

2010 CHANGES IN PUBLIC BENEFITS

Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment

Beneficiaries will get no cost-of-living increase in their monthly checks in 2010. This includes pensioners of the federal government, military, disabled veterans and recipients of Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

Social Security Earnings Test: In the years prior to reaching full retirement age, \$1 in benefits is lost for every \$2 in earnings above the limit. A different rule applies in the year an individual reaches full retirement age. For the months prior to full retirement age, \$1 in benefits is lost for every \$3 in earnings above the limit.

	2009	2010
Under full retirement age	\$ 1,180/month	\$ 1,180/month
Year individual reaches full retirement age	\$ 3,140/month	\$ 3,140/month
After full retirement age	No limit	No limit
Early Retirement Age (with reduced benefits):	62 years old	62 years old
Full Retirement Age (with 100% benefits):		
For those born in 1941	65 and 8 months	65 and 8 months
For those born in 1942	65 and 10 months	65 and 10 months
For those born in 1943 - 1954	66 years old	66 years old
For those born in 1955	66 and 2 months	66 and 2 months
For those born in 1956	66 and 4 months	66 and 4 months
For those born in 1957	66 and 6 months	66 and 6 months
For those born in 1958	66 and 8 months	66 and 8 months
For those born in 1959	66 and 10 months	66 and 10 months
For those born in 1960 or later	67 years old	67 years old
Maximum Monthly Social Security Benefit (full retirement age)	\$ 2,323	\$ 2,346
Average Monthly Social Security Benefit:		
For retired workers	\$ 1,153	\$1,164
For aged widows and widowers	\$1,112	\$1,124
For disabled workers	\$ 1,064	\$1,064
FICA Maximum Taxable Earnings:		
Social Security	\$106,800	\$106,800
Medicare	no limit	no limit

	2009	2010
FICA Payroll Taxes:		
Social Security	6.20%	6.20%
Medicare Part A	1.45%	1.45%
Self-employed	15.3%	15.3%
Quarter of Coverage (minimum earnings in 3 months to get credit towards benefits)	\$ 1,090	\$ 1,120
Social Security Disability Thresholds:		
Non-Blind (Substantial Gainful Activity)	\$980/month	\$1,000/month
Blind (Substantial Gainful Activity)	\$1,640/month	\$1,640/month
Trial Work Period	\$700/month	\$720/month
Maximum Monthly Supplemental Security Income Benefit (SSI):		
Individual	\$ 674	\$ 674
Couple	\$ 1,011	\$1,011
Maximum Allowable Liquid Assets for SSI		
Individual	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Couple	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Medicare Part A:		
Hospital Insurance Deductible	\$ 1,068	\$ 1,100
Copayment for 61st through 90th day in hospital	\$ 267/day	\$ 275/day
Copayment for reserve days of hospitalization	\$ 534/day	\$ 550/day
Copayment for skilled nursing home care (21st through 100th day)	\$ 133.50/day	\$ 137.50/day
Part A premium for those who get Social Security	\$ 0	\$ 0
Part A premium for those who don't get Social Security and have less than 30 quarters of credits	\$ 443/month	\$ 461/month
Part A premium for those who don't get Social Security and have 30 to 39 quarters of credits	\$ 244/month	\$ 254/month
Medicare Part B:		
Monthly Part B premiums deducted from Social Security check	\$ 96.40	\$ 96.40 ¹
Annual Part B deductible (paid once each year that Part B benefits are used)	\$135	\$155
Copayment for Part B services	20%	20%

Medicare Part D Prescription Drugs:	2009	2010
Income Limit for single people to qualify for Extra Help	\$1,353.75/month	Not yet released-will be slightly higher ²
Liquid asset limit for single people to qualify for Extra Help	Less than \$12,510	Less than \$12,510
Income limit for married couples living with spouse to qualify for Extra Help	\$1,821.25/month	Not yet released-will be slightly higher ²
Liquid asset limit for married couples living with spouse to qualify for Extra Help	Less than \$25,010	Less than \$25,010
Limit on a physician's "excess charge" for Medicare services	15% of Medicare approved amount	15% of Medicare approved amount
Monthly Income Limits for full QMB Benefits:		
Individual (2009 figure in effect through 3/31/10)	\$ 923	will be slightly higher
Couple (2009 figure in effect through 3/31/10)	\$ 1,235	will be slightly higher
Monthly Income Range for SLMB & QI (pays Part B premiums):		
Individual (2009 figure in effect through 3/31/10)	\$ 924 – 1,239	will be slightly higher
Couple (2009 figure in effect through 3/31/10)	\$1,236- 1,660	will be slightly higher
Liquid Asset Limits for QMB, SLMB & QI		
Individual	\$4,000	\$8,100
Couple	\$6,000	\$12,910
Medicaid-Spousal Impoverishment:		
Resource allowance (the liquid assets that the spouse of the institutionalized person can keep)	\$21,912 – 109,560	Not yet released-will be slightly higher ³
Monthly maintenance needs allowance (the income that the spouse of the institutionalized person can keep)	\$1,821 - \$2,739 (through 6/30/10)	Not yet released-will be slightly higher ⁴

¹ The Part B premium is frozen for most beneficiaries, but will go up to \$110.50 for those enrolled during 2010 and those who do not have the premium deducted from their Social Security check. In addition, premiums are higher for single seniors with incomes above \$85,000, and married seniors with incomes above \$170,000. For details, go to www.medicare.gov.

² Expected to be released by February of 2010.

³ New figure in effect starting January 1, 2010.

⁴ New figure in effect starting July 1, 2010.

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