

The proportion of beneficiaries receiving \$116 increased from 7.2 percent in February 1959 to 10.7 percent in December. During the same period the proportion receiving benefits of \$60-\$115 declined 4 percent, and the proportion receiving less than \$60 rose  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 1 percent.

Disability insurance beneficiaries living in Michigan were receiving the highest monthly benefits—an average of \$97.19—and those in Mississippi were receiving the lowest, \$78.39. The ranking of the States in December by size of average benefit is similar to that in February, with few States changing more than two positions. Benefits of \$90-\$116 were being paid to 68 percent of the disabled-worker beneficiaries in Michigan and to 29 percent in Mississippi. Only 14 percent of the beneficiaries in Michigan but 46 percent of those in Mississippi were receiving benefits of \$33-\$74.

---

## Persons Receiving Payments From Public Programs for Long-Term Disability, December 1934-59\*

The past quarter century has seen almost a five-fold increase in the number of persons receiving cash benefits or payments for long-term total disability under public income-maintenance programs. This increase has been at a much more rapid rate than the increase in the total number of persons aged 14-64 with long-term disabilities (of more than 6 months' duration) in the Nation's institutional and noninstitutional population. Consequently, as a proportion of the total, the number receiving benefits rose substantially, from 12 percent in December 1934 to 42 percent in December 1959, as shown in the accompanying table.

### GROWTH OF PROGRAMS, 1934-49

Public programs providing a source of income to individuals with prolonged disabilities have expanded rapidly, especially since the end of World War II. In 1934, protection through public provisions was confined to workmen's compensation laws; to programs for veterans, the Armed

Forces, and civilian government employees; and, in about half the States, to special assistance programs for the blind. These programs provided cash payments for long-term total disability in December 1934 to about 230,000 persons, or a little more than one-tenth of the Nation's long-term disabled aged 14-64.

Except for the disability provisions in the Railroad Retirement Act and the provisions in the original Social Security Act for Federal grants for aid to the blind, no special public income-maintenance programs for persons with a protracted disability were introduced during the next 15 years. The number of beneficiaries under existing programs, however, had more than doubled by December 1949 and constituted almost one-fifth of the long-term disabled population. The primary reason was the rapid increase in the number of totally disabled persons receiving veterans' pensions or compensation (defined as those with disability ratings of 70 percent or more).

### THE DECADE 1950-59

The 1950's saw added to the Social Security Act two new income-maintenance programs for persons with a long-term disability. The first, in 1950, was a program of Federal grants to the States for aid to the permanently and totally disabled. By December 1954 this program was next to the veterans' programs in size and was making payments to 220,000 of the more than 850,000 persons under age 65 receiving payments for extended disability.

The second program, enacted in 1956, provided for the payment of benefits under old-age, survivors, and disability insurance to severely disabled workers aged 50-64 and also to the adult disabled children (if the disability had started before they attained age 18) of deceased and retired workers. (Under the 1958 amendments, the disabled children of disabled workers were included.) Primarily as the result of this new program, the number of recipients of extended disability benefits rose by more than 400,000 from 1954 to 1959, to an unduplicated total of 1.3 million. They represented more than two-fifths of the estimated 3.1 million persons aged 14-64 in the Nation's institutional and noninstitutional population with prolonged disabilities.

---

\*Prepared by Alfred M. Skolnik, Division of Program Research, Office of the Commissioner.

## THE PROGRAMS TODAY

In contrast to the situation in earlier years, the programs under the Social Security Act are now providing the major share of income maintenance for the severely disabled under age 65. In December 1959 there were 415,000 disability beneficiaries under the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program and 400,000 recipients of assistance under the Federal-State programs of aid to the blind and aid to the permanently and totally disabled. The veterans' programs, which in previous years had been responsible for the largest group of disability beneficiaries, had 330,000 veterans under age 65 (with disability ratings of 70 percent or more) on its compensation and pension rolls in 1959—55,000 less than in 1954. The remaining programs showed a modest increase in the number of beneficiaries during the 5-year period, from 255,000 to 290,000.

About 10 percent of the beneficiaries in December 1959, or an estimated 145,000, were receiving payments from more than one type of public program. The number of beneficiaries receiving dual benefits has more than doubled since the passage of the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance legislation providing basic disability insurance protection to the general population. Much of the overlap involves recipients of a veteran's pension or compensation.

The income-maintenance programs listed in the accompanying table do not include aid to dependent children and general assistance. In 1959 about 170,000 families were receiving aid to de-

pendent children as a result of the partial or total incapacity of a parent, and perhaps 125,000 persons with disablements of varying severity were receiving relief through State and local general assistance programs. An unknown number of these recipients would be persons with long-term total disabilities.

The data in the table also exclude the State rehabilitation programs that provide for the maintenance of their disabled clients undergoing rehabilitation if they have no other adequate means of support. Nor do the data include programs that primarily furnish services rather than cash benefits to persons with extended disabilities—patients in mental, tuberculosis, and chronic disease hospitals and in other institutions and homes providing long-term care.

