



Retirement Ready

Fact Sheet For Workers Ages 18-48

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Retirement is different for everyone

Retirement is not one-size-fits-all. Because Social Security is more than just retirement benefits, we want to give you the information you need to plan for and make educated decisions about your future retirement.

Earnings are essential

You have probably been paying Social Security and Medicare taxes (also known as FICA taxes, or SECA taxes if you are self-employed) since you began working. Learn more about these taxes at www.ssa.gov/people/materials/pdfs/EN-05-10297.pdf. Your *Social Security Statement* contains information about your earnings history and the Social Security and Medicare taxes you paid, and provides estimates for future retirement, disability, and survivors benefits. Use your *Statement* to check your earnings each year. These earnings are used to determine your eligibility for Social Security benefits and your benefit amount. If you see an error on your earnings record, report it to us. Learn how at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10081.pdf.

Understanding your retirement benefits

Social Security is not meant to be your only source of income in retirement. On average, Social Security will replace about 40% of your annual pre-retirement earnings, although this can vary based on your circumstances. Your full retirement age is 67. Starting retirement benefits before your full retirement age (as early as age 62) lowers this percentage and starting benefits after your full retirement age (up to age 70) increases it. Learn more at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10035.pdf.

Save for retirement

In addition to Social Security, you will likely need other savings, investments, pensions, or retirement accounts to live comfortably in retirement. Because your retirement could last 20 years or more, it is important to begin your financial planning as early as possible.

- If you have a workplace retirement plan, be sure to know how it works so you can make the most of it. Your employer might match some or all of your plan contributions. If your employer does not offer a plan, there are other ways to save and invest on your own. Learn more about how to save at www.savingmatters.dol.gov/employees.htm.
- The earlier you start saving, the more time you will have to build your retirement income. For more information on investing and saving, check out www.investor.gov.
- Any amount you can save will add up over time. You can find a savings calculator at www.investor.gov/financial-tools-calculators/calculators/compound-interest-calculator.



Social Security will be there when you retire

The Social Security taxes you pay go into the Social Security Trust Funds that are used to pay benefits to current beneficiaries. The Social Security Board of Trustees estimates that, based on current law, the Trust Funds will be able to pay benefits in full and on time until 2034. In 2034, Social Security will still be able to pay about \$810 for every \$1,000 in benefits scheduled. Learn more at [**www.ssa.gov/people/materials/pdfs/EN-05-10229.pdf**](http://www.ssa.gov/people/materials/pdfs/EN-05-10229.pdf).

Benefits last as long as you live

Your Social Security benefits last as long as you live. Our Life Expectancy Calculator can provide a rough estimate of how long you might live based on your age and sex: [**www.ssa.gov/OACT/population/longevity.html**](http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/population/longevity.html).

Unable to work due to a mental or physical disability

A disability can occur at any age. If you become unable to work at a certain earnings level due to a mental or physical disability, and you meet certain eligibility requirements, you and your family may be able to receive Social Security disability benefits. Learn more about disability benefits at [**www.ssa.gov/disability**](http://www.ssa.gov/disability). The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program pays benefits to adults and children with disabilities who have limited income and resources. Learn more about SSI at [**www.ssa.gov/ssi**](http://www.ssa.gov/ssi).

Benefits for family members

Social Security is here for you even before your retirement years. Children, widows, and widowers may receive survivors benefits to help them cope with the financial loss if you die. Learn more at [**www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10084.pdf**](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10084.pdf).

We are here for you

Social Security covers about 96% of American workers. To learn more about Social Security, visit [**www.ssa.gov**](http://www.ssa.gov).