

# SSI for Children Under 18

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A guide to understanding *Supplemental Security Income* and the application process for children under age 18

# Objectives of this Guide

*Before anything else, preparation  
is the key to success”*

Alexander Graham Bell

- ★ Understand the application process
- ★ Establish realistic expectations on the outcome
- ★ Learn your role & responsibilities as a parent or caregiver
- ★ Know where to go for more information
- ★ Understand how to initiate a request to appeal a decision

# What is SSI?

SSI stands for **Supplemental Security Income**. SSI provides minimum basic financial assistance to older adults and persons with disabilities (regardless of age) with very limited income *and* resources.

To be considered, an individual must have a social security number and be one or more of the following:

- Disabled,
- Blind, *or*
- Age 65 or older.

# SSI Benefits for Children

*Every family situation is unique and the Social Security Administration will consider a number of income-related factors in arriving at your benefit amount.*



SSI *monthly* benefit for children in California (2021) cannot exceed:

- \$ 859.15 for a child under 18, living alone, with parents, or with relatives
- \$ 598.01 for a child under 18, living in somebody else's household

Typically, applicants receive less than these amounts when income is considered.

# Child SSI Eligibility

Adults qualify for SSI if their disabilities prevent them from working. Because children cannot work, their eligibility is determined in other ways.

## Age

The Social Security Administration (SSA) defines a child as anyone who is under the age of 18 years old. The child **MUST** have a valid social security number.

## Disability

A beneficiary must have “a *medically determinable physical or mental impairment or impairments which result in marked and severe functional limitations*” which must have lasted or be expected to last for at least 12 months or to result in death.

## Income and Resources

The income and resources of the parents, adoptive parents, and stepparents who live with the child must be “limited” as defined by the Social Security Administration.

# SSI Eligibility for Children: Disability

A state agency makes the disability decision based on a review of the information provided by the parents / guardians. They will also ask for information from medical and school sources and other people familiar with the child's condition(s).

Children can qualify based on mental or physical disorders, but only if they ***severely limit the child's functioning***. Mental conditions may include **autism, intellectual disability, schizophrenia, or bipolar disorder**; physical conditions may include **cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, Down Syndrome, blindness, or cancer**.

# SSI Eligibility for Children: Income & Resources

**Before** the state reviews information to determine the child's disability eligibility, the child must meet the Income & Resource criteria.

In this process, parents' income & resources may be considered.



*"If a child is under age 18, not married, and lives at home with parent(s) who do not receive SSI benefits, we may consider a portion of the parents' income and resources as if they were available to the child. We may also count a portion of a stepparent's income and resources if the child lives with both a parent **and** a stepparent (or an adoptive parent **and** a stepparent). We also do this when a child is temporarily away at school, returns home during weekends, holidays or during the summer and remains subject to parental control. We call this process "deeming."*

<https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-child-ussi.htm>

# SSI Eligibility for Children: Income & Resources

## Income considered:

**Earned Income:** Wages, net earnings from self-employment, certain royalties, honoraria, and sheltered workshop payments.

**Unearned Income:** All income that is not earned such as Social Security benefits, pensions, State disability payments, unemployment benefits, interest income, dividends and cash from friends & relatives.

**In-Kind Income:** Food, shelter, or both that you get for free or for less than its fair market value.

## Income & Resources NOT considered:\*

- Foster care payments for an ineligible child
- Certain income used to make court-ordered support payments
- One vehicle that is used for transportation

*\*Information on these must still be disclosed to SSA when applying.*



# SSI Eligibility for Children: Income

<b>Deeming Eligibility Chart for Children 2021</b> <a href="http://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-child-ussi.htm">www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-child-ussi.htm</a>		Gross monthly income <b>BELOW</b> the dollar amounts shown means a disabled child may be eligible for SSI benefits.  Amounts given are general guidelines only.			
Number of ineligible children in household	All income is <b>earned</b>		All income is <b>unearned</b>		
	One parent in household	Two parents in household	One parent in household	Two parents in household	
0	\$3,301	\$4,095	\$1,628	\$2,025	
1	\$3,698	\$4,492	\$2,025	\$2,422	
2	\$4,095	\$4,889	\$2,422	\$2,819	
3	\$4,492	\$5,286	\$2,819	\$3,216	
4	\$4,889	\$5,683	\$3,216	\$3,613	
5	\$5,286	\$6,080	\$3,613	\$4,010	
6	\$5,683	\$6,477	\$4,010	\$ 4,407	

**Earned** income includes wages or net earnings from self-employment.

**Unearned** income Includes Social Security benefits, pensions, unemployment compensation, interest income, and State disability.

