

Supplemental Security Income

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Payments for Children with Disabilities

SSI makes monthly payments to people with low income and limited resources who are blind, disabled, or over age 65. Your child under age 18 may qualify if they meet the Social Security Administration's definition of disability for children **and** if your family income and resources fall within the eligibility limits.

Who is Eligible?

Anyone can file for Supplemental Security Income. The application will first be evaluated based on non-medical factors, such as income and assets. If there is potential for payment, then a medical decision will be made to determine if the impairment meets the disability requirements for SSI. An applicant must be shown to be eligible based on both medical and non-medical factors to receive payment.

Income and Resource Eligibility

As part of determining eligibility for SSI, the Social Security Administration (SSA) considers some of the income and resources from all members living in the household. This process of determining how much of income and resources SSA will count toward calculating eligibility is called "deeming." The SSA typically does not count income from VA benefits pension and resources, such as the house being lived in and one vehicle.

There are many rules and exceptions that can be applied to both income and resources when making the determination, and the SSA encourages everyone to file an application when in doubt.

If your child is not eligible for SSI because your family's income and assets are too high, they may become eligible when s/he turns 18. Social Security no longer includes the income and resources of other household members to make an eligibility decision when the applicant is age 18 or older.

Families should re-evaluate potential eligibility as circumstances change.

Disability Eligibility

The basic definition for disability is that the individual has a condition that is expected to last at least 12 months, or that is expected to end in death. Social Security also looks at the ability of an adult to perform work. The rules for a child are different. The SSA looks to see if the child's impairment causes functional limitations. This means that any disability can be considered.

Apply by calling
1-800-772-1213 to
make an
appointment.
Appointments can
be phone
interviews or in
person at your
local office.

To learn more
about
Supplemental
Security Income,
visit
www.ssa.gov
or call
1-800-772-1213

Apply by calling
1-800-772-1213 to
make an
appointment.
Appointments can
be phone
interviews or in
person at your
local office.

To learn more
about,
Supplemental
Security Income,
visit
www.ssa.gov
or call
1-800-772-1213

Generally, it takes approximately 6 to 8 months for the agency review the application and any medical records. A letter will be mailed to the child once a decision has been made. However, an individual may qualify for compassionate allowance SSI payments in the meantime. Under this program, SSI payments are made right away and for up to six months, while the agency decides if the child meets the criteria for receiving payments. A complete list of qualifying medical conditions for compassionate allowance is available here:

<http://www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm>

How to Apply:

Call 1-800-772-1213 to make a phone or in person appointment at a [local Social Security office](#) to apply. If you need in-person help, you must make an appointment. For a child under 18, a [Child Disability Report](#) must be completed. This can be started online at <https://www.ssa.gov/apply>, but you **must** still contact SSA to complete the SSI application.

Programs and systems change often. It is important to ensure that you are using the most current information. This fact sheet was updated December 2024. Please check <https://www.inf2f.org/fact-sheets.html> for the most recent edition.

La versión en español de esta información está disponible [aquí](#).

This fact sheet was supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$96,750 with 89% percent financed with non-governmental sources. The contents are those of INF2F and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by HRSA, HHS, or the U.S. Government. For more information, please visit HRSA.gov.