



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security Makes New Data Available to Public

Commissioner Astrue Applauds President Obama's Transparency and Open Government Initiative

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, today announced that the agency is making new data about beneficiaries and the agency's disability and hearing processes available to the public. The new data supports the President's *Transparency and Open Government* initiative and is available at www.data.gov.

"I applaud President Obama's commitment to creating an unprecedented level of openness in government and the new datasets we are posting far exceed what was asked of us," Commissioner Astrue said. "Social Security has always valued transparency and sought to give the public user-friendly information about our programs. Each year we send millions of Americans personal information about their Social Security contributions and potential benefits. Our website www.socialsecurity.gov has a wealth of information about our programs and the Social Security trust funds. I hope the new data we are making available will lead to a better understanding of our operations and the important role we play in people's lives. I look forward to engaging Americans in the business of their government."

Here are a few examples of the value of the Social Security datasets available today:

- Researchers can find out about the work-related experiences of our beneficiaries receiving Social Security disability benefits and give us policy guidance for our disability programs.
- The public can see information about hearings workloads and a breakdown of the types of decisions made by Administrative Law Judges.
- Researchers can study the effects of current and proposed legislative and program provisions.
- People who have requested a hearing on their disability claim can estimate the amount of time they may have to wait for the hearing to be held and for a decision.
- The public can see general information requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

"These new datasets are just the beginning of our efforts. In February we will launch our *Open Government* webpage that will include improved access to our data in a variety of formats. In

April we will publish our *Open Government* plan,” said Commissioner Astrue. “Let me also reassure all Americans that while our goal is to become more open and transparent, we will continue to vigilantly protect the personal information the public entrusts to us. We will ensure that transparency does not put that information at risk.”

To read the President’s Memorandum on *Transparency and Open Government*, [click here](#).

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