# SSI Eligibility for Children: Resources

**Deeming of Resources:** For children under 18, SSA will “deem” a portion of the resources of a parent and a parent’s spouse as belonging to the child who is applying for SSI. If a child under age 18 lives with one parent, \$2,000 of the parent's total countable resources does not count. If the child lives with 2 parents, \$3,000 does not count. SSA counts amounts over the parents’ limits as part of the child's \$2,000 resource limit.



## SSI RESOURCE LIMIT

If the value of the applicable resources you own are less than the following, you meet the resource eligibility requirements for SSI.\*

Resource Limits	January 2021
Individual/Child	\$2,000
Couple	\$3,000

*Ex: 5 year old who lives with 2 parents*

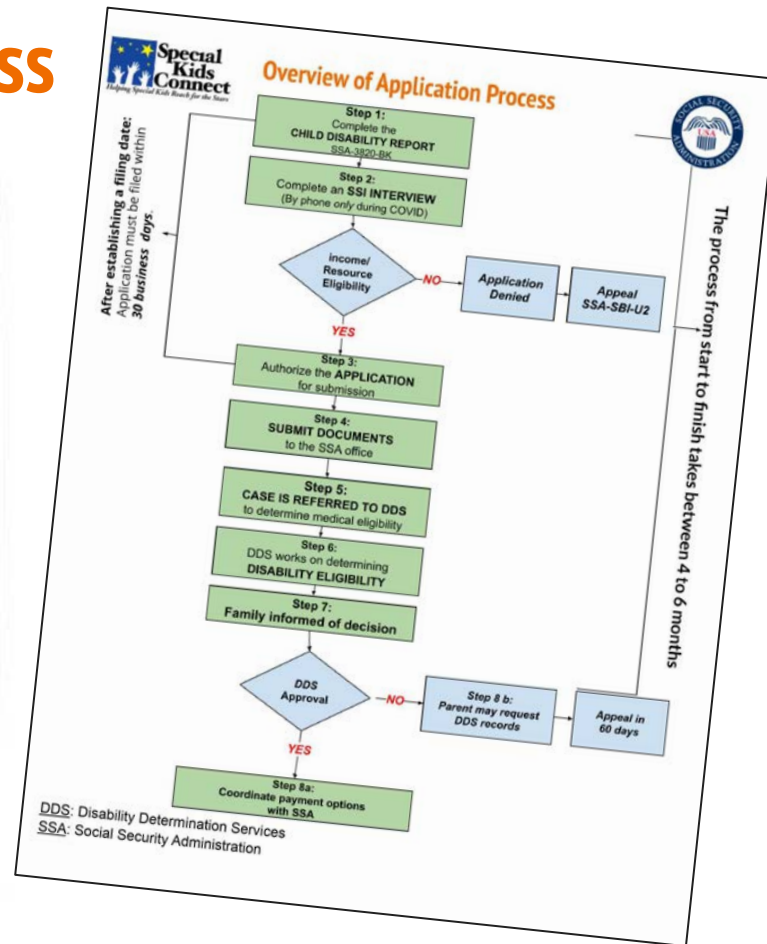
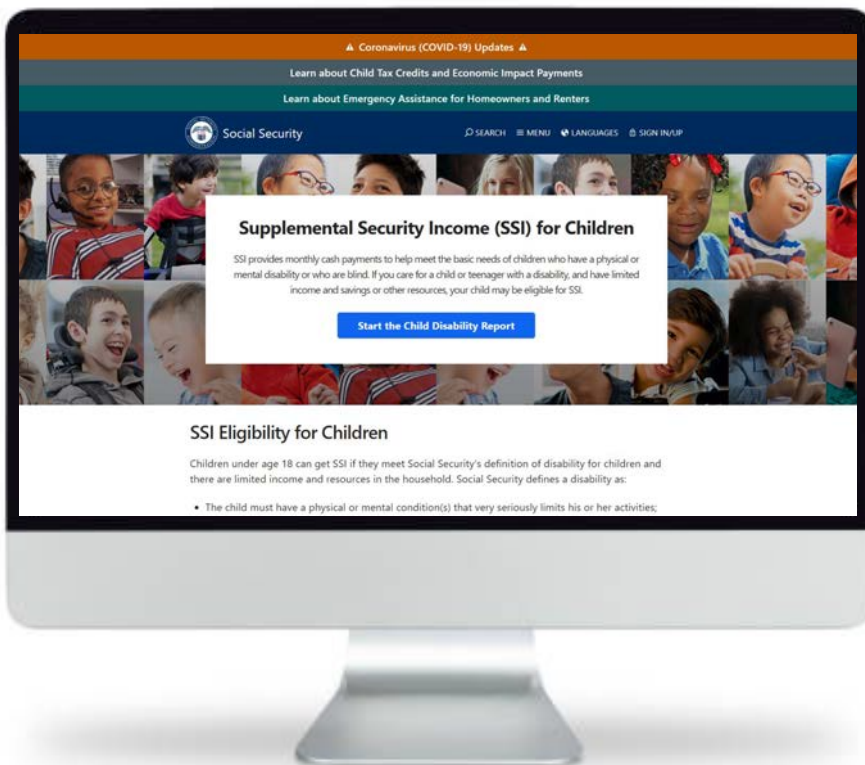
Couple's Resource Limit	\$3,000
+ Child's Resource Limit	+\$2,000
<b>FAMILY RESOURCE LIMIT</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

