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# The Social Security Star

## CELEBRATING 88 YEARS OF SOCIAL SECURITY



For 88 years, Social Security has provided income protection to millions of retirees, people with disabilities, dependents, and families that lose a wage earner. This year, we will administer more than \$1.3 trillion in benefits and payments to more than 70 million beneficiaries. In addition, we issue millions of Social Security numbers each year, maintain wage records, and more. We are proud to serve the American people every day.

To better serve you, we have prioritized our online customer experience. Our website [SSA.gov](https://www.ssa.gov) makes it easier for you to find what you need. More than 180 million people visit our website every year. Whether providing

service in person or online, our goal is help you understand what you may qualify for and transition you to an application process.

We have also worked to make sure our programs, particularly Supplemental Security Income (SSI), remains accessible to the people who need it most. Last year, we launched an online tool that allows you or your representative to request an appointment to file for SSI and protect your filing date. A Social Security employee will then schedule a full interview. Find more information about SSI at [www.ssa.gov/ssi/](https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/).

We remain committed to helping maintain the well-being and protection of the people we serve. We strive to ensure that every person who is eligible for or receives benefits gets them timely and accurately. That is how we help you secure today and tomorrow.

Please share this information with your friends and loved ones who may need it.

### SOCIAL SECURITY SERVICES FOR THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY



Social Security strives to deliver great customer service and helpful information to everyone, including people who are more comfortable reading and speaking Spanish.

Our Spanish-language website, [www.segurosocial.gov](https://www.segurosocial.gov), provides information about our programs and services. You can learn how to get a Social Security card, plan for retirement, apply for benefits, and much more.

You can also learn more about why Social Security is important to the Hispanic community (continued on next page)

at [www.ssa.gov/espanol/personas/hispanos](http://www.ssa.gov/espanol/personas/hispanos). We provide many publications in Spanish at [www.ssa.gov/espanol/publicaciones](http://www.ssa.gov/espanol/publicaciones) on popular topics such as:

- Retirement, disability, and survivors benefits.
- Medicare.
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Spanish-speaking customers who need to speak with a representative can call us at [1-800-772-1213](tel:1-800-772-1213) and press 7. Please share these resources with friends and family who may need them. And follow us on our Spanish-language Facebook and Twitter at [www.facebook.com/segurosocial](http://www.facebook.com/segurosocial) and [twitter.com/segurosocial](https://twitter.com/segurosocial).

**MINIMIZING THE RISK OF FINANCIAL ABUSE FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH DEMENTIA**



Financial crime against older Americans is a growing problem. People living with dementia are at an especially

high risk of becoming victims. That’s why we’re committed to combatting fraud.

As their memory and other thinking skills decline, people with dementia may struggle to make financial decisions. They may not remember or report the abuse – or understand that someone is taking advantage of them. This abuse can occur anywhere – including at home or in care settings.

Victims of fraud who are 80 years and older lose an average of \$39,200 every year. Studies show that financial exploitation is the most common form of elder abuse. However, only a small fraction of these incidents are reported.

You can help protect others by learning to recognize common signs of financial exploitation and abuse, including:

- Unopened bills.
- Unusual or large purchases.
- Utilities being shut off due to unpaid bills.
- Money given to telemarketers or soliciting companies.
- Unexplained withdrawals from the person’s bank account.

There are also many simple things that caregivers can do to reduce the risk of financial abuse for people with dementia and similar conditions, like Alzheimer’s.

Do your best to make sure they’re involved in deciding which safety measures to put into place.

Some options include:

- Agreeing to spending limits on credit cards.
- Signing up for the “Do Not Call” list at [DoNotCall.gov](http://DoNotCall.gov).
- Setting up auto-pay for bills instead of paying them by check.
- Signing up to receive automatic notifications for withdrawals from bank accounts or large charges to credit cards.
- Requesting electronic bank and credit card statements and watching for unusual purchases or changes in how the person typically spends money.
- Asking credit card companies to stop sending balance transfer checks and opting out of future solicitations.
- Creating a separate account where you can keep a small, agreed-upon amount of money that the person can use for recreational activities, meals with friends, etc.

To learn more about combating elder abuse, visit our [blog](#) (continued on next page)

at <https://blog.ssa.gov/world-elder-abuse-awareness-day-combating-injustice/>.

Please share this with those who may need it.

*DO YOU SUSPECT SOMEONE OF COMMITTING FRAUD, WASTE, OR ABUSE AGAINST SOCIAL SECURITY?*

*REPORTING FRAUD TO THE SSA OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL IS EASY, SAFE, AND SECURE.*

*REPORT SOCIAL SECURITY SCAMS AT [HTTPS://SECURE.SSA.GOV/IPFF/HOME](https://secure.ssa.gov/ipff/home)*

*REPORT OTHER SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE AT [HTTPS://SECURE.SSA.GOV/PFRF/HOME](https://secure.ssa.gov/pfrf/home)*

*OR VIA U.S. MAIL:  
SOCIAL SECURITY FRAUD HOTLINE  
PO BOX 17785  
BALTIMORE, MD 21235*

*FAX: (410) 597-0118  
PHONE: (800) 269-0271  
(866) 501-2101 TTY*

*10:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M. ET,  
MONDAY TO FRIDAY,  
EXCEPT FEDERAL HOLIDAYS*

**DISABILITY: PART OF THE EQUITY EQUATION**



People with disabilities play an important role in a diverse and inclusive workforce. We would like to tell you

about Amy and her path to financial independence through work.

