
Social Security (OASDI)

Employment and Earnings

Workers in OASDI covered employment, 2008	162.3 million
Average earnings, 2008	\$39,950
Earnings required in 2009 for—	
1 quarter of coverage	\$1,090
Maximum of 4 quarters of coverage	\$4,360
Earnings test exempt amounts for 2009	
Under full retirement age for entire year	\$14,160
For months before reaching full retirement age in 2009	\$37,680
Beginning with month of reaching full retirement age in 2009	Test eliminated

Program Data

Cost-of-living adjustment for December 2008	5.8 percent
Average monthly benefit, December 2008	
Retired workers	\$1,153
Widows and widowers, nondisabled	\$1,112
Disabled workers	\$1,063
Number of beneficiaries, December 2008	
Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance	50.9 million
Old-Age Insurance	
Total	35.2 million
Retired workers	32.3 million
Survivors Insurance	
Total	6.5 million
Widows and widowers, nondisabled	4.2 million
Disability Insurance	
Total	9.3 million
Disabled workers	7.4 million
Benefit payments, 2008	
Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance	\$615.4 billion
Old-Age and Survivors Insurance	\$509.1 billion
Disability Insurance	\$106.3 billion
Administrative expenses, 2008	
Old-Age and Survivors Insurance	
Amount	\$3.2 billion
As a percentage of total benefits paid	0.6 percent
Disability Insurance	
Amount	\$2.5 billion
As a percentage of total benefits paid	2.4 percent

Program Trends

- About 50.9 million persons received Social Security benefits for December 2008, an increase of 1,033,406 (2.1 percent) since December 2007. Sixty-nine percent were retired workers and their spouses and children, 13 percent were survivors of deceased workers, and 18 percent were disabled workers and their spouses and children.
- Seventy-four percent of the nearly 32.3 million retired workers received reduced benefits because of entitlement prior to full retirement age. Relatively more women (76.3 percent) than men (71.2 percent) received reduced benefits.
- The number of beneficiaries aged 65 or older rose from about 33.5 million in 2003 to more than 35.7 million in 2008 (6.6 percent). Beneficiaries aged 85 or older increased at a greater rate during the 5-year period (14.0 percent) from about 4.3 million in 2003 to more than 4.9 million in 2008. In 2008, about 46,000 centenarians were receiving Social Security.
- About 20.4 million women aged 65 or older received benefits for December 2008. About 8.5 million (41.9 percent) were entitled solely to a retired-worker benefit. About 6 million (29.6 percent) were dually entitled to a retired-worker benefit and a wife's or widow's benefit, and about 5.8 million (28.5 percent) were receiving wife's or widow's benefits only.
- More than 3.1 million children under age 18 received benefits, including 1,280,182 children of deceased workers, 1,552,104 children of disabled workers, and 285,944 children of retired workers.
- About 8.5 million persons received benefits based on disability—7,426,691 disabled workers, 871,466 disabled adult children, and 230,007 disabled widows and widowers. In addition, 154,230 spouses and 1,607,085 minor and student children of disabled workers received benefits.
- Average monthly benefits for December 2008, including the 5.8 percent cost-of-living adjustment, were \$1,153 for retired workers, \$1,063 for disabled workers, and \$1,112 for nondisabled widows and widowers. Among retired workers, monthly benefits averaged \$1,299 for men and \$1,001 for women. For disabled workers, average monthly benefits were \$1,191 for men and \$920 for women.
- Average monthly family benefits for December 2008 were \$2,157 for a widowed mother or father and children; \$1,824 for a disabled worker, wife, and children; and \$2,344 for a retired worker, wife, and children.
- Total OASDI benefit payments for calendar year 2008 were \$615.3 billion. Payments from the OASI trust fund were \$509.1 billion—an increase of 4.8 percent from the \$485.9 billion paid in 2007.
- Benefit payments from the DI trust fund, from which benefits are paid to disabled workers, their spouses, and children, increased by 7.3 percent from \$99.1 billion in 2006 to \$106.3 billion in 2008.
- OASDI benefit awards in calendar year 2008 totaled 5,134,644, including 2,278,997 to retired workers, 484,584 to their spouses and children, and 952,186 to survivors of insured workers. Benefits were awarded to 877,226 disabled workers and to 541,651 of their spouses and children.

Supplemental Security Income

Annual Payment Adjustments

Monthly federal benefit rate, effective January 2009

Individual living in his or her own household

\$674

Couple with both members eligible

\$1,011

Cost-of-living adjustment

5.8 percent

Program Data

Federally administered payments

Benefits paid in 2008

\$43.0 billion

Number of recipients, December 2008

7.5 million

Average benefit, December 2008

\$477.79

Federal SSI payments

Benefits paid in 2008

\$38.7 billion

Number of recipients, December 2008

7.2 million

Average benefit, December 2008

\$447.00

Federally administered state supplementation

Benefits paid in 2008

\$4.4 billion

Number of recipients, December 2008

^a 2.3 million

Average benefit, December 2008

\$156.23

a. Includes 2.0 million persons receiving federal SSI and state supplementation and 0.3 million persons receiving state supplementation only.

