

Michigan Updates



Securing today
and tomorrow

A Social Security Newsletter highlighting
Social Security Disability (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

October 2016

Social Security Announces 0.3 Percent Benefit Increase for 2017

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for more than 65 million Americans will increase 0.3 percent in 2017.

The 0.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) will begin with benefits payable to more than 60 million Social Security beneficiaries in January 2017. Increased payments to more than 8 million SSI beneficiaries will begin on December 30, 2016. The Social Security Act ties the annual COLA to the increase in the Consumer Price Index as determined by the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Some other adjustments that take effect in January of each year are based on the increase in average wages. Based on that increase, the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax (taxable maximum) will increase to \$127,200 from \$118,500. Of the estimated 173 million workers who will pay Social Security taxes in 2017, about 12 million will pay more because of the increase in the taxable maximum.

Information about Medicare changes for 2017, when announced, will be available at www.Medicare.gov. For some beneficiaries, their Social Security increase may be partially or completely offset by increases in Medicare premiums.

The Social Security Act provides for how the COLA is calculated. To read more, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/cola.



For a fact sheet showing the effect of the various automatic adjustments, go to <https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/factsheets/colafacts2017.pdf>

Social Security Launches GeoMaps

Social Security provides financial benefits, tools, and information to help support you throughout life's journey. We're excited to announce the launch of geospatial mapping at Social Security! Our new initiative, *GeoMaps*, complements our Open Government and Open Data initiatives.



GeoMaps is an interactive mapping tool that lets you view large amounts of our data in a quick, geographic visualization. You can also download the data, and mesh it with your own data to create other maps.

We encourage you to explore this innovative technology by visiting our [Open Government Map Gallery](#).

This map focuses on the Social Security beneficiary population – people receiving Old-Age, Survivors, and Disability Insurance (OASDI) benefits – at the state level in 2015. Below is program data specific to Michigan.



Michigan

Total Number of OASDI Beneficiaries:
2,141,824

Composition of OASDI Beneficiaries Receiving:

Retirement Benefits

Workers: **1,393,156**
Spouses: **76,816**
Children: **22,993**

Survivors Benefits

Widow(er)s & Parents: **149,534**
Children: **69,255**

Disability Benefits

Workers: **350,684**
Spouses: **6,020**
Children: **73,366**

Beneficiaries Age 65 or Older:

Male: **650,889**
Female: **826,208**



SAVE THE DATE

National Disability Forum

Thursday, October 27, 2016

National Education Association -- Washington D.C.

The Disability Forum is an open forum of Social Security that gives all interested stakeholders an opportunity to share their unique insights on topics of particular interest to SSA early in the process and directly with policy makers. Further, it provides an opportunity for stakeholders to hear from one another. Open to anyone interested, the Disability Forum is not intended to be a means for reaching agreement on an issue, and SSA's participation is only for the purpose of gaining insight through listening.

This inclusive and collaborative approach helps us develop responsive, effective, and efficient policies in order to empower individuals with a disability, minimize their financial hardship, and ensure proper use of Disability Trust funds. The activities under the Disability Forum supplement, but do not replace, the rule-making process followed by SSA under the Administrative Procedure Act.

We feel that engaging interested parties in a public forum such as the National Disability Forum can help us capture innovative ideas - ensuring that our vision for the [disability program](#) continues to keep pace with advances in medicine, technology, health care delivery, and the modern workplace.

What can you do?

You can help us by considering the following questions:

- How can we use telemedicine or telehealth in the claims procedure to better serve individuals with disabilities?
- How can telemedicine or telehealth help speed our decision-making process at all levels?
- How else might we use telemedicine or telehealth to improve the administration of our programs, and what factors should we consider?

You can share your insights on these question by posting at our [IdeaScale](#) online tool or by [registering](#) to attend the forum on October 27. Social Security is here to help secure today and tomorrow, and together we can strengthen our disability programs.

Submit your ideas at:

<http://ssa-disabilityideas.ideascale.com/a/ideas/recent/campaign-filter/byids/campaigns/19130>



Securing today
and tomorrow

Looking for YOUR input – Helping People with Disabilities Stay in the Workforce

By: Hillary Kanady, Area Work Incentive Coordinator

Social Security is with you through life's journey. This includes providing information and support for people with disabilities who wish to explore working.

We are seeking public input for a potential [demonstration project](#) that will study ways of helping people with disabilities remain in the workforce. Through this research, we hope to identify effective strategies for supporting workers who want and are able to keep working while living with a disability.

Specifically, we are asking for recommendations that will help us test strategies for supporting workers with [musculoskeletal](#) impairments who wish to continue working. Your input will help to guide this effort, which could potentially lead to changes in the Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income programs.

Please read the [Federal Register](#) notice to learn more. The notice includes the questions we want help with answering and instructions for submitting your comments by Internet, fax, or mail. It also provides contact details in case you need further information. Comments are due no later than **November 18, 2016**.

Hillary Kanady is the Area Work Incentive Coordinator for Social Security located in Grand Rapids MI. If you have a client that you are assisting with returning to work and have questions or you have an event or training need, contact Hillary Kanady at hillary.kanady@ssa.gov.

Future Michigan Updates

If you would like to be on the mailing list to receive future Michigan Updates, or if you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please send an email to vonda.vantil@ssa.gov