

# BENEFICIARIES IN CURRENT- PAYMENT STATUS

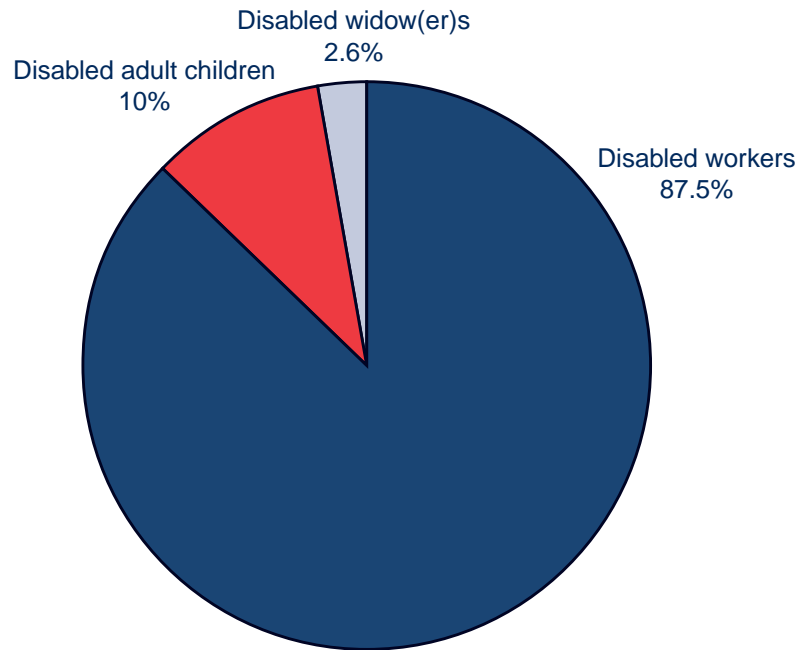




**Chart 1.**

**All Social Security disabled beneficiaries in current-payment status, December 2011**

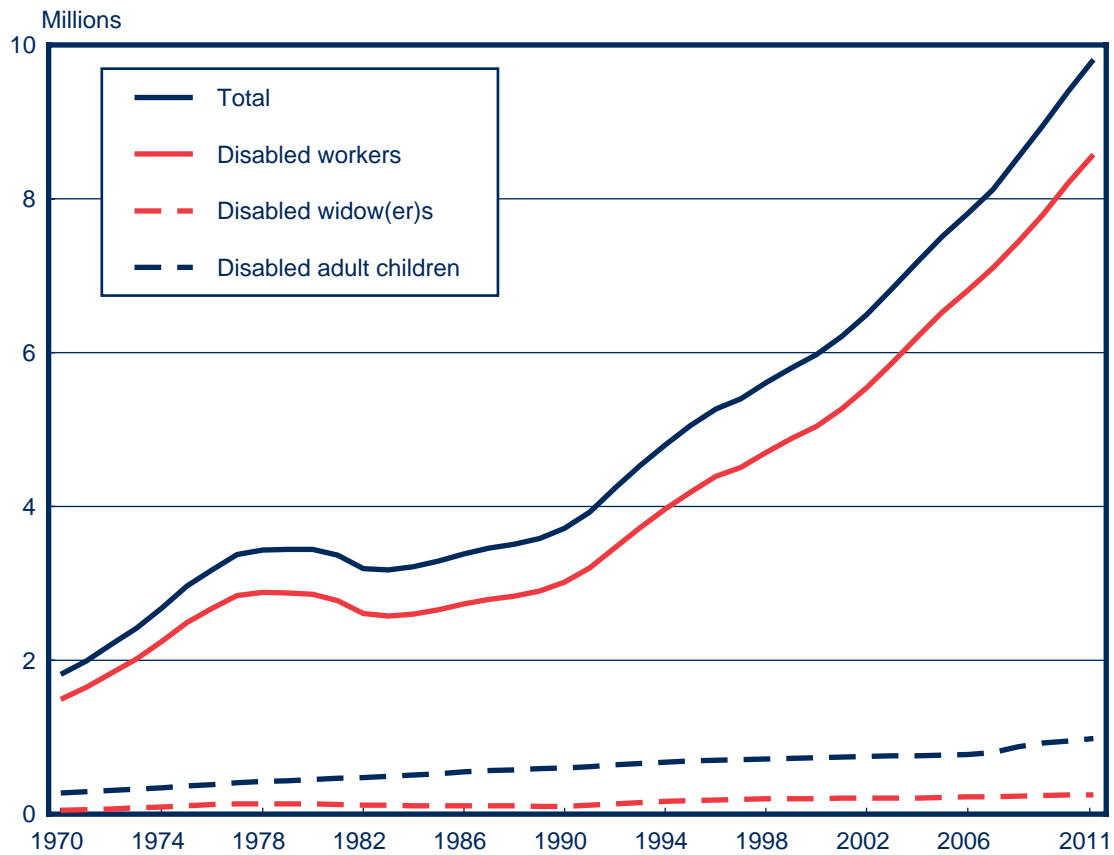
In December 2011, just over 9.8 million people received Social Security disability benefits as disabled workers, disabled widow(er)s, or disabled adult children. The majority (87.5 percent) were disabled workers, 10 percent were disabled adult children, and 2.6 percent were disabled widow(er)s.



