
- Any change in marital status (marriage, divorce, or separation).

To see a complete list of reporting responsibilities, read Understanding Supplemental Security Income Reporting Responsibilities at www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-report-ussi.htm.

How to Report Changes

For changes other than wages:

Call 1-800-772-1213, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., or contact your local Social Security office.

How to Report Your Wages

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If you work, you have several convenient options for reporting your wages each month:

- **Payroll Information Exchange (PIE):** Ask your employer to send your wages directly to us through PIE. You can complete and submit the SSA-8240 online, at your local Social Security office, or give authorization by phone. Continue to report your wages using another method until you receive confirmation that PIE wage reporting has started.
- ***my* Social Security account**: Report wages easily through your secure online account. You can also access your Benefit Verification letter, which serves as proof you receive SSI. If you don't have an account, create one today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.
- **SSA Mobile Wage Reporting app:** Available for free from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store
- **Telephone Wage Reporting system**
- **Call us at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778)**
- **Visit your local Social Security office.** Find yours at www.ssa.gov/locator.

Important:

Before using an automated wage reporting option—or if you change employers—you must call us and provide your employer's information and employer identification number (EIN).

To help you remember to report your wages each month, you can sign up for free email or text reminders at: https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USSSA/subscriber/new?topic_id=USSSA_541.

Report Changes on Time

Reporting changes and wages by the **10th day of the month after they occur** helps prevent being overpaid or underpaid. If you work, we encourage you to report wages by the **6th day of the month** after you get paid to reduce the chance of overpayments. Failure to report changes on time may result in penalties that reduce your SSI payment.

Knowledge Is Key

Staying informed and reporting changes promptly helps ensure your SSI payments stay accurate. Securing today and tomorrow starts with being proactive and keeping your information up to date.

Please share this information with friends, family, and your community—and consider posting it on social media to help others stay informed.