



This update provides new information for 2008 for many items such as Social Security taxes and benefits. By law, these numbers change automatically each year to keep the program up to date with increases in price and wage levels. Whether you are working or you are already getting Social Security benefits, these changes are important to you.

Information for people who are working

Social Security and Medicare taxes		
	2007	2008
Social Security taxes		
Employee/employer (each)	6.2% on earnings up to \$97,500	6.2% on earnings up to \$102,000
Self-employed *Can be offset by income tax provisions	12.4%* on earnings up to \$97,500	12.4%* on earnings up to \$102,000
Medicare taxes		
Employee/employer (each)	1.45% on all earnings	1.45% on all earnings
Self-employed *Can be offset by income tax provisions	2.9%* on all earnings	2.9%* on all earnings
Work credits—When you work, you earn credits toward Social Security benefits. You need a certain number of credits to be eligible for Social Security benefits. The number you need depends on your age and the type of benefit for which you are applying. You can earn a maximum of four credits each year. Most people need 40 credits to qualify for retirement benefits.		
	2007	2008
	\$1,000 earns one credit	\$1,050 earns one credit

Information for people who receive Social Security benefits

Earnings limits		
Under federal law, people who are receiving Social Security benefits who have not reached full retirement age are entitled to receive all of their benefits as long as their earnings are under the limits indicated below. For people born in 1943, the full retirement age is 66. The full retirement age will increase gradually each year until it reaches age 67 for people born in 1960 or later.		
	2007	2008
At full retirement age or older	No limit on earnings	No limit on earnings
Under full retirement age	\$12,960 For every \$2 over the limit, \$1 is withheld from benefits.	\$13,560 For every \$2 over the limit, \$1 is withheld from benefits.
In the year you reach full retirement age	\$34,440 For every \$3 over the limit, \$1 is withheld from benefits until the month you reach full retirement age.	\$36,120 For every \$3 over the limit, \$1 is withheld from benefits until the month you reach full retirement age.
Disability beneficiaries' earnings limits: If you work while receiving disability benefits you must tell us about your earnings no matter how little you earn. You may have unlimited earnings during a trial work period of up to nine months (not necessarily in a row) and still receive full benefits. Once you have completed your nine-month trial work period, we will determine if you are still entitled to disability benefits. You also may be eligible for other work incentives to help you make the transition back to work.		
Substantial Gainful Activity (Non-blind)	\$900 per month	\$940 per month
Substantial Gainful Activity (Blind)	\$1,500 per month	\$1,570 per month
Trial work period month	\$640 per month	\$670 per month

(over)

Information for people who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Monthly federal SSI payment (maximum)		
	2007	2008
Individual	\$623	\$637
Couple	\$934	\$956
Monthly income limits		
Individual whose income is only from wages	\$1,331	\$1,359
Individual whose income is not from wages	\$643	\$657
Couple whose income is only from wages	\$1,953	\$1,997
Couple whose income is not from wages	\$954	\$976
<p>NOTE: If you have income, your monthly benefit generally will be lower than the maximum federal SSI payment. Remember, you must report all of your income to us. Some states add money to the federal SSI payment. If you live in one of these states, you may qualify for a higher payment. Your income can be greater than the limits indicated and you still may qualify.</p>		

Information for people on Medicare

Most Medicare costs are increasing this year to keep up with the rise in health care costs.		
	2007	2008
Hospital Insurance (Part A)		
For first 60 days in a hospital, patient pays	\$992	\$1,024
For 61st through 90th days in a hospital, patient pays	\$248 per day	\$256 per day
Beyond 90 days in a hospital, patient pays (for up to 60 more days)	\$496 per day	\$512 per day
For first 20 days in a skilled nursing facility, patient pays	\$0	\$0
For 21st through 100th days in a skilled nursing facility, patient pays	\$124 per day	\$128 per day
<p>Part A Premium Buy-In: The amount of the premium you pay to buy Medicare Part A depends on the number of Social Security credits you have earned. If you have:</p>		
40 credits	\$0	\$0
30-39 credits	\$226 per month	\$233 per month
less than 30 credits	\$410 per month	\$423 per month
Medical Insurance (Part B)		
Premium	\$93.50 per month	\$96.40 per month**
Deductible	\$131 per year	\$135 per year
	After the patient has paid the deductible, Part B pays for 80 percent of covered services.	
<p>NOTE: If you get Medicare and your income is low, your state may pay your Medicare premiums and, in some cases, your deductibles and other out-of-pocket medical expenses. Contact your local medical assistance (Medicaid) agency, social services or welfare office for more information.</p>		
<p>**Standard monthly premium is \$96.40. Some people with higher incomes pay higher premiums.</p>		