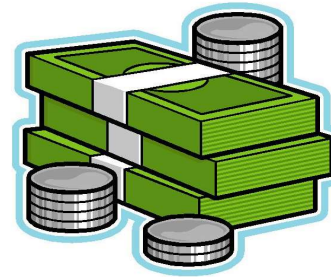
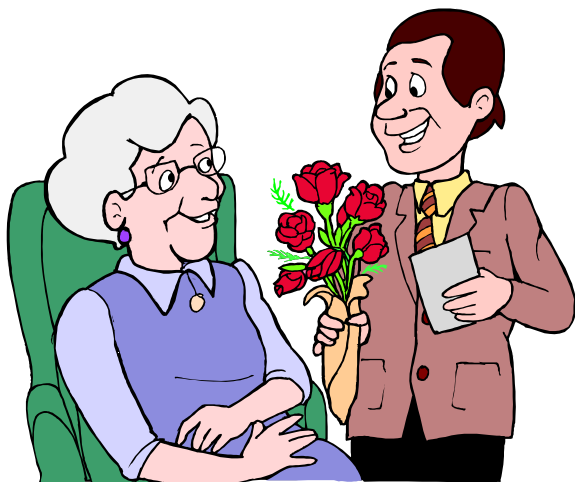


# Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Work Incentives 2023



# Supplemental Security Income

The SSI program makes cash assistance payments to the aged (65 years or older) and persons with disabilities who have limited income and resources.



# Medi-Cal Benefits

If you qualify for SSI, you automatically qualify for California's healthcare program called Medi-Cal.

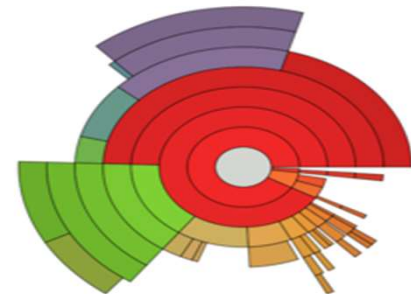


# SSI/SSP Federal and State Amount for 2023

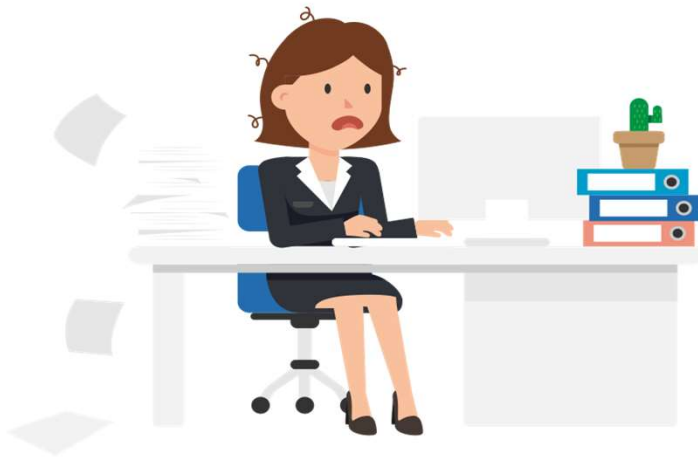
Chart for SSI/SSP amounts can be found at:

<https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-11125.pdf>

- NOTE: Every year, there is an increase in SSI benefits due to COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment). In 2023, the Federal Benefit Rate will be about \$914, and the California supplement will be about \$219.73.



# How Does Work Effect SSI Benefits?



# What is countable income?



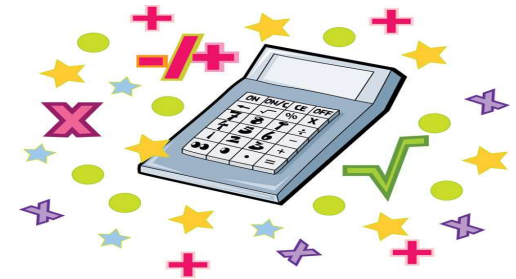
It is the income left after all allowable deductions. Countable income is the income that Social Security considers when determining the amount of SSI you get.

# What are the allowable deductions to gross earned income?

Social Security does not count most of your earned income when it figures your SSI payment amount.

