

Notes and Brief Reports

Old-Age Benefits in Current-Payment Status, by State, December 31, 1959*

Old-age insurance benefits under the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program were being paid on December 31, 1959, to 7.5 million retired workers. The number of beneficiaries was about half a million higher than in February 1959, when the last comparable tabulation was made.

RISE IN AVERAGE BENEFIT

The average old-age benefit in December 1959 amounted to \$72.78—\$1.16 higher than the average in February 1959. The higher average resulted partly from the greater proportion of benefits computed on the basis of earnings after 1950 and the rise in the proportion of beneficiaries whose benefits were computed under the provision that permits up to 5 years of lowest earnings to be excluded in calculating the average monthly wage. The increase in 1959 in the maximum annual earnings—from \$4,200 to \$4,800—usable in computing the average monthly wage contributed only slightly to the higher average benefit payable at the end of 1959, but it will have more effect in subsequent years. The average old-age benefit amount went up each month, from \$71.62 in February to \$72.78 in December.

As shown in the accompanying table, about one-twelfth of all old-age beneficiaries were receiving monthly benefits of \$116.00–\$119.00; two-ninths, benefits in the \$90.00–\$115.90 range; one-third, benefits of \$60.00–\$89.90; and another one-third, less than \$60.00. Actuarially reduced benefits payable to women aged 62–64 at entitlement account for all benefits of \$26.40–\$32.90 and may occur in the other amount-of-benefit intervals.

\$33 BENEFIT GOING TO 814,000

The primary insurance amount is the amount payable to a retired worker aged 65 or over at

entitlement and is the amount from which all other benefits are computed. About 1,033,000 retired workers receiving old-age benefits at the end of 1959 had qualified for a minimum primary insurance amount of \$33, but not all of them were receiving a monthly benefit of \$33. Almost 138,000 were women who were aged 62–64 at entitlement and whose old-age benefit had been actuarially reduced to an amount less than \$33. Some 83,000 persons—aged 65 or over at entitlement—were receiving both an old-age benefit and a widow's, widower's, or parent's secondary benefit or a wife's or husband's secondary benefit that was awarded, reinstated, or adjusted after September 13, 1956. For these persons, the reduced secondary benefit was combined with the old-age benefit, increasing the benefit amount payable to more than \$33. The remaining 812,000 beneficiaries with a primary insurance amount of \$33 were receiving a monthly benefit of that amount.

About 2,000 women aged 62–64 at entitlement were receiving an old-age benefit of \$33 that resulted from (1) actuarial reduction of a primary insurance amount greater than \$33 to exactly \$33, or (2) actuarial reduction of a primary insurance amount of \$33 or more to a smaller amount that was increased to exactly \$33 by dual entitlement to a secondary benefit. In all, about 814,000 retired workers were receiving monthly benefits of exactly \$33. As a proportion of all old-age beneficiaries, the number receiving exactly \$33 declined from 11.6 percent at the end of February 1959 to 10.8 percent in December 1959.

STATES RETAIN RANK IN SIZE OF BENEFIT

In December 1959, as in past years, old-age beneficiaries living in Connecticut were receiving the highest monthly benefits—an average of \$81.00—and those in Mississippi were receiving the lowest, \$55.17. The five States with highest average benefits and the three States with lowest average benefits were the same in December 1959 as in February 1959. The other States, in general, also retained the same relative positions in the ranking.

Monthly benefits ranging in amount from \$75.00 to \$119.00 were being paid at the end of December 1959 to more than 60 percent of the

*Prepared by Gerald Hutchinson and Hammett Buchanan, Division of Program Analysis, Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance.

Number and average monthly amount of old-age insurance benefits in current-payment status and percentage distribution by amount of benefit, ¹ by State, December 31, 1959