*Ex: 10 year old who lives with 1 parent*

Parent's Resource Limit	\$2,000
+ Child's Resource Limit	+\$2,000
<b>FAMILY RESOURCE LIMIT</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>

Resources include assets such as vehicles, land/homes owned, bank accounts, life insurance, cash.

# The Application Process



# The Application Process

## Get Ready

### GATHER RECORDS

When you apply for benefits for them, you should have as much of the following information as possible about your child's *previous 12 months*.

#### Medical Information

- Name, address, and phone number of every medical professional seen in the last 12 months
- Location & dates for your child's treatments
- Medical records with your child's patient identification (ID) number(s)
- Medication(s) taken or prescribed

#### Other Information

- School name, address, phone
- Education records such as an *Individualized Education Plan* (IEP)
- Names & contact information of teachers, psychologists, counselors, speech and other therapists who have seen or treated your child
- Your child's *Individualized Family Service Plan* (IFSP) or *Individualized Education Program* (IEP), if applicable
- Social service programs accessed and the caseworkers' names
- An original or certified copy of your child's birth certificate
- Names and Social Security Numbers for all children and adults who live in the household
- Proof of current income for your child and all family members living in the household
- Proof of resources for your child and parents living in the household



# The Application Process

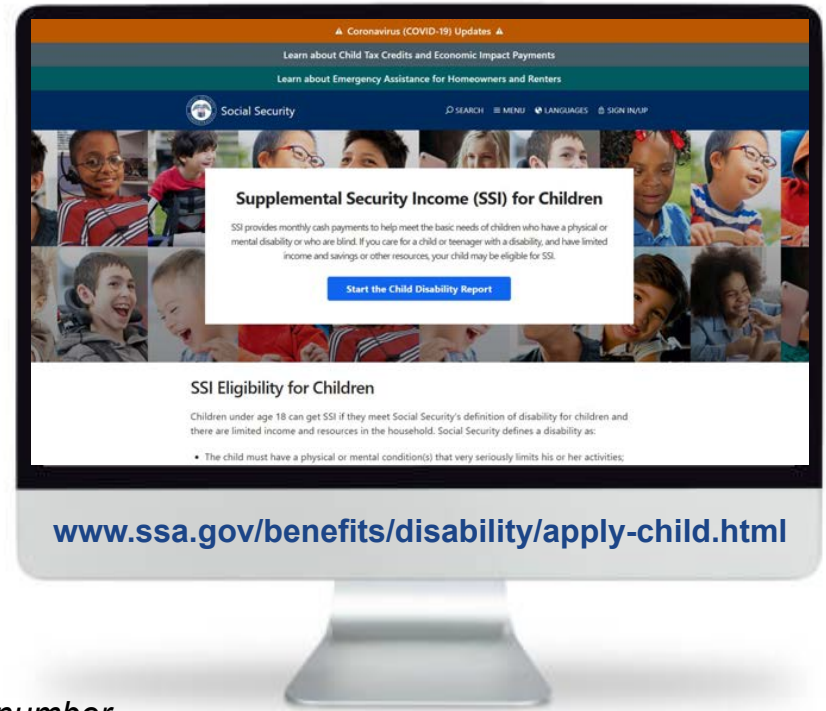
## Step 1

Complete the **CHILD DISABILITY REPORT** (SSA-3820-BK)

- **ONLINE is preferred** (see web address, at right).  
*You may also complete a paper version.*
- Completion time: **90 minutes**  
*This time may be longer if you do not have all of your records gathered in advance.*
- The online Child Disability Report does not have to be completed in one sitting.  
*Applicants can re-login to their application w/ a re-entry number*
- English-only
- If exact dates are unknown, a month/year or even a season/year (Spring 2021) is allowed.

**After completing the report online, call SSA at 1-877-600-2857.**

If you are unable to complete the form online, call **1-877-600-2857** to schedule an appointment for an interview to complete this report. Representatives are available Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm<sup>13</sup>



# The Application Process

## Step 2

Complete an **SSI INTERVIEW**  
(By phone *only* during COVID)

- Completion time: **90 minutes**
- English or Spanish  
If you speak a dialect (Mixteco, Triqui),  
you must have a translator with you.
- The interview will consist of 2 parts:
  - Part 1: “Non-medical” (Income and Resource) information is reviewed **FIRST** to determine income/resource eligibility.
  - Part 2: “Medical” information pertaining to your child’s disability will be reviewed **SECOND**.
- Have **ALL** necessary documents in front of you for **BOTH** parts prior to the start of the interview.





