



Securing today  
and tomorrow

## What is Social Security?

- Social Security is the foundation of economic security for millions of Americans — retirees, disabled persons, and families of retired, disabled or deceased workers.
- President Franklin Roosevelt signed The Social Security Act into law in 1935 to promote economic security. The Act was part of his New Deal to lift the United States out of the Great Depression of the 1930s. It created a social insurance program designed to pay retired workers age 65 or older an income after retirement.
- The program expanded in 1939 to include survivors insurance for families of deceased workers and again in 1956 with disability insurance for disabled workers and their family members.
- In 1965, Medicare began providing health insurance for our beneficiaries.
- Since 1972, Social Security has administered the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. It is a needs-based program, funded by the U.S. Treasury general fund, not Social Security withholdings, to provide payments to people with limited income and resources who are age 65 or older, blind, or disabled. Children with disabilities can get SSI, too.
- Social Security is the most successful anti-poverty program in our country's history.

## Who do we serve?

- About one in every six Americans receives a Social Security benefit. Most of our beneficiaries are retired. Almost one third are disabled, dependents of those with disabilities, or survivors.
- Currently, about 61 million people receive a monthly Social Security benefit, including:
  - 43.9 million retired workers and dependents (about 72% of all our beneficiaries);
  - 10.7 million disabled workers and dependents; and
  - 6 million survivors of deceased workers.
- Currently, about 8.3 million people receive a monthly SSI benefit, including 1.2 million children under the age of 18.

## Resources for young people

- Social Security's website includes 20 online services, information in 18 languages, and a presence on social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and LinkedIn.
- Young adults age 18 and older can open a *my* Social Security account at [www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount/](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount/) to keep track of their earnings and get estimates of future benefits. They can also use their account to request a replacement Social Security card online in many states.