## 1. Unearned Income Exclusion:

Social Security applies a \$20 general income exclusion (an exclusion that is first applied to any unearned income that you may receive, if none, then to earned income).



# What are the deductions to gross earned income (cont.)?

## 2. Earned Income Exclusion

- Social Security does not count the first \$65 of your earnings in a month plus one-half of the remainder.
- This means that Social Security counts less than one-half of your earnings when they figure your SSI payment amount.



\$ 1,300.00	Wages/ Gross Earned Income
<u>- 20.00</u>	General income exclusion
\$ 1,280.00	
<u>- 65.00</u>	Earned income exclusion
\$ 1,215.00	
<u>÷ 2</u>	SSA does not count half of earned income
\$ 607.50	Countable earned income

\$1,133.73	2023 SSI Base Rate (independent living status) + CA Supplement
<u>- 607.50</u>	Countable earned income
\$ 526.23	SSI payment

Available income:

\$ 1,300.00	Gross income
<u>+ 526.23</u>	SSI payment
\$ 1,826.23	Total monthly income

# Additional deductions

- Impairment Related Work Expenses (IRWEs)
- Blind Work Expenses (BWEs)



# What are Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE)?

- Costs for items or services that you need in order to work because of your disability.
- An IRWE must meet all of the following criteria:
  - The item(s) or service(s) enable you to work;
  - You need the item or service because of a physical or mental impairment;
  - You pay for the item or service yourself and are not reimbursed by another source (such as Medicare, Medicaid or a private insurance carrier); and
  - The cost is "reasonable," meaning that the cost represents the standard charge for the item or service in your community; and
  - Must be approved by Social Security

# Examples of IRWEs

- See <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-64-030.pdf> (page 24...)
  - Transportation costs
  - Attendant care
  - Service animals
  - Drugs
  - Medical supplies



# What are Blind Work Expenses (BWE)?

- Expenses necessary to work.
- To qualify you must be eligible for SSI based on blindness.
- BWE items do not have to be related to your blindness.
- BWEs are treated differently than IRWEs – results in a higher SSI payment amount -BWE is deducted after ½ deduction



# Examples of BWEs

See: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-64-030.pdf>  
(Page 42...)

- Service animal expenses
- Transportation to and from work
- Federal, state, and local income taxes
- Social Security taxes
- Attendant care services
- Visual and sensory aids Translation of materials into Braille
- Professional association fees
- Union dues



# Where in calculation are IRWEs and BWEs deducted?

\$ 1,300.00
- 85.00
<hr/>
\$ 1,215.00
- XX
<hr/>
\$ XX
÷ 2
<hr/>
<b>\$ XX</b>
<hr/>
<b>\$ XX</b>

**Wages/Earned income**

Earned income & General income exclusion

(\$65 + \$20)

IRWEs are deducted here

**Countable earned income**

BWEs are deducted after dividing by 2

**Countable earned income**





# SSI Work Incentives

- Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)
- Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)



# What is the student earned income exclusion (SEIE)?



- Allows a person who is under age 22 and regularly attending school to exclude certain earnings from income.
- “Regularly attending school” means that you take one or more courses of study and attend classes:
  - In a college or university for at least 8 hours a week
  - In grades 7-12 for at least 12 hours a week
  - In a training course to prepare for employment for at least 12 hours a week (15 hours a week if the course involves shop practice)
  - For less time than indicated above for reasons beyond the student’s control, such as illness

## What is the SEIE (cont.)?



- SEIE is deducted before the general income exclusion or the earned income exclusion
- **For 2022:** The amount of earnings that Social Security can exclude each month is **\$2,040 a month**, until it has excluded the maximum for the year of **\$8,230**.
- **For 2023:** The amount of earnings that Social Security can exclude each month is **\$2,220 a month**, until it has excluded the maximum for the year of **\$8,950**.

# What is a Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS)?



- It allows you to set aside other income besides your SSI and/or resources for a specified period so that you may pursue a work goal that will reduce or eliminate the SSI or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits you currently receive.
- For example, if you receive SSDI, wages, or other income, you could set aside some of that money to pay expenses for education, vocational training, assistive technology used for employment-related purposes, or starting a business as long as the expenses are related to achieving your work goal.
- A PASS can help you establish or maintain SSI eligibility.