**Meet Amy**

Amy has a developmental disability that affects her speech, learning, and social interactions. When she was ready to find a path to financial independence through work, Amy turned to her State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) agency for help. Amy’s VR counselor told her about Social Security’s Ticket to Work (Ticket) Program.

The Ticket Program supports career development for people with disabilities who want to work. Adults ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) qualify for this free and voluntary program. Through the Ticket Program, service providers offer free employment support services.

Amy had questions about how employment could affect her benefits. Her State VR counselor connected her with Full Circle Employment Solutions. Full Circle is an Employment Network (EN) with benefits counselors on staff who explained how working might affect her disability benefits.

Amy’s benefits counselor also told her about Work Incentives. Work Incentives make it easier for adults with disabilities to enhance their

job skills and gain work experience. They do so while receiving Medicaid or Medicare and Social Security benefits or SSI payments.

With a better understanding of these supports, Amy was ready to explore her employment options. She pursued an internship with Project SEARCH, a training program for young adults with developmental disabilities. Through Project SEARCH, Amy landed an internship that led to a permanent position with her local government.

Amy earned her way to financial independence and no longer receives SSI. Now, she’s a union member, receives benefits through her job, and enjoys the security and stability that come with full-time employment. She’s grateful for the support she received through the Ticket Program and looks forward to building the future she always hoped for.

“This job makes me feel needed and welcomed,” she says. “I have learned about what motivates me and how to keep going, even when things get hard.”

**Learn More**

To learn more about the Ticket Program, visit [choosework.ssa.gov](https://choosework.ssa.gov) where you also can see a list of service providers. Or you can call the Ticket to Work Help Line (continued on next page)

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at [1-866-968-7842](tel:1-866-968-7842) or [1-866-833-2967 \(TTY\)](tel:1-866-833-2967), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, and ask for a list of service providers.

You can also learn more by registering for a free, online [Work Incentives Seminar Event](#) webinar at [choosework.ssa.gov/wise](http://choosework.ssa.gov/wise). Or you can [text TICKET to 474747](#) to receive Ticket Program texts. Standard messaging rates may apply, and you can opt out at any time.

Please share this information with friends and family who may need it.

## HOW SSA.GOV HELPS YOU



We're excited to announce the addition of two helpful screening tools on [SSA.gov](http://SSA.gov)! These tools are the Benefits Screener and the Card Replacement Screener. The Benefit Screener helps you determine your eligibility for benefits and the Card Replacement Screener helps

you request a replacement Social Security card. Let's go over how you can use these tools.

### Benefits Screener

You can access the Benefits Screener tool at [www.ssa.gov/prepare/check-eligibility-for-benefits](http://www.ssa.gov/prepare/check-eligibility-for-benefits) to determine which benefits you may be eligible for, typically in 10 minutes or less! Whether you're considering retirement, disability, survivor, or other types of benefits, this tool will guide you in the right direction.

To use the screener, select the "Start" button and answer a few questions about what's going on in your life. You will immediately get a response that tells you which benefits you may be eligible for based on your answers.

### Card Replacement Screener

You can access the Card Replacement Screener at [www.ssa.gov/number-card/replace-card](http://www.ssa.gov/number-card/replace-card). If you need a physical Social Security card, you can use this screener to determine the best way to replace it.

Depending on your situation, you may be able to request a replacement Social Security card without visiting a local office. Select "Answer a few questions" on the Replacement Card page to get started. If you

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can't complete the process online and have to visit an office, you can save yourself time by starting with the online application.

Requesting a replacement Social Security card is free. In most situations, you do not need to present a physical card – just knowing your Social Security number is usually enough. But if you do need the physical card, you can use this online screener to get started.

[SSA.gov](http://SSA.gov) continues to be a safe and secure way to conduct your business with us online. The redesigned website—with its online tools—is the quickest, easiest, and most convenient way to begin.

Please share this information with those who need it.

***MOST SOCIAL SECURITY SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE BY VISITING [WWW.SOCIALSECURITY.GOV](http://WWW.SOCIALSECURITY.GOV), AND BY CALLING SOCIAL SECURITY TOLL-FREE AT 1 (800) 772-1213 OR 1 (800) 325-0778 TTY***

***REMEMBER, VISIT [WWW.SSA.GOV/AGENCY/EMERGENCY/](http://WWW.SSA.GOV/AGENCY/EMERGENCY/) FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION ABOUT SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE CLOSINGS AND EMERGENCIES. SUBSCRIBE TO STATE OR TERRITORY SPECIFIC UPDATES!***