# The Application Process

## Step 2

Complete an **SSI INTERVIEW**  
(By phone *only* during COVID)

*Information to have with you for this part of the interview*

- **PART 1: “Non-medical” Income & Resource information**

- Monthly income from most recently completed month
- Most recent pay-stub
- Weekly amount for unemployment
- Child support payment history print-out
- If self-employed, tax return from the previous year OR Schedule C of your tax return
- Resources (i.e., vehicles, land/homes owned, bank statements, life insurance, cash)
- Living arrangements (rent receipt, copy of lease agreement)



If eligibility based on income/resource information looks *possible*, the interview will continue.

# The Application Process

## Step 2

Complete an **SSI INTERVIEW**  
(By phone *only* during COVID)

*Information to have with you for this part of the interview*

- **PART 2: “Medical Information” to confirm and/or complete the Child Disability Report**
  - School records
  - Names & contact info of medical providers & therapists
  - Medical records / dates of treatments
  - Your child’s medications/prescriptions
- Parents will be asked questions about the child’s functional abilities/limitations. To prepare, review the **Child Function Report** for your child’s age *in advance* of this interview.





# A word about Child Function Reports

SSA evaluates **physical and mental impairments** in children in terms of several domains of activity. A child is evaluated by how they typically function in these domains ***compared to children of the same age who do not have impairments.***

The following domains of activity are used in an SSA evaluation:

1. Acquiring and Using Information
2. Attending and Completing Tasks
3. Interacting and Relating with Others
4. Moving About and Manipulating Objects
5. Caring For Yourself
6. Health and Physical Well-being

The questions can be quite detailed and should be considered prior to your SSI Interview.

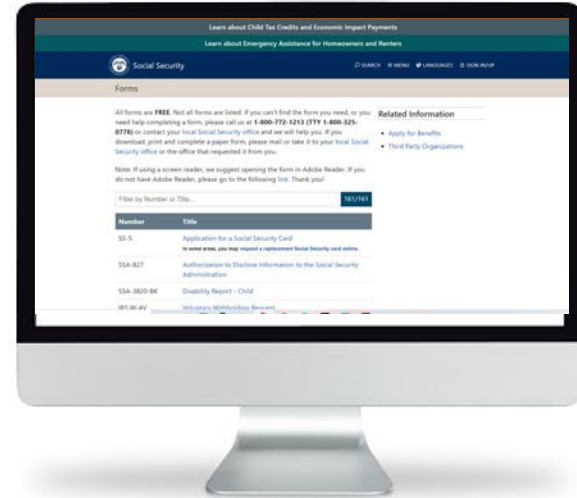
Parents must answer these questions on their own *without* the assistance of a doctor, hospital, therapist, or other professional.

# Child Function Reports

The Function Report questions you will be asked will be based on the age of your child.

Function Report Form Number	Child's Age In the Application Month
SSA-3375-BK	Birth to Age 1 year
SSA-3376-BK	Ages 1 to 3 years
SSA-3377-BK	Ages 3 to 6 years
SSA-3378-BK	Ages 6 to 12 years
SSA-3379-BK	Ages 12 to 18 years

Spanish versions of these forms can be obtained from Special Kids Connect.  
Spanish versions are not available from the Social Security Administration (SSA).



SSA offers a searchable database of forms (English-only) at [www.ssa.gov/forms](http://www.ssa.gov/forms). Search by the Form Number you are interested in accessing.

# The Application Process

## Step 3

Authorize the **APPLICATION**  
for submission

The method of authorizing the SSI application is dependent on the parents' residency status:

- If a parent has a valid Social Security Number (SSN) *and* is applying for a child under 12 years old, the application can be submitted to DDS by personal attestation at the conclusion of the interview.
- If a parent does not have a Social Security Number (SSN), they must sign an *Authorization to Disclose Information* (form SSA-827), prior to submitting.
- If a parent has a child age 12 or older, regardless of the SSN status of the parent, BOTH parent and child must sign an *Authorization to Disclose Information* (form SSA-827) before the application can be submitted.
  - The application will be in English and will be filled out with the applicant's information. Only a signature by the representative payee is required.
  - The applicant has **30 calendar days** to return the application *in-person or by mail*.
  - **IMPORTANT!** If the application is not returned within 30 days, the application may be terminated and the application process (including the SSI Interview) will have to begin again.