## What is PASS (cont.)?

- Social Security will not count the income that is set aside under the PASS plan when it figures the SSI payment amount, nor will it count the resources set aside under the PASS when it determines your initial and continuing eligibility for SSI.

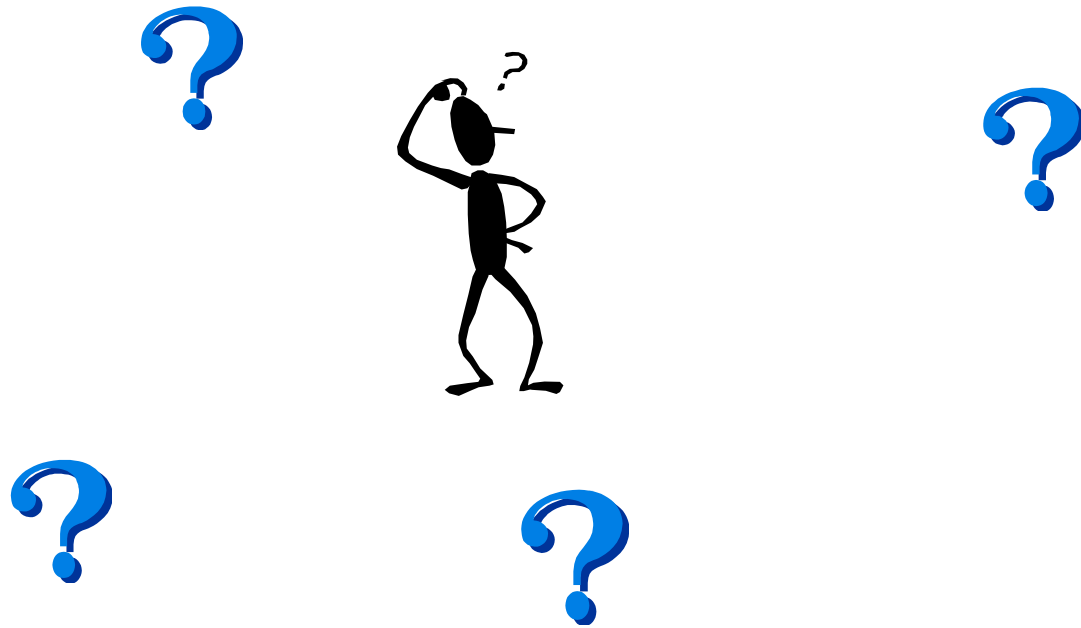
# What is a PASS (cont.)?



