



Social Security Benefits 101

Transition-Age Students and Their Benefits

What will happen to my benefits if I go to work?

- Fear of losing benefits
- Families can discourage working due to fear
- Education can encourage work

Education + Work Incentives = SUCCESS!



Types of Disability Benefits

Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

- Needs based
- Can receive as a child or adult
- Amount based on living arrangement and income
- Maximum is \$771 in 2019
- Medicaid health insurance

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

- Disability insurance program
- Must be age 18 or older
- Can receive on parent's record or their own work record
- Medicare health insurance after 2 years

SSI Benefits and Age 18 Redetermination

- At 18 reapply for SSI as Adult, this test is more stringent
- If no longer eligible but in a training program may be able to continue receiving SSI benefits temporarily (Section 301)
- Did not qualify for SSI due to parent(s) income might qualify now!



SSI Benefits and Work

- SSI payment usually reduced when working
- SSI counts less than half of monthly wages
- Nearly everyone has more money when they work than when they remain on SSI benefits alone!

Earnings + Reduced SSI check > Just SSI Check



Federal Benefit Rate

Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) is the most that can be received in an SSI check per month

2019	\$771.00 (Individual)
2019	\$1,157.00 (Couple)



How SSI Check is Adjusted When Working

UNEARNED INCOME + EARNED INCOME

exclude \$85 of income and divide by $\frac{1}{2}$

= COUNTABLE INCOME

SSA will take the Base SSI rate and subtract countable income to determine monthly SSI check



Step One	Not working	20 hrs/wk at \$8.50 per hr	40 hrs/wk at \$8.50 per hr
Unearned Income	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subtract General Income Exclusion -	-\$20.00	-\$20.00	-\$20.00
Equals Countable Unearned income =	0.00	0.00	0.00
Step Two			
Gross Earned Income	0.00	\$688.00	\$1,376.00
Student Earned Income Exclusion -	0.00	0.00	0.00
Subtract Earned Income Exclusion -	-\$65.00	-\$65.00	-\$65.00
Subtract GIE (if not used above) -	-\$20.00	-\$20.00	-\$20.00
Remainder =	0.00	\$603.00	\$1,291.00
Impairment-Related Work Exp. -	0.00	0.00	0.00
Remainder =	0.00	\$603.00	\$1,291.00
Divide by 2 /2	/2	/2	/2
Remainder =	0.00	\$301.50	\$645.50
Blind Work Expenses -	0.00	0.00	0.00
Equals Countable Earned Income =	0.00	\$301.50	\$645.50
Step Three			
Total Countable Unearned Income	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Countable Earned Income +	0.00	\$301.50	\$645.50
Countable Income =	0.00	\$301.50	\$645.50
PASS Deduction -	0.00	0.00	0.00
Equals Total Countable Income =	0.00	\$301.50	\$645.00
Step Four			
Base SSI Rate	\$771.00	\$771.00	\$771.00
Deductions: (e.g., Overpayment) -	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Countable Income -	0.00	-\$301.50	-\$645.50
Equals Adjusted SSI Payment =	\$ 771.00	\$469.50	\$125.50
Before/After Work Illustration			
Unearned Income (if any) +	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gross Earned Income +	0.00	\$688.00	\$1,376.00
New SSI Payment +	\$771.00	\$469.50	\$125.50
Equals Total Income From All Sources =	\$ 771.00	\$1,157.50	\$1,501.50
Minus cost of IRWE (if applicable) -	0.00	0.00	0.00
Equals Total Adjusted Monthly Income =	\$ 771.00	\$1,157.50	\$1,501.50

Student Earned Income Exclusion

- Under 22 and regularly attending school or training program can keep all or most of their SSI payment and work.
- Students can earn up to \$1,870 per month (up to a limit of \$7,550 for the year) before their wages have any impact on their SSI payments!



Example

Joni is attending high school and is currently participating in a transition program. She accepted a part-time job at the zoo. She makes \$8.50 an hour and works about 10 hours a week. She is currently an SSI recipient. Using the countable income formula, show Joni and her parents how her SSI check may be affected.