Program Trends

- In December 2008, 7,520,501 persons received federally administered SSI payments—160,976 more than the previous year. Of the total, 2,033,561 (27.0 percent) were aged 65 or older; 4,333,096 (57.6 percent) were blind or disabled aged 18–64; and 1,153,844 (15.3 percent) were blind or disabled under age 18.
- The number of blind or disabled aged 18–64 rose by 111,176 (2.6 percent) between December 2007 and December 2008, and the number under age 18 increased by 32,827 (2.9 percent).
- During 2008, 919,146 persons were awarded federally administered payments, an increase of 82,504 from the previous year. Of the 2008 awards, 629,697 went to blind or disabled recipients aged 18–64, 181,228 to those blind or disabled under age 18, and 108,221 to recipients aged 65 or older.
- Total federally administered SSI payments were \$43.0 billion in 2008, up 4.5 percent from 2007. Federal SSI payments in 2008 were \$38.7 billion (an increase of 4.8 percent over the previous year). Federally administered state supplementation totaled \$4.4 billion.

Health Care

Medicare

Total benefits paid in calendar year 2008	
Hospital Insurance (Part A)	\$232.3 billion
Supplementary Medical Insurance (Part B)	\$229.3 billion
Number of enrollees in July 2008 (one or both of Parts A and B)	45.4 million
Aged	37.9 million
Disabled	7.5 million
Administrative costs, 2008	
Hospital Insurance	
Amount	\$3.3 billion
As a percentage of total benefits paid	1.5 percent
Supplementary Medical Insurance	
Amount	\$3.3 billion
As a percentage of total benefits paid	1.4 percent

Medicaid

Medical service expenditures in fiscal year 2007	\$276.5 billion
Number of unduplicated recipients, fiscal year 2007	56.8 million
Average 2007 vendor payment per unduplicated recipient	
Persons aged 65 or older	\$14,187
Permanently and totally disabled persons	\$14,200
Dependent children under age 21	\$1,797
Average 2007 vendor payment for medical services	
Nursing facility services	\$28,368
Inpatient general hospital care	\$7,197
Prescribed drugs	\$932
Physicians services	\$456

Other Social Insurance Programs and Veterans' Benefits

Unemployment Insurance

Total payments, 2008	\$42.7 billion
Average—	
Weekly benefit amount (regular programs)	\$297.10
Duration of benefits	14.9 weeks
Weekly insured unemployment	3.3 million
Covered employment	132.8 million

Workers' Compensation

Benefit payments, 2007	\$55.5 billion
Compensation payments	\$27.2 billion
Medical and hospitalization	\$28.3 billion
Benefits paid by—	
Private insurance carriers	\$28.4 billion
State and federal funds	\$13.7 billion
Employers' self-insurance	\$13.3 billion
Covered workers per month	131.7 million
Costs as a percentage of covered payroll	1.45 percent

Temporary Disability Insurance

Average weekly benefit, 2006	
California	
State fund	\$386
Private plans	\$592
New York	
Private plans	\$188

NOTE: Programs in effect in California, Hawaii, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island, Puerto Rico, and the railroad industry.

Black Lung Benefits

Basic benefit to miner or widow	\$599
Maximum family benefit	\$1,197
Part B (claims filed before July 1, 1973)	
Number of monthly benefits to miners, widows, and dependents, December 2008	32,411
Total benefits paid, calendar year 2008	\$255.9 million
Part C (claims filed July 1, 1973, or later)	
Total benefits paid, fiscal year 2008	
Disability and survivors benefits	\$270.4 million
Medical benefits	\$36.8 million

Veterans' Benefits

Number of veterans with disability compensation or pension, 2008	
Service-connected disability	2,952,000
Nonservice-connected disability	318,000
Monthly payment in 2009 for—	
Service-connected disability	
10 percent disability	\$123
Total disability	\$2,673
Nonservice-connected disability (maximum payment)	
Without dependent	\$986
With one dependent and in need of aid and attendance	\$1,950

Poverty Data

Weighted average poverty thresholds, 2008

Individual, aged 65 or older	\$10,326
Couple, householder aged 65 or older	\$13,030
Family of four	\$22,025

Percentage of population with income below poverty level, 2007

All ages	12.5 percent
Children under age 18 living in families	17.6 percent
Persons aged 65 or older	9.7 percent