SOURCE: Table 3.

**Chart 2.**  
**All Social Security disabled beneficiaries in current-payment status, December 1970–2011**

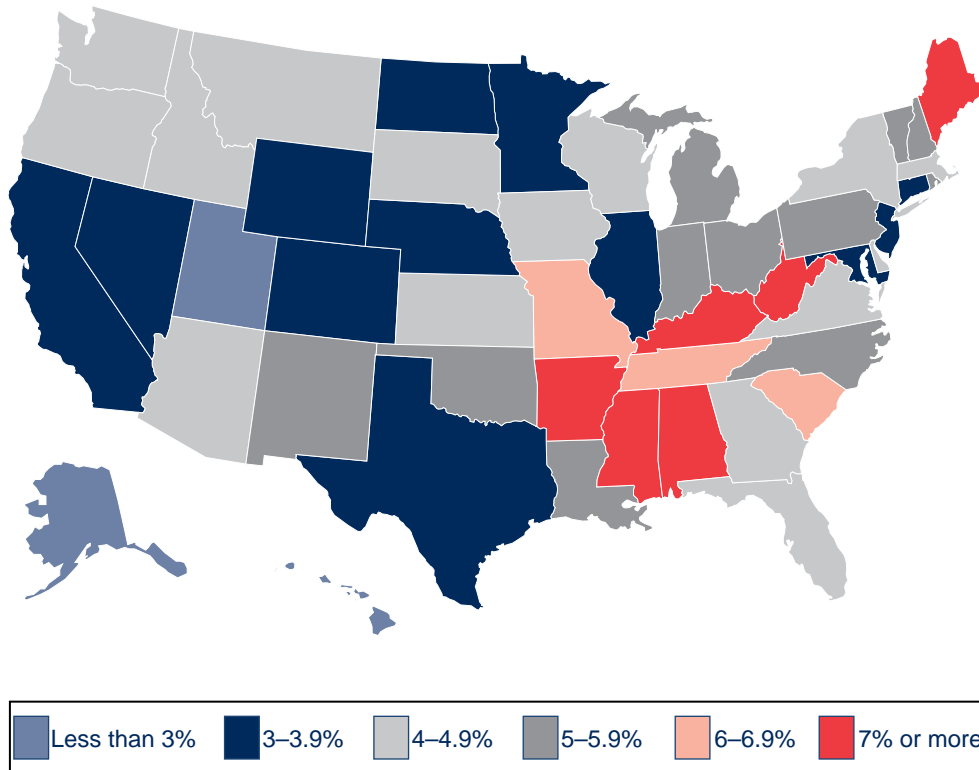
The number of disabled workers grew steadily until 1978, declined slightly until 1983, started to increase again in 1984, and began to increase more rapidly beginning in 1990. The growth in the 1980s and 1990s was the result of demographic changes, a recession, and legislative changes. The number of disabled adult children has grown slightly, and the number of disabled widow(er)s has remained fairly level. In December 2011, over 8.5 million disabled workers, over 977,000 disabled adult children, and just over 251,000 disabled widow(er)s received disability benefits.



SOURCE: Table 3.

**Chart 3.****Disabled beneficiaries aged 18–64 in current-payment status as a percentage of state population aged 18–64, December 2011**

Disabled beneficiaries aged 18–64 in current-payment status accounted for over 4.6 percent of the population aged 18–64 in the United States. In three states, they represented less than 3 percent of the state population. The states with the highest rates of disabled beneficiaries—7 percent or more—were Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Maine, Mississippi, and West Virginia.



