

TABLE 8.—Selected characteristics of persons approved for APTD and AB in 1962

Characteristic	APTD	AB
Number in sample.....	1,861	552
Percent:		
Married.....	29	41
Widowed.....	18	11
Divorced or separated.....	26	19
Confined to home.....	25	8
Need help outside home.....	18	45
Received rehabilitation services.....	7	26

These comparisons suggest that, in general, blind recipients of public assistance who are under age 65 resemble other disabled persons receiving public assistance but have a somewhat more normal family life and receive somewhat more help from society.

A comparison of the AB and APTD recipient rates since 1950 also suggests that our economic and social system has marshaled more resources to help solve the economic problems of the blind

than those of other disabled persons. The ratio of AB recipients to the total population has declined from 10 per 10,000 aged 18 or over in 1958 to 8 per 10,000 in 1965. This decline has virtually coincided with the rise in disability insurance benefits, which were introduced in mid-1957.

The APTD recipient rate rose steadily from 1 per 1,000 persons aged 18-64 in 1950 to more than 5 per 1,000 in 1965, and the introduction of disability insurance benefits did not alter this trend. Disability insurance would thus appear to be more effective in meeting the needs of the blind than those of other disabled persons; perhaps the criteria for qualification are less stringent for the blind. Regardless of whether disability insurance is the major factor, these figures suggest either that blindness is decreasing or that society is increasingly providing for it in ways other than public assistance to a much greater extent than for other forms of disability.

Notes and Brief Reports

Special Awards to Persons

72 and Over, Oct.-Dec. 1966*

During October-December 1966, the Social Security Administration awarded special benefits to about three-fourths of a million persons aged 72 and over who at the time of award did not qualify for OASDHI monthly cash benefits under the regular or transitional insured-status provisions of the Social Security Act.¹ These benefits were authorized by the Tax Adjustment

*Prepared by William T. Rabin, Division of Statistics, Office of Research and Statistics.

¹For regular insured status, a person must have at least 1 quarter of coverage for each year elapsing after 1950 and before the attainment of age 65 (age 62 for a woman); generally, a minimum of 6 quarters is required. The transitional insured-status provision reduces to 3 quarters the minimum quarter-of-coverage requirement for persons aged 72 and over.

Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-368) and were first payable for October 1966. The purpose of this legislation was to establish for persons aged 72 and over uninsured under the social security program a minimum income of \$35.00 (\$52.50 for a married couple) monthly (except as affected by the receipt of a public assistance payment or government pension). These special beneficiaries are persons without substantial past employment or with past employment in activities not covered under the Social Security Act.

ELIGIBILITY

Any person aged 72 or over is eligible for these special benefits if he meets several additional requirements: (1) residence in one of the 50 States or the District of Columbia; (2) United States citizenship; or (3) continuous residence in the United States for the 5-year period immediately preceding the month in which he files an application for special benefits, if he is an alien lawfully

admitted to the United States for permanent residence. In addition, persons attaining age 72 after 1967 must also have at least 3 quarters of coverage for each calendar year elapsing after 1966 and before the year of attainment of age 72. Thus, a person reaching age 72 in 1970, for example, would need 9 quarters of coverage.

AMOUNT OF BENEFITS AND OFFSETS

The law provides a special "primary" benefit of \$35.00 a month to each eligible individual and a special "wife's" benefit of \$17.50, if both husband and wife are eligible for the special benefits at the same time. A married woman could be eligible for a special benefit of \$35.00 if at the time of award her husband is not eligible—either because he has not yet reached age 72 or for some other reason. The married woman's benefit would be reduced to \$17.50, however, when her husband became eligible even if an actual award to the husband had not yet been made.

The special benefits payable to an individual and his wife for any month may be either partly or completely offset by the amount of a government pension either person was receiving or was eligible to receive for that month. If the pension is more than the amount of the special benefit, the benefit is withheld completely. The special benefits are also withheld completely for any month in which the individual or his wife are public assistance recipients, regardless of the amount of the public assistance payment.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPECIAL BENEFICIARIES

Not all of the 749,000 special benefit awards resulted in actual payments. More than 10 percent were either partly or completely offset by government pensions, and 9 out of 10 of these were completely offset. About 5 percent of the special benefit awards were made to persons who were receiving public assistance, and their payments were therefore completely withheld. The remaining 95 percent of the awards—nearly 640,000—were payable in full, mostly as special primary benefits. A few—about 18,000—were payable as special wife's benefits.

TABLE 1.—Special benefit awards for persons aged 72 and over, by type of benefit and payment status at time of award, October–December 1966

Payment status	All special benefits		Primary		Wife's	
	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of total	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of total	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of total
All awards.....	748.6	100.0	725.5	100.0	23.1	100.0
Awards without offset..	637.8	85.2	619.8	85.4	18.4	79.8
Awards with government pension offset..	75.8	10.1	71.9	9.9	4.0	17.3
Part offset.....	4.8	.6	4.8	.7	(¹)	.2
Complete offset.....	71.0	9.5	67.1	9.2	3.9	17.1
Awards with complete offset because of public assistance...	35.0	4.7	34.3	4.7	.7	3.0

¹ Less than 50 benefits.

