

OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Mission

Ensure equity and accessibility in delivering Social Security services by improving the customer experience and addressing systemic barriers to participation in our programs.

Programs

Few government agencies affect the lives of as many people as we do. In accordance with law and regulations, we administer three programs under the *Social Security Act*:

- **Old-Age and Survivors Insurance:** Established in 1935, the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) program provides retirement and survivors benefits to qualified workers and their family members. In fiscal year (FY) 2023, we paid OASI benefits to an average of approximately 58 million beneficiaries each month and incurred over \$1,204 billion in benefit payment expenses¹ to OASI beneficiaries through the fiscal year. Learn more about retirement benefits on our website at [SSA.gov/benefits/retirement](https://ssa.gov/benefits/retirement) and about survivors benefits at [SSA.gov/benefits/survivors](https://ssa.gov/benefits/survivors).
- **Disability Insurance:** Established in 1956, the Disability Insurance (DI) program provides benefits for workers who become disabled and their families. In FY 2023, we paid DI benefits to an average of approximately 9 million beneficiaries each month and incurred over \$155 billion in benefit payment expenses¹ to DI beneficiaries through the fiscal year. Read stories from DI beneficiaries on our website at [SSA.gov/disabilityfacts/stories.html](https://ssa.gov/disabilityfacts/stories.html), and learn more about DI benefits at [SSA.gov/benefits/disability](https://ssa.gov/benefits/disability).
- **Supplemental Security Income:** Established in 1972, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides financial support to aged, blind, and disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources. In FY 2023, we paid SSI benefits to a monthly average of 7.5 million recipients (approximately 2.5 million of whom concurrently receive OASI or DI benefits) and incurred over \$58 billion in SSI Federal and State supplementary benefit payment expenses¹ through the fiscal year. Learn more about SSI benefits on our website at [SSA.gov/benefits/ssi](https://ssa.gov/benefits/ssi).

We also support national programs administered by other Federal and State agencies, as required by law, such as Medicare, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, State Children's Health Insurance Program, E-Verify, Medicaid, and Federal Benefits for Veterans, and programs associated with the *Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974*, *Coal Industry Retiree Health Benefit Act*, and *Help America Vote Act*.

¹ Benefit payment expenses consist of benefits paid and the change in benefits accrued during FY 2023.



How Social Security Benefited America in Fiscal Year 2023

Our programs and services are vital to the public, and the scope of our work is enormous. For more than 85 years, Social Security has provided income security for retirees, individuals with disabilities, and families that lose a wage-earner. Almost 90 percent of workers over the age of 65 receive Social Security benefits.

- We paid a combined total of over \$1.4 trillion in Social Security and SSI benefits.
- Approximately 86 percent of the American population age 65 and over received Social Security benefits.
- On average each month, a million blind or disabled children under age 18 received SSI benefits.

How We Served America in Fiscal Year 2023

- Processed over 401.5 million online transactions.
- Mailed an estimated 350 million notices.
- Registered over 9.8 million new accounts on the [my Social Security](#) portal for a total of more than 80 million users. The portal offers many secure and convenient online self-service options.
- Provided *Social Security Statements (Statement)* to beneficiaries online via [my Social Security](#) more than 32 million times, and by mail with approximately 14.6 million paper *Statements*.
- Processed over 18 million applications for new and replacement Social Security Number (SSN) cards.
- Posted approximately 304 million annual earnings items to workers' records submitted by both employers and self-employed individuals.
- Performed nearly 2.4 billion automated SSN verifications for employers.
- Conducted 23 cost benefit analyses for incoming data exchanges with various Federal partners, resulting in \$11 billion in projected annual savings.
- Our agents handled over 25 million calls and our self-service options handled over 4.4 million calls on our National 800 Number, amid staffing and technology challenges. These challenges resulted in an annual average speed of answer of nearly 36 minutes.
- Completed over 8.5 million retirement and disability claims for benefits; conducted over 550,000 full medical continuing disability reviews (CDR); and performed over 2.5 million non-medical redeterminations of SSI eligibility.
- Completed nearly 378,000 hearing requests; reviewed nearly 80,000 cases in the Appeals Council; and defended over 15,000 disability cases in Federal court.

Organization

Over 61,000 Federal employees and 15,000 State employees serve the public from a network of more than 1,500 offices across the country and around the world. We administer our programs and services online, by phone, by video, and in person in our offices. Our customers can access our online services such as applying for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits; checking the status of an application or appeal; or requesting a replacement Social Security card.

A diverse, engaged, and well-trained workforce is critical to meeting our service delivery goals. Our employees directly serve the public or provide support to employees who do. We support our workforce throughout their chosen career paths by fostering an engaging workplace environment and by providing training and development opportunities.

State disability determination services (DDS) make disability determinations for initial claims, reconsiderations, and CDRs. Challenges with hiring and maintaining staff have limited the DDSs' capacity to improve disability workload performance.

Administrative law judges in our hearing offices and administrative appeals judges in our Appeals Council decide appealed cases.

Our processing centers handle the most complex benefit payment decisions, in addition to issuing benefit payments after appeals decisions, determining and collecting debt, correcting records, and performing program integrity work.

Our teleservice centers answer a broad range of Social Security and Medicare questions, schedule appointments for our field offices, provide status updates on current claims or appeals, and ensure the accuracy of our records.

For more information about our organization and its functions, refer to the *Summary of Key Management Officials' Responsibilities* section in the *Appendix* or visit our organizational structure [webpage](#).



Remember! We are with You from Birth through Retirement

When people experience major life events—the birth of a child, a new job or job loss, marriage or the loss of a spouse, health problems, retirement—we are here to help. Create your own *my Social Security* account to receive personalized estimates of future benefits based on your real earnings, see your latest Statement, and review your earnings history ([SSA.gov/myaccount](https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount)).