State ² (ranked by size of average benefit)	Average old-age benefit	Number of old-age beneficiaries	Percent of old-age beneficiaries receiving—									
			Total	\$26.40- 32.90 ³	\$33.00	\$33.10- 44.90	\$45.00- 59.90	\$60.00- 74.90	\$75.00- 89.90	\$90.00- 104.90	\$105.00- 115.90	\$116.00- 119.00 ³
Total.....	\$72.78	7,525,628	100.0	1.9	10.8	8.1	14.4	17.8	16.1	11.3	11.6	8.0
Connecticut.....	81.00	122,094	100.0	1.1	5.3	5.3	11.4	16.4	18.6	14.8	16.1	11.0
Michigan.....	80.43	313,784	100.0	1.3	7.5	6.2	12.4	14.6	14.6	11.3	18.0	14.1
New Jersey.....	79.43	276,709	100.0	1.4	6.4	5.9	12.0	16.9	17.2	13.9	15.5	10.8
Illinois.....	77.28	447,886	100.0	1.5	8.3	6.6	12.7	16.7	17.0	13.0	13.8	10.4
Pennsylvania.....	77.04	521,659	100.0	1.5	7.9	6.4	12.2	17.9	17.8	13.3	13.8	9.2
New York.....	77.03	827,974	100.0	1.3	7.4	6.5	12.9	18.3	18.0	13.1	13.0	9.5
Ohio.....	76.92	403,732	100.0	1.5	8.8	6.9	13.3	16.6	15.6	11.5	14.6	11.2
Massachusetts.....	75.95	279,581	100.0	1.3	6.7	6.3	13.3	20.4	19.6	13.3	11.7	7.4
Florida.....	74.93	252,603	100.0	2.0	9.8	7.5	13.5	16.4	15.8	11.6	14.3	9.1
Rhode Island.....	74.74	43,368	100.0	1.5	6.2	6.5	14.0	20.5	14.1	10.3	5.5	5.5
Washington.....	74.70	136,148	100.0	1.4	9.8	7.3	14.6	17.2	15.9	11.4	13.7	8.7
Arizona.....	74.44	38,058	100.0	1.8	10.8	7.5	13.8	16.3	15.6	11.6	13.1	9.5
Utah.....	74.37	26,397	100.0	1.7	10.6	7.3	13.3	17.2	16.5	12.4	12.5	8.5
Montana.....	73.88	30,776	100.0	1.3	11.5	7.5	14.2	17.7	15.0	11.2	11.6	10.0
Wisconsin.....	73.68	196,877	100.0	1.7	10.7	7.5	15.1	17.1	15.1	11.5	12.6	8.7
Indiana.....	73.63	218,729	100.0	1.7	10.8	7.9	14.2	17.0	15.7	12.0	12.3	8.5
California.....	73.58	626,227	100.0	1.7	9.7	7.8	15.3	17.6	16.1	11.0	12.3	7.8
Nevada.....	73.50	8,474	100.0	1.7	10.0	7.5	14.7	18.3	16.2	11.3	12.7	7.6
Delaware.....	73.40	17,160	100.0	2.0	9.5	7.7	14.1	19.3	16.1	11.6	11.5	8.2
Oregon.....	73.17	96,890	100.0	1.4	10.2	7.8	15.9	17.8	15.3	11.5	12.8	7.3
Alaska.....	72.55	2,826	100.0	1.8	10.8	8.3	15.4	17.7	14.3	11.4	13.3	7.0
Wyoming.....	71.51	11,866	100.0	1.7	11.4	8.0	14.7	18.8	17.4	11.1	10.8	6.1
Minnesota.....	71.41	158,869	100.0	1.8	11.9	8.2	15.1	18.4	15.8	11.1	10.7	7.0
Colorado.....	71.32	63,592	100.0	1.6	12.0	8.2	14.8	18.2	16.8	11.6	10.3	6.5
New Hampshire.....	71.23	35,880	100.0	1.4	9.5	8.2	15.2	21.2	18.7	12.3	8.8	4.7
Maryland.....	71.04	96,590	100.0	2.2	11.2	8.6	14.7	19.2	16.4	10.7	10.1	6.9
Iowa.....	70.84	145,079	100.0	1.7	11.7	8.5	15.1	19.2	16.0	12.4	9.5	5.9
North Dakota.....	70.79	26,235	100.0	1.6	12.1	8.4	15.5	19.1	15.7	12.0	8.5	7.1
Idaho.....	70.34	28,141	100.0	1.6	12.8	8.3	15.5	18.5	16.2	11.4	9.8	5.9
West Virginia.....	70.32	75,676	100.0	1.7	13.7	8.5	13.5	18.5	17.1	10.2	10.5	6.3
Missouri.....	70.27	213,962	100.0	1.9	11.6	9.0	15.8	18.8	16.2	10.7	9.4	6.6
District of Columbia.....	68.97	26,776	100.0	2.2	12.5	9.2	15.1	19.8	16.8	10.0	8.7	5.7
Nebraska.....	68.96	72,498	100.0	1.7	12.5	9.1	16.1	19.8	16.4	11.3	7.9	5.2
South Dakota.....	68.93	31,850	100.0	1.6	13.0	9.2	15.5	19.7	16.3	11.7	8.0	5.0
Hawaii.....	68.76	14,715	100.0	2.5	13.4	8.9	14.3	17.2	19.4	12.1	7.5	4.7
Kansas.....	68.56	102,891	100.0	1.8	12.9	9.7	16.7	18.8	15.3	10.8	8.4	5.6
Vermont.....	68.52	20,887	100.0	1.6	11.9	9.2	16.8	20.7	16.7	10.6	7.9	4.6
Maine.....	67.62	55,672	100.0	2.0	12.7	9.4	16.5	20.5	16.7	10.4	7.6	4.2
Oklahoma.....	66.75	87,878	100.0	2.5	14.9	10.3	16.3	18.5	14.8	9.0	7.9	5.8
New Mexico.....	66.35	18,601	100.0	2.2	16.8	10.0	16.4	17.6	13.5	9.3	8.8	5.4
Texas.....	65.56	269,104	100.0	3.0	15.4	10.7	16.9	18.4	14.1	8.4	7.6	5.5
Louisiana.....	64.83	73,890	100.0	3.2	16.5	10.8	16.7	18.3	13.7	8.0	7.3	5.5
Virginia.....	64.29	122,166	100.0	2.7	17.3	11.2	16.3	18.3	14.2	8.5	7.0	4.5
Kentucky.....	64.11	123,151	100.0	2.3	16.3	11.4	17.6	19.7	13.7	8.0	6.9	4.1
Alabama.....	62.08	95,203	100.0	3.4	19.8	12.0	16.0	18.0	12.8	7.5	6.2	4.3
Georgia.....	61.58	104,273	100.0	4.0	17.6	12.1	17.9	19.0	13.5	6.8	5.2	3.9
North Carolina.....	61.55	137,942	100.0	3.3	16.7	12.0	19.4	19.9	13.8	6.9	4.8	3.2
South Carolina.....	61.49	59,907	100.0	3.8	18.1	12.0	17.6	18.6	14.1	7.8	5.0	3.0
Tennessee.....	60.35	121,711	100.0	3.5	19.7	13.0	18.3	18.0	11.8	6.6	5.4	3.7
Arkansas.....	59.42	75,505	100.0	3.3	21.3	12.6	17.9	18.6	12.2	6.0	4.9	3.2
Mississippi.....	55.17	70,367	100.0	3.9	26.0	14.6	17.9	17.9	9.4	4.5	3.5	2.3
Virgin Islands.....	52.84	492	100.0	5.1	25.4	19.9	15.9	15.9	8.6	3.7	3.7	1.8
Puerto Rico.....	46.38	40,686	100.0	4.8	39.3	20.5	13.5	11.4	5.3	2.4	1.7	1.1
Foreign.....	74.90	51,121	100.0	.4	7.1	5.4	12.9	24.3	21.6	12.3	11.4	4.6