**You will be advised, at the end of the interview, of what you will need to sign and the date(s) they are due.**

# The Application Process

## Step 4

**SUBMIT DOCUMENTS** to the Social Security Administration (SSA) office

**Original** documents needed:

(These will be returned to you.)

- Birth certificate of the child (Original or Certified Copy)
- Parent's photo identification  
(Note: Only the identification of the "representative payee," which is usually the parent who took part in the SSI interview, is needed.)

Other documents needed (copies are acceptable) for the most recent calendar year:

(Note: These will *not* be returned unless you put a note on the documents requesting to have them mailed back.)

- School & Regional Center Records (IEP, IFSP, IPP)
- Lease agreement or rent receipt
- Pay stub / W-2s
- Tax Return (if self-employed)
- Bank statements for all accounts



**A family's "original documents" will be put back in the mail to families within 5 business days.**

# The Application Process

## Step 5

**CASE IS REFERRED TO DISABILITY DETERMINATION SERVICES (DDS)** to determine medical eligibility



**Disability  
Determination  
Services (DDS)**

The Social Security Administration (SSA) will submit the following documents to *Disability Determination Services (DDS)*:

- Child Disability Report (form SSA 3820)
- Authorization for the Disclosure of Information (form SSA 827)
- Child Function Report (Form SSA-3375-BK - SSA-3379-BK)
- Most recent IEP, IFSP, or IPP - if applicable.



**NOTE:** It is extremely important that DDS be able to contact you! If you have no telephone, you must provide a phone number where a message can be left so you can return their call.

# The Application Process

## Step 6

DDS works on determining  
**DISABILITY ELIGIBILITY**

This process takes 4 to 6 months.

**The speed with which a disability determination will be made may depend on the completeness and accuracy of the Child Disability Report and the Functional Report for your child's age.**

Disability Determinations Services (DDS) may follow up with professionals, doctors, and parents.

DDS may also request a Consultative Evaluation (CE), at no cost to you, to provide additional evidence to support a disability claim.



### IMPORTANT!

During this time, notify the SSA if you change your mailing address, your phone number, and/or if you obtain new medical information, a new IFSP/IEP/IPP, or other new evidence to support your claim.

*Be sure to include your child's social security number with ALL documents submitted to SSA.*

# The Application Process

## Step 7

### DISABILITY DETERMINATION

Once Disability Determination Services (DDS) has determined disability eligibility, the following will occur:



- An electronic folder will be sent back to the local SSA office that will include materials that are
  - Essential to DDS' disability determination, and
  - Required for Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRs).
- DDS will mail a letter to the applicant's family, in English or Spanish (as desired by the family), with an approval or a denial.

# The Application Process



## Step 8a

### SSI BENEFIT APPROVED

*If approved...*

- Parent must agree to *immediately* provide any missing documents to SSA.
- After documents are provided, parent will receive a *Notice of Award* letter outlining the benefit amount and the factors considered in determining that amount.
- Parents must determine how they wish to receive an electronic payment:
  - Option 1: Parent opens a bank account entitled “Parent full name for Child’s full name.”  
Ex: If parent is Maria Gomez and child is Jesus, account title should read *Maria Gomez for Jesus Gomez*. This account is used for child’s funds ONLY.  
Do NOT mix parents’ funds with the child’s.
  - Option 2: Parent accepts payment to a DirectExpress debit card.
- Each January, your monthly payment may be adjusted due to cost of living changes.



# Payments

Payments begin on the first full month after your child is approved for benefits. If you are approved on January 3, benefits will begin February 1.

Your child may also be entitled to back pay, originating from the first full month after the month in which you initiated your application.

If the total amount of backpay due is greater than 3 times the *full* benefit amount (in 2021, this is \$859.15 for a child living with a parent, so 3 times that is \$2,577.45), it will be released to the family in up to three installments, each six months apart.



If a family is in need of the back pay ahead of schedule, the representative payee should write a letter to SSA explaining why the money is needed. SSA may be able to release the funds sooner.

# Payments

Payment schedule example:

Maria Gomez completed and submitted SSA's *Child Disability Report* for her son, Jesus, on January 3, 2021. Her Notice of Award Letter from SSA, dated October 15, 2021, indicates Jesus' SSI award is \$400 per month.



Maria's first SSI payment will be made November 1, 2021. She will be entitled to back pay from February 1, 2021 (the month *after* she initiated her application) through October 2021, which is 10 months.

For 10 months of back pay, she is due \$4,000 (\$400/month multiplied by 10 months), which is more than 3 times the maximum monthly benefit of \$2,577.45 (\$859.15/month multiplied by 3). Maria will receive her regular monthly benefit of \$400 on November 1, 2021. She will then receive \$2,577.45 thereafter. The remaining \$1,422.55 will be electronically deposited six months later, in May 2022, (Note: If Maria's remaining amount after Nov. 2021 had been greater than \$2,577.45, she would have received another \$2,577.45 in May 2022 and the remainder in November 2022.)

