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PROGRAMS DEPARTMENT  
SOCIAL SECURITY/DISABILITY/SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY

**Social Security** is a financial safety net for American workers who are ready to retire or become disabled (see information on Disability benefits below). The program is based on workers' contributions into the system while employed. The majority of workers in the U.S. pay into the system while employed through payroll deductions and receive money later when they retire.

To apply for [Social Security Retirement benefits](#) as a senior, you must meet certain eligibility criteria in terms of age, citizenship and amount of contribution.

**Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** are the two largest federal assistance programs that offer financial support to people with disabilities. The Social Security Administration will ask about your medical condition, work and education history to help determine if you are disabled under Social Security rules.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) will pay benefits to you and certain members of your family if you worked long enough and have paid Social Security taxes.

Social Security Income (SSI) pays benefits to individuals based on financial need. It is designed to help aged, blind and disabled people, who have little or no income. SSI will provide cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing and shelter. The following link will help you determine if you are [eligible](#) for either program.