

Social Security Benefits After the Death of a Spouse or Divorced Spouse



Who is eligible for survivors benefits as a spouse?

If you are working with a family who has a member experiencing the death of a spouse or divorced spouse, they may be eligible for monthly Social Security survivors benefit payments. Under certain circumstances, we can also pay benefits to members who were in non-marital legal relationships.

Why are survivors benefits important?

The death of a spouse or divorced spouse can have a financial and emotional impact on a surviving partner and family. Social Security benefits can help provide support during these difficult times.

What is the average monthly survivors benefit amount?

As of September 2024, surviving spouses receiving survivor benefits can get about \$1,800 per month, and a surviving spouse with a disability receiving survivor benefits can get about \$900 per month.

How to apply for survivors benefits?

The Social Security application for survivors benefits is not available online. Applications are completed either by phone or in person at a local Social Security office.

To set up an appointment, call us at **1-800-772-1213** (TTY: **1-800-325-0778**) between 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Wait times to speak to a representative are typically shorter early in the day (before 10 a.m.) or later in the afternoon (after 4 p.m.). The wait is also shorter later in the week (Wednesday to Friday) and later in the month. We can usually schedule an appointment in 30 to 60 days.

The person who calls should have the Social Security number of the worker who died. Our representatives can provide any additional information needed for their appointment.

When to apply for survivors benefits?

It's important for the spouse or divorced spouse to contact Social Security as soon as possible. The date they contact us to file an application can affect when benefits will begin.

For more information, visit <https://www.ssa.gov/survivor>.

