



# Retirement Ready

## Fact Sheet For Workers Ages 61-69

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



### Retirement is different for everyone

Because retirement is not one-size-fits-all, we want to provide you with the information you need to plan for retirement and to make informed decisions.

### You have choices to make

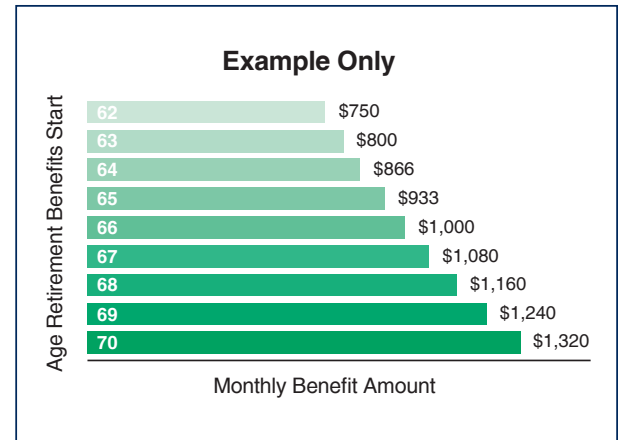
Some of these decisions may involve your Social Security retirement benefits. You can continue to work, apply for benefits, do both, or do neither. Each choice comes with important considerations for you and your family. Learn about them at [www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/matrix.html](http://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/matrix.html).

### Your “full” retirement age

Depending on when you were born, your full retirement age could be from 66 to 67. Find your exact full retirement age at [www.ssa.gov/planners/retire/retirechart.html](http://www.ssa.gov/planners/retire/retirechart.html).

### When you start affects how much you get

Everyone’s decision about when to start receiving benefits is different. Say that your monthly benefit at a full retirement age of 66 is \$1,000. Starting retirement benefits early at 62 or late at 70 can mean the difference between \$750 and \$1,320 a month. The graph on this page gives you an example. Your *Social Security Statement* provides your personalized retirement benefit estimates.



### Earnings are essential

Your earnings are used to determine your eligibility for Social Security benefits and your benefit amount. Use your *Social Security Statement* to check your earnings each year. If you see an error on your earnings record, report it to us. Learn how at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10081.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10081.pdf).

### Benefits last as long as you live

Your benefits last as long as you live. Taking benefits before your full retirement age (as early as age 62) lowers the amount you get each month. Delaying benefits past full retirement age (up to age 70) increases the monthly amount for the rest of your life. Our Life Expectancy Calculator can provide a rough estimate of how long you might live based on your age and gender: [www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html](http://www.ssa.gov/planners/lifeexpectancy.html).

### Benefits are protected from inflation

Your benefit will be adjusted to keep up with inflation. Learn about these cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) at [www.ssa.gov/cola](http://www.ssa.gov/cola).

### Some benefits are taxed

You may have to pay federal income taxes on a portion of your Social Security benefits if you have other substantial income in addition to your benefits (such as wages, self-employment, interest, dividends, and other taxable income that must be reported on your tax return). You may choose to have federal income taxes withheld from your Social Security benefit. Learn more at [www.ssa.gov/planners/taxes.html](http://www.ssa.gov/planners/taxes.html).

### Working while getting benefits

If you get retirement benefits but want to continue to work, you can. However, depending on how much you earn before full retirement age, we might temporarily withhold all or some of your benefit amount. When you reach full retirement age, we will recalculate your benefit amount to give you credit for the months we reduced or withheld benefits due to your excess earnings. Any earnings after you reach your full retirement age won’t reduce your benefits. Learn more at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10069.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10069.pdf).

## Work may boost your benefits

Your earnings can increase your monthly benefit amount — even after you start receiving benefits. Each year, we check your earnings record if you continue to work. If your latest year of earnings turns out to be one of your highest 35 years, we will automatically recalculate your benefit amount and pay you any increase due. You can get additional estimates based on what you think your future earnings will be with the *my* Social Security Retirement Calculator at [myaccount.ssa.gov](https://myaccount.ssa.gov).

## Avoid a Medicare penalty

Even if you delay retirement benefits, be sure to sign up for Medicare three months before you turn 65 to avoid the lifelong penalty. Special rules apply if you are covered by a health plan at work. Find out about Medicare, including the different parts of Medicare, the coverage options, how to apply, and how to avoid a lifelong penalty at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10043.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10043.pdf).

## Unable to work due to a mental or physical disability

You may be able to receive Social Security disability benefits if you are unable to work at a certain earnings level due to a mental or physical disability, have not reached full retirement age, and if you meet certain eligibility requirements. Learn more about disability benefits at [www.ssa.gov/disability](https://www.ssa.gov/disability). The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program pays benefits to adults and children with disabilities who have limited income and resources. Learn more about SSI at [ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/](https://ssa.gov/benefits/ssi/).

## Benefits for family members

Your family, including your spouse, former spouses, and dependent children, may qualify for benefits on your record. Find out more about benefits for your family at [www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/planner/applying7.html](https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/retirement/planner/applying7.html).

Your family may also be eligible for survivors benefits. If you are the higher earning spouse, your decision on when to claim benefits can affect the benefits of your surviving spouse. Find out more about survivors benefits at [www.ssa.gov/planners/survivors](https://www.ssa.gov/planners/survivors).

## Benefits as a spouse

If you are married, divorced, or widowed, you may be eligible for higher benefits on your spouse's record. When you apply for either retirement or spousal benefits, you may be required to apply for both benefits at the same time. Learn more at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10035.pdf](https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10035.pdf).

## Impact of other retirement plans

Most pensions or other retirement plans do not affect your Social Security benefits. But if you participate in a retirement plan or receive a pension based on work for which you did not pay Social Security tax, it could lower your benefits. This work may have been for federal, state, or local government or in a foreign country. Learn more at [www.ssa.gov/gpo-wep](https://www.ssa.gov/gpo-wep).

## Understanding your retirement benefits

Social Security is not meant to be your only source of income in retirement. On average, Social Security will replace about 40% of your annual pre-retirement earnings, although this can vary based on each person's circumstances. Learn more at [www.ssa.gov/planners/retire](https://www.ssa.gov/planners/retire).

## We are here for you

Social Security covers about 96% of American workers. To learn more about Social Security, visit [www.ssa.gov](https://www.ssa.gov).



Securing today  
and tomorrow

## When you're retirement ready...

The easiest and most convenient way to apply for retirement benefits is at [www.ssa.gov/applyforbenefits](https://www.ssa.gov/applyforbenefits).