\*SSI monthly benefits are deposited on the first of each month. Back pay may be deposited as soon as on 2nd day of the month.

# Spending Your Child's SSI Benefits

The SSA has strict guidelines on spending.

***The payee's first priority is to provide food, clothing, Shelter, medical care, and personal comfort items for the child.*** Once these needs are met, the payee may spend funds on other items, such as life insurance, burial arrangements, renovations needed to make the child's home safer or more accessible, furnishings for the child's use, medical equipment, dental care, and school expenses.

***The payee must save any funds not used for the child's current needs, and must account annually for how he or she used the SSI payments for the child.***

[www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)



If you have questions regarding the use of your child's monthly SSI benefit, contact  
SSA at **1-877-600-2857**

# Continuing Disability Reviews (CDRs)

Social Security periodically reviews your child's medical impairment(s) to determine if he/she continues to have a disabling condition. This is called a **Continuing Disability Review**, or **CDR**.

SSA will initiate a CDR based on its expectations of whether a child's medical condition may improve. The eligibility letter from DDS will indicate the timing of your child's CDR. DDS may require a CDR every one, three, or seven years, depending on the child's disability.

During the CDR, Social Security may ask the child's representative payee to provide evidence that the child is, and has been, continuing to receive treatment that is medically necessary and appropriate for his or her medical condition.



# Avoid Overpayments!

Overpayments occur when the Social Security Administration determines that they have paid more in benefits than a beneficiary was entitled to receive.

SSI overpayments may arise due to:

- Increases in earned or unearned income that isn't reported to SSA
- Changes in living situation or marital status
- Having more resources than the allowable limit
- An error in calculating the benefit amount due to incorrect or incomplete information at SSA

When an overpayment is identified for a child's SSI benefit, parents will receive a letter indicating how much must be paid back to Social Security and will ask for payment within 60 days.

# Avoid Overpayments!

The most common reason for overpayments is the failure to report changes in earnings.

The Social Security Administration encourages *consistent* monthly wage reporting - even if your income has not changed at all -- within the first six days of each month to help prevent SSI overpayments *and* underpayments.

Changes to your living situation, unearned income, and resources should be reported to the local SSA office within 10 days of their occurrence.

Earnings can be reported using any of the following methods:

- Using an automated wage reporting tool:
  - SSI Telephone Wage Reporting system (SSITWR)
  - SSI Mobile Wage Reporting application (SSIMWR)
  - myWageReport, located in the *my Social Security* ([www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount))
- SSI beneficiaries can also mail or bring copies of their pay stubs to their local SSA field office during the first six days of the month.



Regardless of which method an SSI beneficiary chooses to report wages, they can sign up online to receive monthly e-mail or text message wage reporting reminders at [www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/wage-reporting.html](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/wage-reporting.html).

## Annual Requirements

To ensure that benefits are properly used, SSA may regularly review how representative payees used the benefits they received on behalf of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries.

SSA mails an annual Representative Payee Report to the payees who are required to complete the report. In general, this report is not required of:

- Natural or adoptive parents of a minor child beneficiary who primarily reside in the same household as the child, *or*
- Legal guardians of a minor child beneficiary who primarily reside in the same household as the child.

Regardless of whether you are asked to complete an annual Representative Payee Report, all payees are responsible for keeping records of how the payments are spent or saved, and making all records available for review if requested by SSA.

# Representative Payee Report

PAYEE'S NAME AND ADDRESS

REPORT PERIOD

FROM: TO:

BENEFICIARY

ID:

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER

Form Approved  
OMB No. 0950-0068

ID

BIC

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CC

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FFS

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MFA

If change of address, check box and enter new address on back of report.

This report is about the benefits you received between this form to help you answer each question.

Please read the enclosed instructions before completing for the

1. Did the beneficiary continue to live alone, or with the same person, or in the same institution from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_? If NO, please explain and provide the beneficiary's current address in REMARKS on the back of this form.

2. Benefits paid to you between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Benefits you reported as saved on last year's report = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Accountable Amount = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- A. Did you (the payee) decide how the \_\_\_\_\_ was spent or saved? If NO, please explain in REMARKS on the back of this form.

- B. Did you (the payee) charge the beneficiary a fee for payee or guardianship services you provided between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_? If YES, how much of the \_\_\_\_\_ did you collect from the beneficiary for these services between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_?

- C. How much of the \_\_\_\_\_ did you spend for the beneficiary's food and housing between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_?

- D. How much of the \_\_\_\_\_ did you spend on other things for the beneficiary such as clothing, education, medical and dental expenses, recreation, or personal items between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_?