\$8.50 an hour x
10 hours x 4.3
weeks = \$365.50

Step One		Scenario 1
Unearned Income		
Subtract General Income Exclusion	-	-\$20.00
Equals Countable Unearned income	=	
Step Two		
Gross Earned Income		\$365.50
Student Earned Income Exclusion	-	-\$365.50
Subtract Earned Income Exclusion	-	-\$65.00
Subtract GIE (if not used above)	-	-\$20.00
Remainder	=	0
Impairment-Related Work Exp.	-	0
Remainder	=	0
Divide by 2	/2	/2
Remainder	=	0
Blind Work Expenses	-	0
Equals Countable Earned Income	=	0
Step Three		
Total Countable Unearned Income		0
Total Countable Earned Income		0
Countable Income	=	0
PASS Deduction	-	0
Equals Total Countable Income	=	0
Step Four		
Base SSI Rate		\$771.00
Deductions: (e.g., Overpayment)	-	0
Total Countable Income	-	0
Equals Adjusted SSI Payment	=	\$771.00
Before/After Work Illustration		
Unearned Income (if any)	+	0
Gross Earned Income	+	\$365.50
New SSI Payment	+	\$771.00
Equals Total Income From All Sources	=	\$1,136.50
Minus cost of IRWE (if applicable)	-	0
Equals Total Adjusted Monthly Income	=	\$1,136.50

Impairment Related Work Expenses

Expenses that are related to impairment and needed to work, like medical equipment, Rx co-pays, special transportation

**½ the cost of these expenses will go
back into their SSI check**



Blind Work Expenses

Blind Individuals can exclude most work related expenses

Examples:

State and Federal taxes

Childcare

Union dues

Cost of service animal

Uniforms

Meals consumed at work

Transportation

Reader services



What if I lose my job?

- 1619b allows individuals to stay on SSI roles if earnings decrease and to continue to have Medicaid coverage for at least 12 months if earnings fall below a threshold

For Indiana in 2019 the state threshold is \$38,506.00



What about that Other Benefit???



Earnings and CDB or SSDI Benefit



- 9 months to get full SSDI payment during your Trial Work Period, regardless of how much you may earn!
- \$880 (gross) earnings in a month will be counted a Trial Work month
- Ends when you have 9 Trial Work Months within a rolling 60-month Period

TRIAL = TRY



After Trial Work Period

Social Security will decide whether or not your earnings show Substantial Gainful Activity effort

In 2019, the SGA guideline is \$1,220 in gross monthly earnings (\$2,040 for blind individuals)

Under SGA = check Over = No check



Work Incentives if Earnings Are Over SGA

- **Subsidies/Special Conditions**—extra assistance, a reduced production rate, frequent breaks, or fewer job duties
- **Impairment Related Work Expense**—expenses related to impairment
- **Extended Period of Eligibility (EPE)**—after Trial Work Period 3 years of protection
- **Grace Period**—at SGA level, 3 more SSDI checks!



SSDI Check Stops due to Earnings

Within 5 years of losing check, person can request for **Expedited Reinstatement of Benefits**, and get paid SSDI while Social Security determines if they still have disability



WELCOME BACK



Asset Building Resources

- ABLE Account
- Individual Development Account
- Plan for Achieving Self Support

Set goals and build for a better future...maybe a future off benefits if possible!



ABLE Account



- Opportunity for individuals with disabilities to save money for qualified disability expenses without losing their eligibility for Medicaid and Social Security benefits.
- Individuals, family and friends can save up to \$450,000 in the account (\$15,000 per year)

Indiana ABLE Accounts: <https://savewithable.com/in/home.html>



Individual Development Account

- Save for the purchase of a lifelong asset, such as training, schooling, home ownership, purchasing a vehicle for employment/school purposes
- Most IDAs not counted as resources for SSI, Medicaid and other benefits resource eligibility requirements
- Usually matched at **three times** the size of each deposit the person makes!

<http://www.in.gov/ihcda/2341.htm>



Plan for Achieving Self Support

- If you need funds to reach a specific work goal, you may apply for a (PASS) with Social Security
- Set aside funds to help you achieve your goal
- Funds will not be counted, so a PASS may allow you to become eligible for SSI or increase your SSI payment

<https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/pass.htm>



Where can students go for help?



- **Vocational Rehabilitation**—supports for getting into work or continued education or training
- **Ticket to Work**—people ages 18-64 receiving SSI or SSDI to access work supports and services
- **Social Security office**—information on work incentives and resources



Websites

Vocational Rehabilitation—find local office

<https://www.in.gov/fssa/ddrs/2636.htm>

BIN Program—access fact sheets on work incentives

<https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/bin>

Ticket to Work—how to use and assign your ticket

<https://choosework.ssa.gov/>

Social Security office locator—find your local office

<https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>



Benefits Counseling



- Alleviate fear of losing benefits
- Educating prevent OVERPAYMENTS!!!!
- More money through working
- Self-sufficiency before benefits become a habit!





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