

Fact Sheet: Iowa (2022)

Social Security Quick Facts

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Who Receives Benefits

- **Retirement benefits:** The largest group of beneficiaries in Iowa are its 493,211 retired workers, who account for 74.3 percent of all Social Security beneficiaries in the state.¹
- **Disability benefits:** Iowa has 75,552 residents who receive Social Security disability income, representing 11.4 percent of the state's Social Security beneficiaries.²
- **Spousal and survivor benefits:** In Iowa, 58,425 spouses, former spouses, widows, widowers, and parents of deceased beneficiaries³ account for 8.8 percent of the state's Social Security beneficiaries.⁴ An additional 36,615 children, representing 5.5 percent of the state's Social Security beneficiaries, receive benefits.⁵

Impact

- **Economic engine.** Annual Social Security benefits to Iowans pump at least \$11.4 billion into the state economy, with \$8.8 billion paid annually to those receiving retirement benefits and their eligible family members, \$1.3 billion via survivors benefits, and an additional \$1.2 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 in Iowa.
- **Reduced poverty.** Social Security lifted 116,000 Iowans 65 or older out of poverty from 2018 through 2020. In fact, 28.8 percent of the state's residents in this age group would be in poverty but for Social Security benefits; that number falls to 6.2 percent when Social Security income is included. Nationally, the program lifted 16.1 million people 65 and older out of poverty, reducing the proportion below the poverty line from 37.8 percent to 9 percent.⁷

More than one in five Iowa residents—663,803 people—receives Social Security benefits. These payments inject more than \$11.4 billion into the state's economy every year.

Average Benefits

- **Retirement benefits:** In Iowa, the average Social Security retired worker benefit is \$1,554 per month (about \$18,600 annually). The national average monthly retirement benefit is \$1,544.⁸
- **Disability benefits:** In Iowa, the average Social Security disabled worker benefit is \$1,216 per month (about \$14,600 annually). The national average monthly disabled worker benefit is \$1,277.⁹

Reliance

- **At least half of income.** 198,502 Iowa residents, or 39 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.** 70,232 Iowa residents, or 14 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, 37 percent of Black Iowa residents 65 and older live in families that rely on Social for at least 90 percent of their income as compared with 14 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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