¹ For persons receiving both an old-age benefit and a widow's, widower's, or parent's secondary benefit or a wife's or husband's secondary benefit that was awarded, reinstated, or adjusted after Sept. 13, 1956, the amount of the reduced secondary benefit is combined with the amount of the old-age benefit. Actuarially reduced benefits payable to women aged 62-64 at entitlement account for all the cases in the \$26.40-\$32.90 interval and may be represented in

the other amount-of-benefit intervals.

² Beneficiary's State of residence, based on the monthly benefit check address.

³ A benefit smaller than \$26.40 or larger than \$119 is possible under certain conditions that are expected to occur rarely.

old-age beneficiaries in Connecticut but to only 20 percent of the beneficiaries in Mississippi. Only 23 percent of the old-age beneficiaries in Connecticut but 62 percent of those in Mississippi were receiving benefits of \$26.40-\$59.90. In Puerto Rico, where the average benefit was only \$46.38, 78 percent of the old-age beneficiaries were receiving less than \$60.00.

Disability Insurance Benefits in Current-Payment Status, by State, December 31, 1959*

At the end of December 1959 there were 334,000 disabled workers aged 50-64 receiving disa-

*Prepared by Hammett Buchanan, Division of Program Analysis, Bureau of Old-Age and Survivors Insurance.