SOURCE: Table 8.

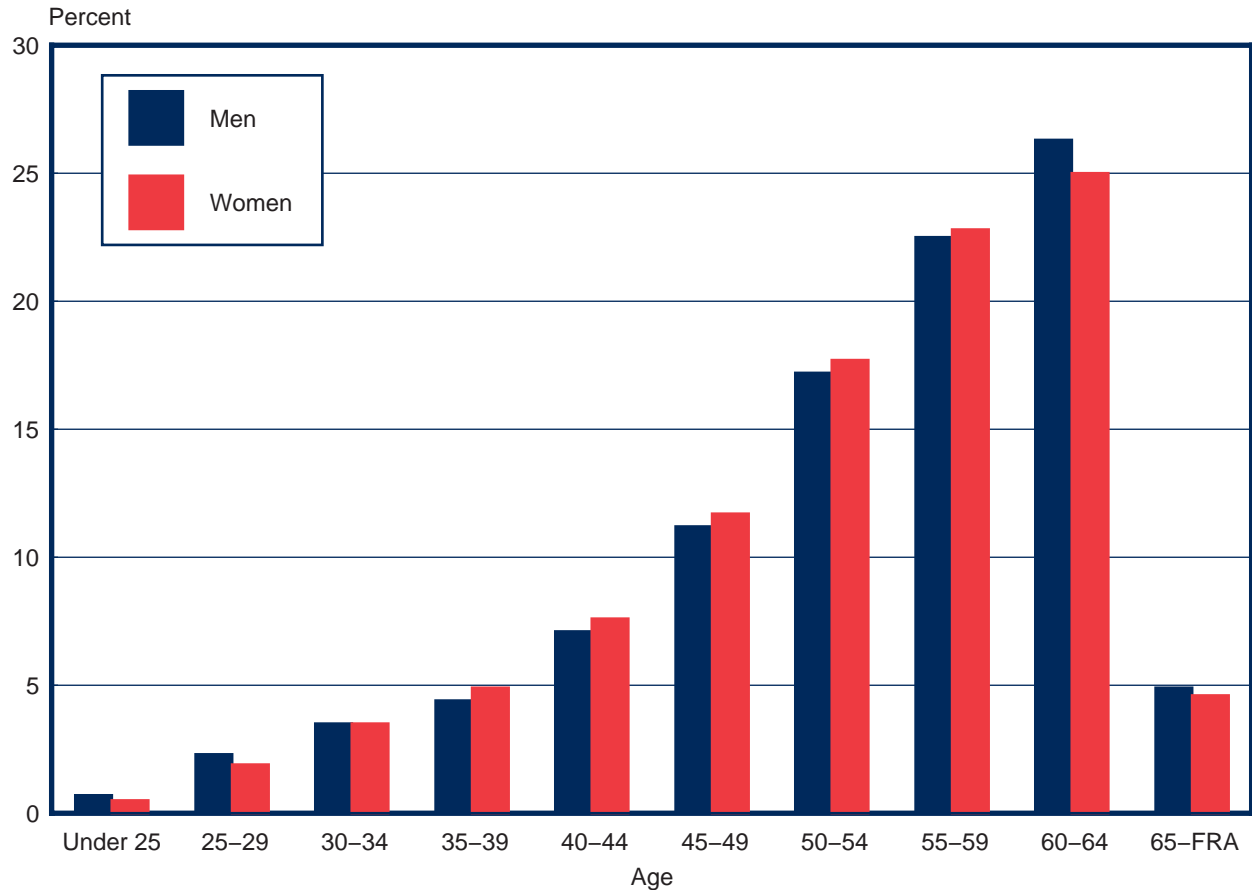
NOTE: The percentages for Nebraska, Massachusetts, Delaware, and Michigan are 3.98, 4.97, 4.98, and 5.96 respectively. In Table 8, those percentages have been rounded up.

## Beneficiaries in Current-Payment Status

Chart 4.

### Age of disabled-worker beneficiaries in current-payment status, by sex, December 2011

The percentage of disabled-worker beneficiaries increases with age for both men and women. In December 2011, the largest percentage of disabled-worker beneficiaries was aged 60–64. Disability benefits convert to retirement benefits when the worker reaches full retirement age, 65–67, depending on the year of birth.