## "WOULD-BE" WORKERS

In assessing the amount of protection that persons with an extended disability are receiving through public programs, it might be well to note that some of the disabled have not been or would not be regularly attached to the labor market. It is estimated, for example, that of the 3.1 million persons aged 14-64 with prolonged disabilities on an average day in 1959, perhaps 2.3 million would have been in the labor force but for their disability. The others, if not disabled, would have been engaged in some activity other than gainful employment; they would be keeping house or attending school, for example, or be in

*Estimated number of persons aged 14-64 in the United States receiving cash payments for long-term total disability<sup>1</sup> from public income-maintenance programs, December of selected years, 1934-59*

[In thousands]

Source of cash payment	1934	1939	1944	1949	1954	1959
Long-term disabled aged 14-64, total number in population.....	2,000	2,300	2,500	2,700	2,900	3,100
Long-term disabled aged 14-64, number receiving payments <sup>2</sup> .....	230	290	285	490	865	1,290
Federal civilian and uniformed services retirement.....	30	40	50	80	110	135
State and local government retirement.....	5	10	15	20	30	35
Workmen's compensation.....	40	45	55	60	70	75
Veterans' compensation and pension programs <sup>3</sup> .....	145	160	135	275	385	330
Railroad retirement.....		15	15	40	45	45
Old-age, survivors, and disability insurance:						
Worker disability.....						335
Childhood disability.....						80
Public assistance:						
Aid to the blind.....	20	40	40	50	55	60
Aid to the permanently and totally disabled.....					220	340
Percent of long-term disabled receiving payments.....	11.5	12.6	11.4	18.1	29.8	41.6

<sup>1</sup> Physical or mental disease or impairments that have for more than 6 months prevented persons from working or following their normal activities on a regular basis.

<sup>2</sup> Because some persons received payments from more than one source, the sum of the recipients of the individual programs is larger than the total.

<sup>3</sup> Payments to veterans reported as having disability ratings of 70 percent or more.

Source: Estimated in the Division of Program Research on the basis of published and unpublished data from agencies administering income-maintenance programs.

retirement status. These persons presumably are receiving support from the same income sources that existed before the onset of their disability—such as the earnings of spouses and other members of the family or pension plans, insurance policies, and other investments.

For some purposes, then, it is more meaningful to confine the analysis to would-be workers among the disabled who presumably are suffering a loss of earnings—actual or potential—because of an extended disability. Such an analysis, however, would also have to take into consideration the fact that not all the disability programs listed in the table are paying benefits as replacement for lost earnings. The public assistance programs and the childhood disability program under old-age, survivors, and disability insurance, for example, are making payments unrelated to the question of the disabled person's past employment (though undoubtedly many of them are former or would-be workers).

If it is assumed that the proportion of would-be workers among public assistance recipients and childhood disability beneficiaries is the same as in the disabled population in general, then the total number of would-be workers receiving disability payments in December 1959 becomes 1,180,000 or about 51 percent of the estimated 2,300,000 would-be workers in the disabled population under age 65.

## TECHNICAL NOTE

As used in this note, the term "long-term disabled" refers to persons who, because of some physical or mental disease or impairment, have for more than 6 months been unable to work or to follow other normal activities—such as keeping house or attending school—on a regular basis. Estimates of the total number of long-term disabled and of would-be workers in the population were projected from earlier estimates published in the June 1955 issue of the BULLETIN, using the same methodology.

The 1959 estimate presented here of the number of long-term disabled in the population—3.1 million aged 14–64—differs from the estimates derived from the National Health Survey, which show 1.3 million persons aged 15–64 with chronic conditions who were completely limited in their ability to carry on their major activity and 8.5

million who were partially limited in the amount or kind of major activity that they could pursue. The National Health Survey data exclude disabled persons in institutions—numbering perhaps more than 1 million—but include persons with chronic limitations of less than 6 months' duration.

Much of the variation in the estimates can be attributed to the fact that the definition of disability used in this note includes some of the persons classified in the National Health Survey as having a partial limitation of activity.

---

## Recent Publications\*

### SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

CHILDREN'S BUREAU. *Coordination of the National Effort for Dealing with Juvenile Delinquency: Government Responsibility*, by Bjarne Romnes. (Juvenile Delinquency: Facts/Facets, No. 7, 1960.) Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1960. 17 pp. 15 cents.

Describes patterns of coordination at local, State, and Federal levels of government and discusses the impact of Federal child welfare grants in programming for delinquency control.

CHILDREN'S BUREAU. *Current Training Needs in the Field of Juvenile Delinquency*, by Bernard Russell. (Juvenile Delinquency: Facts/Facets, No. 8, 1960.) Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1960. 16 pp. 15 cents.

CHILDREN'S BUREAU. *Directory of Public Training Schools for Delinquent Children*, compiled by George H. Weber. Washington: The Bureau, 1960. 66 pp. Processed. Limited free distribution; apply to the Children's Bureau, Social Security Administration, Washington 25, D.C.

CHILDREN'S BUREAU. *Home Play and Play Equipment*, by Adele Franklin. (Children's Bureau Publication No. 238, revised 1959.) Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1960. 23 pp. 15 cents.

Designed to help parents meet the playtime needs of their children.

CHILDREN'S BUREAU. *How Effective Are Services for the Treatment of Delinquents?* by Paul Schreiber. (Juvenile Delinquency: Facts/Facets, No. 9, 1960.) Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1960. 23 pp. 15 cents.

Considers the criteria of effectiveness—social adjustment, recidivism rates—and reviews selected studies and reports.

---

\*Prepared in the Library, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Orders for items listed should be directed to publishers and booksellers. Federal publications for which prices are listed should be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C.