



# OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

## Mission

For 90 years, the Social Security Administration (SSA) has helped secure the financial future for millions and safeguarded the identities of our growing clientele—now over 330 million—making us the largest service provider for the American public. We serve every member of the American public at some point in their lives: from birth, when registering for a Social Security number; to their first job, where we verify Social Security numbers and track reported earnings; to providing income support through disability and survivor benefits if the unexpected happens; and helping individuals as they plan for retirement.

## Programs

Few government agencies affect the lives of as many people as we do. In accordance with law and regulations, we administer three programs under the *Social Security Act*:

- **Old-Age and Survivors Insurance:** Established in 1935, the Old-Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI) program provides retirement and survivors benefits to qualified workers and their family members. In fiscal year (FY) 2025, we paid OASI benefits to an average of approximately 61 million beneficiaries each month and incurred over \$1,423 billion in benefit payment expenses<sup>1</sup> to OASI beneficiaries through the fiscal year. Learn more about retirement benefits on our website at [SSA.gov/retirement](https://ssa.gov/retirement) and about survivors benefits at [SSA.gov/survivors](https://ssa.gov/survivors).
- **Disability Insurance:** Established in 1956, the Disability Insurance (DI) program provides benefits for workers who become disabled and their families. In FY 2025, we paid DI benefits to an average of over 8 million beneficiaries each month and incurred about \$156 billion in benefit payment expenses<sup>1</sup> to DI beneficiaries through the fiscal year. Learn more about DI benefits on our website at [SSA.gov/disability](https://ssa.gov/disability).
- **Supplemental Security Income:** Established in 1972, the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program provides financial support to aged, blind, and disabled adults and children who have limited income and resources. In FY 2025, we paid SSI benefits to a monthly average of 7.4 million recipients (approximately 2.6 million of whom concurrently receive OASI or DI benefits) and incurred about \$60 billion in SSI Federal and State supplementary benefit payment expenses<sup>1</sup> through the fiscal year. Learn more about SSI benefits on our website at [SSA.gov/ssi](https://ssa.gov/ssi).

We also support national programs administered by other Federal and State agencies, as required by law, such as Medicare, Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, State Children's Health Insurance Program, E-Verify, Federal Benefits for Veterans, as well as

<sup>1</sup> Benefit payment expenses consist of benefits paid and the change in benefits accrued during FY 2025.



programs associated with the *Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974*, *Coal Industry Retiree Health Benefit Act*, and *Help America Vote Act of 2002*.

## How Social Security Benefited America in Fiscal Year 2025

Our programs and services are vital to the public, and the scope of our work is enormous.

- We paid a combined total of over \$1.6 trillion in Social Security and SSI benefits.
- This year, about 85 percent of persons aged 65 or older received Social Security and more than 90 percent of those aged 75 and older.
- On average each month, about one million blind or disabled children under age 18 received SSI benefits.

## How We Served America in Fiscal Year 2025

- Processed over 528.1 million online transactions.
- Mailed nearly 300 million notices.
- Added 9.3 million new **my Social Security** accounts for a total of 97.3 million accounts. A new account is one where the customer is credentialed and has at least one **my Social Security** log-in.
- Provided *Social Security Statements (Statement)* to beneficiaries online via **my Social Security** nearly 50 million times, and by mail with approximately 10 million paper *Statements*.
- Eliminated frequent service downtimes, granting Americans 24/7 access to their personal **my Social Security** account.
- Processed over 17 million applications for new and replacement Social Security Number cards, in office and online through the Internet Social Security Number Replacement Card.
- Posted approximately 295 million annual earnings items to workers' records submitted by both employers and self-employed individuals.
- Reduced in-office wait times by 27 percent to 22 minutes.
- Ensured customers with an appointment only waited around 6 minutes on average to receive assistance.
- Transitioned all field offices to our agency's single telephone platform for consistency and efficiency of service, resulting in 20 percent of all calls to the field offices being handled instantaneously through automation, which gives our teams more time to focus on customers needing help in-person.



- Handled over 25 million calls in our field offices, our National 800 Number agents handled over 33 million calls, and our self-service options handled over 34.8 million calls. We reduced the annual average speed of answer to 15.1 minutes on our National 800 Number from 27.6 minutes in FY 2024.
- Sent over 3.1 million payments totaling \$17 billion to eligible beneficiaries five months ahead of schedule under the Social Security Fairness Act.
- Reduced the initial disability claims backlog by 30 percent, from an all-time high of 1.3 million in FY 2024 to nearly 885,000 cases.
- Decreased Disability hearing wait times by nearly 60 days, reaching historic lows.
- Completed over 10.2 million retirement, survivor, disability, and Medicare claims for benefits; conducted over 401,000 full medical continuing disability reviews (CDR); and performed nearly 2.5 million non-medical redeterminations of SSI eligibility.
- Completed nearly 395,000 hearing requests, reviewed nearly 85,000 cases in the Appeals Council, and defended nearly 15,000 disability cases in Federal court.

### **DID YOU KNOW THAT FOLLOWING THE COMMISSIONER'S CONFIRMATION IN EARLY MAY...**

The Initial Disability Claim Average Processing Time decreased by **17** days from May to September, and we decreased our backlog by nearly **89,000** claims

The Reconsideration Disability Claim Average Processing Time decreased by over **9** days from May to September.

The Hearings Average Processing Time decreased by **5** days from May to September

The Retirement, Survivor, and Medicare claims pending decreased by over **146,000** from May to September, and our timeliness increased by over **4** percentage points, achieving **87.1** percent in September.

Visitors who had a scheduled appointment only waited around **6** minutes on average to receive assistance



## Organization

Serving the American public requires a vast network of facilities, technology, and skilled staff. Our Commissioner leads approximately 52,000 Federal employees and 13,700 State employees who serve our customers through a network of about 1,500 offices across the country and around the world. We administer our programs and services online, by phone, by video, and in person in our offices. Our customers can access our online services, such as applying for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits; checking the status of an application or appeal; or requesting a replacement Social Security card.

The 13,700 State employees at disability determination services (DDS) make disability determinations for initial claims, reconsiderations, CDRs, and CDR appeals. We continue to persevere and improve DDS performance despite challenges with hiring and retaining staff. At the Federal level, our Federal Disability Determination Division has jurisdiction in handling disability claims filed by career railroad (RR) employees and certain dependent RR survivor disability annuitants.

Administrative law judges in our hearing offices and administrative appeals judges in our Appeals Council decide appealed cases.

Our processing centers handle the most complex benefit payment decisions, in addition to issuing benefit payments after appeals decisions, determining and collecting debt, correcting records, and performing program integrity work.

Our teleservice centers answer a broad range of Social Security and Medicare questions, schedule appointments for our field offices, provide status updates on current claims or appeals, and ensure the accuracy of our records.

For more information about our organization and its functions, visit our organizational structure [webpage](#).



### How Can We Help?

Did you know that Social Security provides financial protection for our nation's people, supporting Americans throughout all of life's journeys. In FY 2025, the agency provided service to more than 330 million Americans. For help finding your local Social Security office, visit our website at [www.SSA.gov](http://www.SSA.gov) to use the office locator and to learn more about the online services we offer.