

Fact Sheet: United States (2022)

Social Security Quick Facts

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Who Receives Benefits

- **Retirement benefits:** The largest group of beneficiaries in the U.S. are its 46,329,595 retired workers, who account for 71.4 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries.¹
- **Disability benefits:** The U.S. has 8,151,016 disabled workers who receive Social Security disability income, representing 12.6 percent of the nation's Social Security beneficiaries.²
- **Spousal and survivor benefits:** In the U.S., 6,366,621 spouses, former spouses, widows, widowers, and parents of deceased beneficiaries³ account for 9.8 percent of the nation's Social Security beneficiaries.⁴ An additional 4,003,635 children, representing 6.2 percent of Social Security beneficiaries receive benefits.⁵

Impact

- **Economic engine:** Annual Social Security benefits pump about \$1.1 trillion into the national economy, with \$824 billion paid annually to those receiving retirement benefits and their eligible family members, \$128 billion via survivors benefits, and an additional \$144 billion paid through the disability program.⁶ Recipients buy goods and services with their Social Security benefits, increasing business sales—which help not only the companies making those sales but also the firms that supply them. The result is more jobs and income to businesses and workers.
- **Reduced poverty:** Social Security lifted 16.1 million people 65 or older out of poverty, reducing the proportion below the poverty line from 37.8 percent to 9 percent.⁷

Average Benefits

- **Retirement benefits:** The average Social Security retired worker benefit is \$1,544 per month (about \$18,530 annually).⁸
- **Disability benefits:** The average Social Security disabled worker benefit is \$1,277 per month (about \$15,300 annually).⁹

Nearly one in five U.S. residents—65 million people—receives Social Security benefits. These payments inject more than \$1.1 trillion into the national economy every year.

Reliance

- **At least half of income.** 22,421,315 residents, or 42 percent of individuals 65 and older, live in families that rely on the program for at least half of their income.
- **More than 90% of income.** 10,792,018 residents, or 20 percent of individuals 65 and older, live in families that rely on the program for at least 90 percent of their income.
- **Black individuals rely more on Social Security income.** Overall, 28 percent of Black residents 65 and older live in families that rely on Social for at least 90 percent of their income as compared with 19 percent of white residents.

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- 1 OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2020. Social Security Administration: https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/2020/table02.html.
 - 2 OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2020. Social Security Administration: https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/2020/table02.html.
 - 3 In certain circumstances where parents are dependent on their children for at least half of their income, the parents can receive parent's benefits.
 - 4 OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2020. Social Security Administration: https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/2020/table02.html.
 - 5 OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2020. Social Security Administration: https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/2020/table02.html.
 - 6 OASDI Estimated Total Benefits Paid, 2020, Social Security Administration: <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2021/5j.html#table5.j1>.
 - 7 Social Security Lifts More People Above the Poverty Line Than Any Other Program. <https://www.cbpp.org/research/social-security/social-security-lifts-more-people-above-the-poverty-line-than-any-other#:~:text=Social%20Security%20benefits%20play%20a,March%202021%20Current%20Population%20Survey>.
 - 8 OASDI Number and Total Monthly Benefits for Beneficiaries, age 65 or older, 2020: <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2021/5j.html#table5.j6>.
 - 9 OASDI Number and Total Monthly Benefits for Beneficiaries, age 65 or older, 2020: <https://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2021/5j.html#table5.j8>.

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