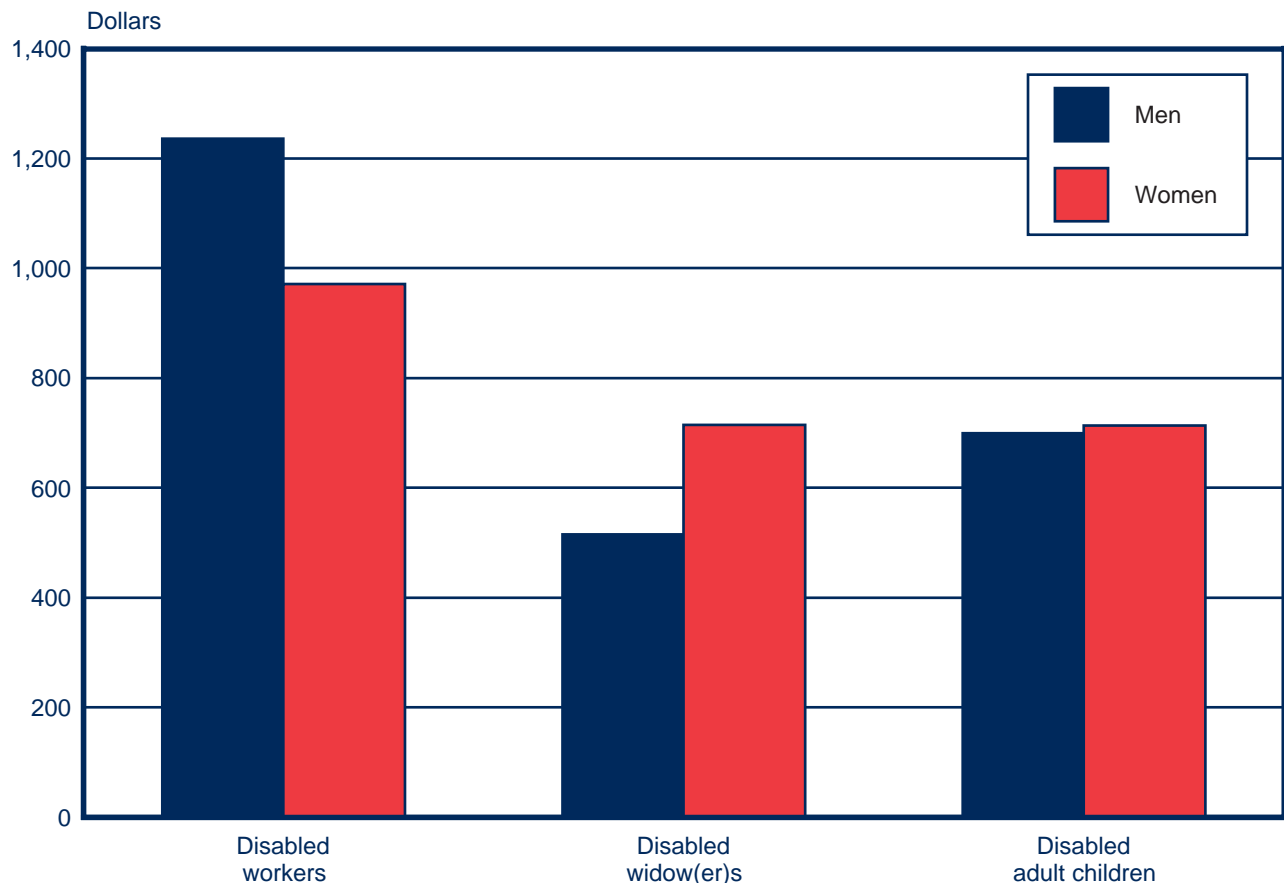
SOURCE: Table 4.

NOTE: FRA = full retirement age.

**Chart 5.****Average monthly benefit of disabled beneficiaries in current-payment status, by sex, December 2011**

The average monthly benefit for disabled-worker beneficiaries is higher than that paid to disabled widow(er)s or disabled adult children. The reason for the difference is that disabled workers receive 100 percent of the primary insurance amount (PIA), compared with 71.5 percent for disabled widow(er)s and 50 percent for disabled adult children (if the worker is disabled or retired) or 75 percent (if the worker is deceased).