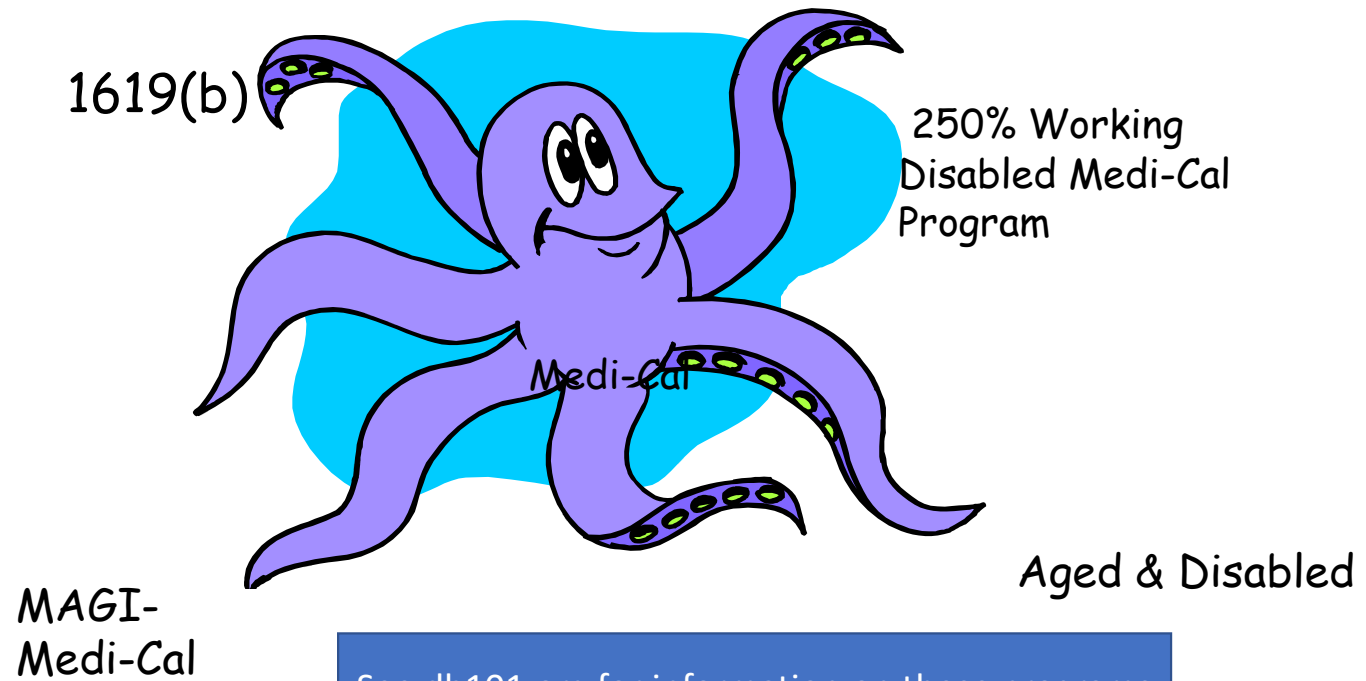
## Requirements:

- Be designed especially for you (PASS Cadre, vocational counselor...)
- Be in writing. Can use form: SSA-545-BK.
- Have a specific work goal that you are capable of performing.
- Have a specific timeframe for reaching your goal.
- Show what income you receive (other than your SSI payments) and/or resources you have that you will use to reach your goal.
- Show how you will use your income and resources to reach your work goal.
- Show how the money you set aside will be kept separate from other funds.
- Be approved by Social Security
- Be reviewed periodically by Social Security to assure your plan is actually helping you make progress towards your work goal

# What Happens To Medi-Cal if you lose SSI?



# Medi-Cal



See [db101.org](http://db101.org) for information on these programs



# SSI Reporting Responsibilities



- If you start or stop work.
- If you already reported your work, but your duties, hours, or pay have changed.
- If you start paying for expenses that you need for work due to your disability.
- You can report changes in your work activity by phone, fax, mail, in person or by using my Social Security, call 1-800-772-1213, or call, visit, or write your local Social Security office.
- If you have SSI benefits and have a My Social Security account, you may be able to report your wages online.
- If you receive SSI, Social Security also offers a toll-free automated wage reporting telephone system and a mobile wage reporting application. For more information see [www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-telephone-wage.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssi/spotlights/spot-telephone-wage.htm) or call 1-800-772-1213 and ask how you can report wages using the system.
- When you report changes in your work activity, Social Security will give you a receipt. Save the receipt!

# SSDI vs. SSI

## Social Security Disability Insurance:

- SSDI is based on disability + sufficient work credits.
- Work credits are obtained through work earnings/income or through self-employment income.
- A person can get a maximum of 4 work credits per year of work.
- The amount of work credits required to be eligible for SSDI depends on the age of the person.

## Supplemental Security Income:

- As previously mentioned, SSI is based on age/disability + limited income and resources.
- If a person is 65 years of age or older, they may be eligible for SSI benefits if they have limited income and resources.
- If a person of any age has a disability, they may also be eligible for SSI benefits if they have limited income and resources.

## How Many Work Credits Are Needed to Receive SSDI?

- **Before age 24** → 6 work credits earned the 3-year period before disability starts.
- **Age 24 to 31** → work credits for half the time between age 21 to the year the disability began.
  - For example, John becomes disabled at 25 years of age. 21 years of age to 25 years of age is 4 years. 4 years ÷ 2 is 2 years. 2 years or 8 work credits would be needed to be eligible.
- **Age 31 or older** → Generally, a person must have at least 20 credits in the last 10 years before the disability began.



