

Solutions, Strategies, Answers

Newsletter of the 18 Social Security Administration offices in
Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, and Philadelphia counties



February 2023

Issue 128



Need Some Love? ... Try SSA.GOV

Just like this forlorn guy, we've all been there at one time or another. A broken heart is the pits. But February is the Month of Love, so buck up! Our website has much to offer; check it out, and who knows? Maybe it will be the start of a beautiful relationship.

Love Your Family Here's information about benefits for a Social Security recipient's family members, such as a spouse or child. [Benefits Planner: Retirement | Benefits For Your Family | SSA](#)

Oh Baby Having a child soon? Or planning to adopt? Read up on what you need to assign a Social Security number to your new arrival. [Learn what documents you will need to get a Social Security Card | SSA](#)

Love Indeed Can Be Fleeting, but ... if you were married for at least 10 years but then divorced, you may be eligible for divorced spouse's benefits. [Family Benefits | Disability Benefits | SSA](#)

Sadly, We All Suffer Losses Of course, this is a most difficult time. But, if it happens and you need information on survivors benefits, you can find it here. [Survivors Benefits | SSA](#)

Staying Healthy for Your Family Members They'd love to have you around for years to come, so if you're reaching Medicare age, learn how the program works. [Medicare Benefits | SSA](#)

Happy Valentine's Day to All (Even Mr. Forlorn)!

Qualifying for Social Security Disability

In many of our agency's publications, we refer to Social Security Disability Insurance benefits as **SSDI**. What's a bit ironic is that SSA employees rarely use the term "SSDI;" rather, we say "**Title 2**." This is a reference to Title 2 of the Social Security Act, which authorizes retirement, survivors, and disability benefits. Our other benefit program, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), is called "**Title 16**" because that's where it's found in the Act.

Now let's look at how to qualify for Title 2 Disability. You must have worked in jobs covered by Social Security, and have a medical condition that meets our strict disability definition. We pay only for total disability; no benefits are payable for partial or short-term disability. We consider you to have a qualifying disability under our rules if these two requirements are met:

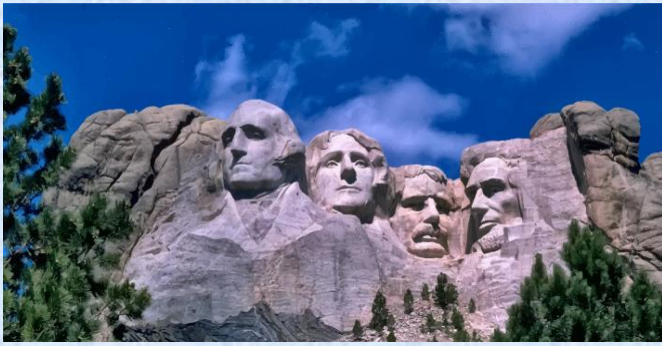
*** Because of your condition, you cannot work at a substantial level, and you cannot do the work you did previously or adjust to other work. We generally use earnings guidelines to evaluate whether your work activity is "substantial." If you are working and your earnings average more than \$1,470 monthly (*\$2,460 if you're blind*), you generally can't be considered disabled.

*** Your condition has lasted or is expected to last for at least one year or to result in death.

If you file a claim and meet these requirements, we send your application to the Disability Determination Services (DDS) office that will determine if your condition is severe enough to qualify medically. DDS will go through a sequence of steps before making a final decision. This usually takes about three to four months.

If your application is approved, the local SSA office will take action to start your benefits. If you are denied, you have 60 days to appeal the decision.

[How You Qualify | Disability Benefits | SSA](#)



Presidents' Precedents

Social Security has been around close to 90 years, so of course many presidents have had their hand in the program. With Presidents Day on the horizon, we want to look at the chief executives who were a part of key moments of change. You'll see that Social Security and its related programs have always evolved to meet society's needs; one could certainly say nothing is set in stone. *(That's a little Mt. Rushmore humor, folks!).*

President Franklin Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law on August 14, 1935. In addition to several provisions for the general welfare, the new Act created a social insurance program designed to pay retired workers age 65 and older a continuing income after retirement. Today, Social Security is considered to be the government's most successful domestic program.

President Dwight Eisenhower signed Social Security amendments in 1956 to pay benefits to disabled workers aged 50 to 64, and to disabled adult children ages 18 and older if their parent was receiving benefits.

President Lyndon Johnson signed a federal health insurance program into law in 1965. The program? Medicare. The law was signed in Independence, Missouri, in the presence of former **President Harry Truman**, who opened the fight for such legislation in a message to Congress in 1945.

President Richard Nixon signed amendments to the Social Security Act in 1972. The law liberalized several of the cash benefit provisions, made substantial changes to Medicare, and established a new federal security income program for the needy aged, blind and disabled. It was called Supplemental Security Income (SSI), and it went into effect in 1974.

So, build a log cabin, have some cherry pie, and enjoy PD!

To subscribe to *Solutions, Strategies, Answers*, contact richard.gaudiosi@ssa.gov or jessica.m.silvent@ssa.gov

New Medicare Benefit for Kidney Transplant Recipients

Most individuals who suffer from renal failure are eligible for Medicare regardless of age. When an individual has a successful kidney transplant, Medicare coverage extends for 36 months and then terminates (*unless the person is entitled to Medicare based on age or disability*).

Effective January 2023, a new rule provides coverage for immunosuppressive drugs beyond the 36-month period. This new benefit is called Medicare Part B-ID. It covers continuous immunosuppressive drugs, which are medically necessary for preventing or treating the rejection of a transplanted organ or tissue. These drugs suppress a patient's natural immune response.

The benefit is only for immunosuppressive drugs, not for any other Part B benefits or services.

Enrollment There is no specific enrollment period.

An individual can enroll as early as two months before the 36-month period is to end. In this scenario, Part B-ID will begin with the next month after the 36, which means there would be no interruption of Medicare.

If the individual enrolls after Medicare has terminated, then coverage will begin the next month after enrollment.

Exclusions To be eligible, a transplant recipient must not have certain types of other health coverage.

Exclusions apply if the individual has an Employer Group Health Plan, Tricare for Life, Dept. of Veterans Affairs coverage, and Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) when either program covers immunosuppressive drugs.

Cost to the Transplant Recipient The standard monthly premium is \$97.10. Some people may pay more because of their income level. The annual deductible is \$226.00.

How to Apply Complete form CMS-10798 and mail it to the Social Security Administration Office of Central Operations, PO Box 32914, Baltimore, Maryland 21298. You can also apply by calling 1-877-465-0355.

You can find the application form and more information at:

[End-Stage Renal Disease \(ESRD\) | Medicare](#)