- E. How much, if any, of the \_\_\_\_\_ did you save for the beneficiary as of the \_\_\_\_\_? If none show zeros.

Form SSA-6234-F6 (08-2013) ef (08-2013)

Continued on the Reverse

PRINT NAME

6.

\_\_\_\_\_

Form SSA-6234-F6 (08-2013) ef (08-2013)

ONLY

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☐ OTH ☐

How you one box in

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for Name for

for Name for

answered "OTHER" in

which the benefits are

COUNT

on this form, and on any my knowledge, I understand lateral fact in this information, on, or may face other penalties,

NAME TELEPHONE NUMBER(S) (see area code and extension)

Area Code

Extension



# The Application Process

## Step 8b

### SSI BENEFIT DENIED



#### ***If denied...***

- The parent will receive a letter explaining the reason for the SSI denial. The letter will indicate whether you should request a *reconsideration* or a *hearing*.
- If the parent wishes to see detailed records that DDS used to determine the *medical* (disability) denial, they may request them in writing by completing form SSA-3288 (available in English or Spanish).



# The Application Process

## Step 8b

### SSI BENEFIT DENIED

#### *To appeal the medical decision...*

- You have **60 days** to request an appeal of the determination on your claim. Your 60 days starts 5 days after the date on your *Notice of Disapproved Claim* or *Notice of Reconsideration*. If you have special circumstances that prevent you from filing an appeal within that time frame, let SSA know and they *may* allow an extension (no guarantee).
- Appeals **MUST** be done in writing.
  - You can start the appeal process online at [www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/appeal.html](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/appeal.html),  
**OR**
  - You can also download forms for printing at [www.ssa.gov/forms](http://www.ssa.gov/forms) or call SSA and ask for the forms to be mailed to you. When completed, submit them to your local SSA office .

Form SSA-3441-BK (01-2021) UF  
Discontinue Prior Editions  
Social Security Administration

**DISABILITY REPORT - APPEAL**

**For SSA Use Only - Do not write in this box.**

Related SSN \_\_\_\_\_ Number Holder \_\_\_\_\_

If you are filling out this report for someone else, please provide information about his or her condition. If the question refers to "you", "your," it refers to the person who is applying for disability benefits.

**SECTION 1 - INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISABLED PERSON**

1.A. Name (First, Middle, Last, Suffix) \_\_\_\_\_ 1.B. Social Security Number \_\_\_\_\_

1.C. Daytime Phone Number, including area code (include IDD for international numbers if outside the United States or Canada) \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ Check this box if you do not have a phone number where we can reach you.

1.D. Alternate Phone Number, another number where we can reach you \_\_\_\_\_

1.E. Email address (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**SECTION 2 - MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

Give the name of someone (other than your doctor) who can help you with your claim (e.g., a family member, friend, or community health worker).

2.A. Name (First, Middle, Last) \_\_\_\_\_

wikiHow

# Age-18 Redetermination

*When children who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) disability benefits turn 18, they must be reevaluated as adults in both non-medical and medical eligibility areas in what's called an AGE-18 REDETERMINATION.*



SSA will notify the SSI recipient *and* his/her representative payee of this process within one year of the recipient's 18th birthday.

**Income & Resource Changes:** Parental-income deeming ends at age 18. (Thus, many youths with severe disabilities who were income-ineligible for SSI as minors can become income-eligible as adults.) SSA will review all sources of income and all resources to determine which should be applied toward the individual's SSI-eligible resource and income limit. SSA will also look at your new adult's living arrangements and how they are obtaining shelter and food.

**Medical Information Changes:** Different expectations are placed on children versus adults. Adult eligibility criteria focuses on an individual's ability to work, while the child requirements focus on functioning level. Individuals will be re-evaluated based on adult eligibility criteria when they turn 18.

# FAQ

## APPLICATION

### **How can I check on the status of my application?**

Call your local SSA office. Your child's Social Security number will be required to check on your application's status.

### **How will I know that my application has been forwarded to DDS?**

The representative payee will be advised on this status at the conclusion of the interview.

### **How can I speed up my application?**

- Provide medical records so that DDS doesn't have to make a request.
- If "Homeless," indicate this on your application or let SSA know about your living situation when you start the process

### **What if my income status or resource status changes after I have submitted my application?**

Maintain records of any income or resource changes. Provide these to SSA if and when you are notified by DDS of approval of your medical (disability) claim.

### **How much money will I be eligible to receive?**

Once DDS has approved your child's medical claim, SSA will determine your monthly benefit amount. You will be informed of this amount and how it was determined in a letter from SSA.

### **What if I disagree with the monthly benefit amount awarded to my child?**

Call the SSA office. They will provide you with information on how to appeal this decision.