# Can Someone Receive Both SSI Benefits and SSDI At The Same Time?



- Yes, a person can receive both SSDI and SSI benefits at the same time. This is known as “concurrent benefits.”
  - However, the amount of SSDI that someone receives can affect the amount of SSI benefits that someone receives.
  - For example, John begins receiving SSI benefits at \$500 per month. John then begins receiving SSDI at \$200 per month. His SSI benefits will then be reduced to \$300 per month (-\$20 general income exclusion).

## Expedited Reinstatement (EXR): SSI and SSDI

- If your SSI or SSDI ended because of your earnings, and you stop work within 5 years of when your SSI or SSDI ended, then Social Security may be able to start your benefits again without having to complete a new application.
- While Social Security determines whether you can get benefits again, it can give you provisional (temporary) benefits for up to 6 months.
- See page 29 of the Redbook.



# Ticket to Work (SSI and SSDI)



- Program for people with disabilities who want to work and participate in planning their employment.
- Increases your available choices when obtaining employment services, vocational rehabilitation (VR) services, and other support services you may need to get or keep a job.
- Free and voluntary service.
- For persons age 18-64
- Approved providers are called Employment Networks (EN). ENs are public or private organizations that have an agreement with Social Security to provide employment services to beneficiaries with disabilities
- For more information: 866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY)

# When will Social Security Review Your Disability?



Social Security will review your case periodically to see if your condition has medically improved. (improvement likely, improvement possible, improvement not possible)

Social Security will not perform a review to see if your condition has medically improved while you are actively pursuing your employment goal while using a Ticket to Work provider.

# What is a Benefits Plan Query (BPQY)?

- It provides information about a beneficiary's disability cash benefits, health insurance, scheduled continuing disability reviews, representative payee, and work history.
- It is an important planning tool for a beneficiary. See the BPQY Handbook located at <https://www.ssa.gov/redbook/>
- Get by contacting their local Social Security office or by calling 1-800-772-1213, TTY: 1-800-325-0778.
- If someone other than the beneficiary, representative payee, or appointed representative (a benefits counselor, for example) wants to get a BPQY, they must submit Consent for Release of Information form signed by the beneficiary. The form is available at [www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ssa-3288.pdf](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/online/ssa-3288.pdf)



# What is “WIPA”?

- Acronym for Work Incentives Planning and Assistance.
- Provides individualized, in-depth, employment focused benefits counseling and work incentives planning in all 50 states and the U.S. territories.
- Funded primarily by the Social Security Administration.
- To find a WIPA see: (866) 968-7842  
or <https://www.disabilityrightsca.org/system/files/file-attachments/558801.pdf>

# What is DAC?

- Social Security Disabled Adult Child (DAC) benefits are paid from the Social Security wage record of a parent
- If a parent is living, a DAC recipient receives 50% of the parents benefit amount (75% if parent is deceased)
- An adult can receive Social Security DAC on their parent's work record if the adult is:
  - Unmarried (or is married to someone who gets Social Security Title II benefits)
  - Has a disability that began before age 22; and
  - Was a dependent on their parent at the time of application, the time of the parent's death, or at the time the person became disabled



# DAC Medi-Cal **Program**

- Full-scope, no cost Medi-Cal to qualifying adults who receive Social Security DAC benefits
- Eligibility Requirements
  - You receive Social Security DAC benefits **and**
    - Have previously received SSI which began before age 22;
    - Are now age 18 or older;
    - Get Social Security DAC; and
    - Lost SSI after July 1, 1987, because:
      1. you started getting Social Security DAC or
      2. you got an increase in Social Security DAC or
      3. you had a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) increase in Social Security DAC benefits
- Income and Resource Limits

# DAC Medi-Cal Program

- How to ask for DAC benefits:
  - Contact your county Medi-Cal eligibility worker to ask the county to process an application
- What to do if you lose DAC Medi-Cal Program Benefits:
  - Senate Bill 87 requires county continue person's free or no SOC Medi-Cal while it determines if individual is eligible for Medi-Cal under a different program
  - Receiving a Notice of Action (NOA)
  - Aid paid pending