More than 275,000 of the special age-72 benefit awards (97 percent of the total) were special primary benefits. Only about 23,000 were special wife's benefits. In most cases of special wife's awards, the husbands were simultaneously awarded primary benefits. In only about 300 instances were the husbands not yet awarded the special benefits for which they were eligible.

Women were the recipients of nearly 83 percent of special age-72 benefit awards and almost 80 percent of all special primary benefits. The relatively small number of women receiving special wife's benefits indicates that most of the women recipients were widows or had never been married. Thus, widows and unmarried women seem to be the chief beneficiaries of the special age-72 benefit legislation.

Nonwhite recipients of the special age-72 benefit awards were relatively few—about 28,000 or 3.7 percent of the total. By contrast, in 1965

TABLE 2.—Special benefit awards for persons aged 72 and over, by type of benefit and race and sex of beneficiary, October–December 1966

Type of special benefit and sex of beneficiary	All races		White		Nonwhite	
	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of all races	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of all races	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of all races
All special benefits..	748.6	100.0	720.6	96.3	28.0	3.7
Men.....	131.3	100.0	123.9	94.4	7.4	5.6
Women.....	617.4	100.0	596.7	96.7	20.6	3.3
Primary special benefits.....	725.5	100.0	698.2	96.2	27.4	3.8
Men.....	131.3	100.0	123.9	94.4	7.4	5.6
Women.....	594.3	100.0	574.3	96.6	20.0	3.4
Wife's special benefits..	23.1	100.0	22.4	97.1	.7	2.9

TABLE 3.—Special benefit awards for persons aged 72 and over, by type of benefit, source of funds, and sex of beneficiary, October–December 1966

Type of special benefit and sex of beneficiary	General revenue and OASI trust fund		General revenue		OASI trust fund	
	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of total	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of total	Number of benefits (in thousands)	Per cent of total
All special benefits.	748.6	100.0	743.2	100.0	5.4	100.0
Men.....	131.3	17.5	127.2	17.1	4.0	74.3
Women.....	617.4	82.5	616.0	82.9	1.4	25.7
Primary special benefits.....	725.5	100.0	720.2	100.0	5.4	100.0
Men.....	131.3	18.1	127.2	17.7	4.0	75.4
Women.....	594.3	81.9	593.0	82.3	1.3	24.6
Wife's special benefits.....	23.1	100.0	23.0	100.0	.1	100.0

nonwhite persons received 7.8 percent of all awards to persons aged 72 and over under the regular provisions of the Social Security Act and by the end of the year they constituted 5.8 percent of all beneficiaries aged 72 and over.²

The relatively low participation of the nonwhite in the special age-72 benefits might be because relatively more of the nonwhite who were aged 72 or over were receiving public assistance, a condition that would disqualify them from the special benefits. Thus, an analysis of data contained in a study of the characteristics of old-age assistance recipients in 1960³ shows that about one-fifth of the public assistance recipients aged 72 and over were nonwhite. It is not likely that the proportion has decreased since then.

FINANCING OF SPECIAL BENEFITS

The law provides that special age-72 benefits be paid from the old-age and survivors insurance trust fund if the persons receiving the special primary benefits worked in covered employment for more than 2 calendar quarters. In all other cases, the special benefits are paid from general revenue. Less than 1 percent of the 749,000 awards during the last quarter of 1966 were to be paid from the old-age and survivors insurance

² Data from the 1960 Census of Population show that about 7 percent of all persons aged 72 or older were nonwhite.

³ *Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of Recipients of Old-Age Assistance, 1960, Part II, State Data*, Bureau of Family Services, June 1962.

trust fund. Three-fourths of these awards to persons with 3 or more quarters of coverage were made to men.

Recent Publications*

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND STATISTICS. *1965 Annual Statistical Supplement to the Social Security Bulletin*. Washington: U. S. Govt. Print. Off., 1967. 120 pp. 60 cents.

Calendar-year and trend data for social security and related programs. Includes a legislative chronology of the provisions of the social security program.

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND STATISTICS. *The Aged Population of the United States: The 1963 Social Security Survey of the Aged*, by Lenore A. Epstein and Janet M. Murray. (Research Report No. 19.) Washington: U. S. Govt. Print. Off., 1967. 423 pp. \$1.25.

Presents the findings of a nationwide survey of persons aged 62 and over, conducted in 1963 by the Social Security Administration to measure the economic and social situation of the aged population. Includes detailed tables and analyses of the data collected on the characteristics of the aged—their income, assets, work experience, retirement patterns, and health care costs.

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND STATISTICS. *Interindustry Labor Mobility in the United States, 1957 to 1960*, by Lowell E. Gallaway. (Research Report No. 18.) Washington: U. S. Govt. Print. Off., 1967. 330 pp. \$1.

GENERAL

BATCHELDER, ALAN B. *The Economics of Poverty*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1966. 214 pp. \$4.95.

LEWIS, W. ARTHUR. *Development Planning: The Essentials of Economic Policy*. New York: Harper & Row, 1966. 278 pp. \$4.95.

MERTON, ROBERT K., and NISBET, ROBERT A., eds. *Contemporary Social Problems*. 2d ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1966. 847 pp. \$12.50.

PARADIS, ADRIAN A. *The Hungry Years: The Story of the Great American Depression*. Philadelphia: Chilton Book Co., 1967. 183 pp. \$4.25.

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