### **How will I receive my child's SSI money?**

SSA deposits funds electronically on the 1st of every month. You have two choices for how you may receive these funds:

1. **Bank account:** The account title must specify both the name of the representative payee and the child. Example: If the representative payee is Maria Gomez and child is Jesus, the account title should read *Maria Gomez for Jesus Gomez*. This account is used for child's SSI funds ONLY and should never be mixed with money from other sources (including parents).
2. **DirectExpress debit card:** You may choose to have the funds electronically deposited into a debit card account.

### **Are SSI benefits taxable?**

No. Supplemental security income (SSI) payments are NOT taxable, and thus do not need to be reported on your tax return.

# FAQ

## CITIZENSHIP & LANGUAGE

### **I am a parent who is not a U.S. citizen. Is my child eligible for SSI?**

As long as a child has a Social Security number, he/she will be eligible. The parent (representative payee) does not need to have a social security number but must have an acceptable form of photo identification. (See next page for acceptable types of photo ID.)

### **Can non-citizens sign application documents for their child's SSI?**

Yes. The representative payee signs SSI application documents. If a child beneficiary is 12 years or older, he/she will *also* need to sign form SSA-827 (Authorization to Disclose Information). If the representative payee and/or the child are unable to provide signatures, they may sign with an "X" and a witness who can attest to the identify of the non-signing individuals will also need to sign.

### **I do not speak English. What can I do?**

SSA will provide language interpretation at no cost to you. If you speak a dialect (ex: Mixteco, Trique), it's helpful to have someone who speaks English or Spanish interpret for you.

# FAQ

## REPRESENTATIVE PAYEE

### What is a “representative payee”?

The main duties of a representative payee (also referred to as “payee”) are to use the benefits to pay for the current and future needs of the beneficiary, and properly save any benefits not needed to meet current needs. *A payee must also keep records of expenses.* When SSA requests a report, a payee must provide an accounting of how he or she used or saved the benefits.

### Who can be a “representative payee”?

Generally, the parent who initiates the SSI application becomes the representative payee. If SSA determines that this individual is not qualified to manage or direct the management of the beneficiary’s benefits, SSA will appoint a payee to receive the SSI benefits.

### What forms of photo identification will SSA accept from the representative payee?

- U.S. Driver’s License
- U.S. State I.D.
- Passport
- Matrícula consular card
- El Salvador DUI (Identification card)

*If you have a photo I.D. different from what is listed here, talk to your SSA agent to determine if it may be accepted.*

# FAQ

## BIRTH CERTIFICATE

**I do not have my child's original birth certificate. What can I do?** You may submit a *certified copy*. Certified copies generally require processing fees\* and can be obtained in the following ways:

**If the child was born *in* Monterey County**, you can visit:

Monterey County Recorder's Office  
168 W. Alisal St. 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901  
TEL: (831) 755-5041

**If the child was born in the U.S. but *outside* of Monterey County**, contact the vital records office in the state or territory where your child was born to request a certified copy. For vital records office locations in each state, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm>. Follow the instructions for requesting copies and paying fees.

**If the child has a Social Security Number (SSN) but was born outside of the U.S.**, follow the guidance at <https://www.usa.gov/replace-vital-documents#item-36582> to obtain a certified copy of your child's birth certificate.

\* The fee for obtaining a certified birth certificate for a birth in Monterey County is \$25

# Acronyms

**CDR** - Continuing Disability Review

**CE** - Consultative Evaluation (Requested by DDS if additional medical information is desired to determine eligibility.)

**DDS** - Disability Determination Services (DDS) (The state agency who determines if the applicant meets the disability eligibility requirements.)

**IEP** - Individualized Education Program (For children ages 3 years and older, obtained through the school district of residence.)

**IFSP** - Individualized Family Service Plan (For children ages 0 to 3 years who are receiving early intervention services through the regional center or their school district.)

**IPP** - Individual Program Plan (For ages 3 years and older, from a regional center, such as SARC)

**SSA** - Social Security Administration

**SSI** - Supplemental Security Income

**SSN** - Social Security Number



# SSA Contact Information

Monterey County Field Office  
928 E Blanco Rd #155  
Salinas, CA 93901

TEL: (877) 600-2857  
TTY: 1-800-325-0778  
Fax: 1-833-950-2752

Drop-off ONLY during COVID

\* Need to call to set up a time to drop off paperwork

Social Security Administration  
Office of Public Inquiries and  
Communications Support  
1100 West High Rise  
6401 Security Blvd.  
Baltimore, MD 21235

Toll-free at 1-800-772-1213.  
If you're deaf or hard of hearing and  
use TTY equipment, you can call our  
TTY number at 1-800-325-0778.

The office of jurisdiction is based off your zip code. If you live outside of Monterey County, visit [www.ssa.gov/locator](https://www.ssa.gov/locator) to find the office nearest you.