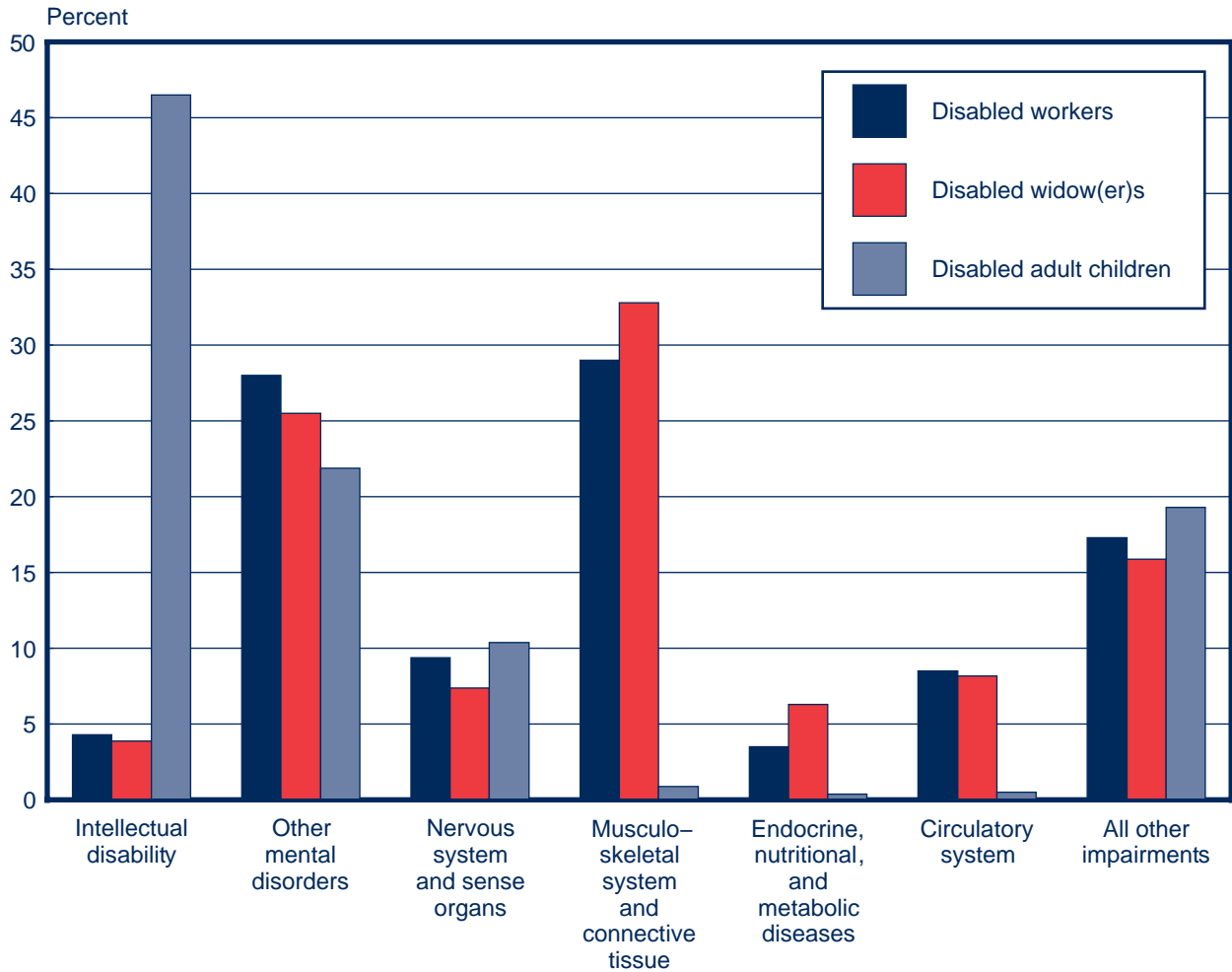
Because men have traditionally had higher earnings than women, their monthly benefit is higher. This is most obvious in the disabled-worker group. Benefits for disabled widow(er)s and disabled adult children are dependents' benefits, so their monthly benefit is a function of the worker's earnings. Therefore, a disabled widow's average benefit tends to be higher than that of a disabled widower because a male worker's earnings are higher than a female worker's. Benefit amounts are about the same for men and women in the disabled adult children group.



SOURCE: Table 4.

**Chart 6.**  
**Disabled beneficiaries in current-payment status, by diagnostic group, December 2011**

The impairment on which disability is based varies with the type of beneficiary. In December 2011, diseases of the musculoskeletal system and connective tissue were the primary reason disabled workers and disabled widow(er)s received benefits; intellectual disability was the predominant reason for disability among disabled adult children.



SOURCE: Table 6.