

Living Arrangements of SSI Recipients

by Charles G. Scott*

This article describes the living arrangements of persons receiving payments under the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. The data were taken from the Quality Assurance Review conducted by the Social Security Administration (SSA). This procedure is used by SSA to determine the frequency and causes of incorrect determinations of eligibility and payment amounts. During the period October 1986-September 1987, approximately 15,000 SSI recipients (from a total caseload of 4 million) were included in this SSA review.

All age groups are represented in the SSI recipient population and it is therefore difficult to describe the living arrangement for the "typical" recipient. Nevertheless, some interesting patterns emerge in an analysis of the data. About 36 percent of all SSI recipients lived alone in their own households, and 52 percent of the elderly recipients lived alone. About 12 percent of persons receiving SSI payments lived in households with only their spouse or with only their spouse and minor children. Another 12 percent of the SSI recipients lived in households with only other related adults (other than a spouse or parents). About 9 percent of all SSI recipients lived in an institution, and children were somewhat less likely to be institutionalized than were adults.

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The Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program makes payments to individuals whose income and resources are below specified amounts and who meet the requirements in one of the following three categories—

Aged: Aged 65 or older.

Blind: Vision, with use of a correcting lens, is 20/200 or less in the better eye or tunnel vision of 20 degrees or less. No minimum age limit applies.

Disabled: Meets the Social Security Disability Insurance program definition of disability. No minimum age limit applies.

The living arrangements of SSI recipients vary and include an elderly couple living in their own home, a child living in an apartment with his or her parents, or a young adult living in an institution. This article describes SSI recipients in terms of their living arrangements— that is, the type of residence in which they live, the number of persons in the household, and the relationship of the recipients to other persons in the household.

The information on living arrangements in this article is derived from the Quality Assurance (QA) Review, a process the Social Security Administration uses to monitor payment and eligibility accuracy for the SSI program. The

Technical Appendix, on page 23, describes the review process and provides tables of sampling errors for estimated counts and percents. A set of statistical tables containing all data referred to in the article also appears in this appendix. This article reports on data obtained for a sample of cases in the October 1986-September 1987 period.

Variables for Analysis

The number of persons who received federally administered SSI payments averaged 4,199,400 during the 12-month study period.¹ These recipients are described in terms of three analysis variables: Age, sex, and geographic region. The age variable is divided into three groups²—

Elderly recipients: Forty-six percent of the 1.9 million recipients were aged 65 or older. Of that number, 14 million were

¹ For discussion of how the sample was drawn, see Technical Appendix on page 23.

² For a few recipients, the age category may be incorrect because the survey was conducted over a 12-month period and the sample month was not on the data base.

awarded payments based on their age, and 530,000 were awarded payments based on blindness or other disability.³

Blind or disabled adult recipients, aged 18-64: Forty-eight percent of the recipients (2.0 million) were blind or disabled adults, aged 18-64. All of these recipients were awarded payments based on blindness or other disability. Because of the relatively small number (49,526) of blind adult recipients, this group is referred to as disabled adults.

Disabled children: Six percent of the recipients (237,600) were younger than age 18. All of these children were awarded payments based on blindness or disability (table 1).

An analysis of the recipient population, by sex, shows that nearly two-thirds of all SSI recipients are females. The percentage of female recipients varies substantially by age (chart 1). Although females are only about 42 percent of all disabled recipients under age 18, they represent about 75 percent of all elderly recipients. The primary reasons for the large percentage of females among elderly recipients include the fact

³ When a person awarded payments on the basis of disability attains age 65, the program category is not changed on agency records.

Table 1.—Number and percentage distribution of SSI recipients, by age, sex, and region, October 1986–September 1987

Variable	Total		Elderly		Disabled adults		Disabled children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Sex								
Total	4,199,400	100.0	1,940,500	100.0	2,021,300	100.0	237,600	100.0
Male	1,493,300	35.6	479,000	24.7	877,000	43.4	137,200	57.7
Female	2,706,100	64.4	1,461,500	75.3	1,144,300	56.6	100,300	42.3
Region								
Total	4,199,400	100.0	1,940,500	100.0	2,021,300	100.0	237,600	100.0
Northeast	823,300	19.6	348,400	18.0	426,500	21.1	48,400	20.4
Midwest	701,400	16.7	235,000	12.1	417,700	20.7	48,600	20.5
South	1,766,900	42.1	910,000	46.9	751,500	37.2	105,300	44.3
West	907,800	21.6	447,000	23.0	425,600	21.1	35,100	14.8

that females have a longer life expectancy than males and they are less likely than males to have been employed sufficiently to qualify for Social Security benefits at a level in excess of the SSI limit.

To analyze the geographic dispersion of the SSI recipients, the regional composition used by the Bureau of the Census is used to define the makeup of the Northeast, Midwest, South, and West.⁴

For each category of SSI recipients, the South has a larger group than any other area. Of the total SSI population (4.2 million recipients), 42 percent live in the

South. Among all U.S. residents, 34 percent are in the South (table 1).⁵ Nearly 47 percent of all elderly SSI recipients live in the South, compared with 34 percent of the Nation's total elderly population.⁶

In contrast with this overrepresentation of SSI recipients in the South, in the Midwest they are underrepresented. Almost 17 percent of the SSI recipient population live in the Midwest, compared with nearly 25 percent of the total population. Among the elderly, the SSI recipients are only 12 percent of the Midwest population; those aged 65 or older are 25 percent of the population in that area.⁷

Type of Residence

Although the types of residence for SSI recipients varied, most (89 percent) were in a household setting (chart 2). For more than 3.7 million persons in the SSI population, this setting was defined as common living quarters and facilities under domestic arrangements and circumstances that create a single economic unit or establishment. Members of a household need not be related by blood or marriage, but they must live together in a single residence and function as an economic unit. About 17 percent of the 4.2 million SSI recipients had an ownership interest in their home, 43 percent had rental liability,⁸ and 29 percent lived in households where they were neither owners nor renters. All children who lived in households were in this last category.

⁸ An oral or written agreement between the individual, spouse, or parent, and a landlord, that the landlord will provide shelter in return for rent.

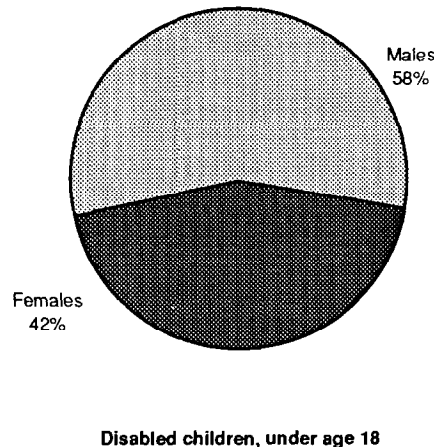
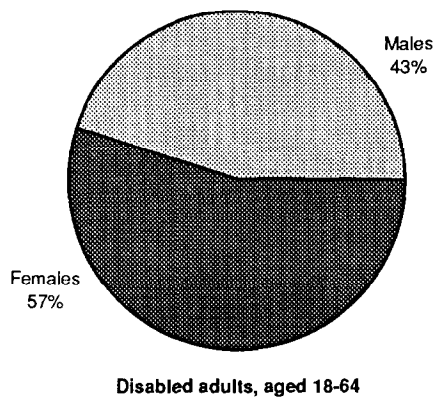
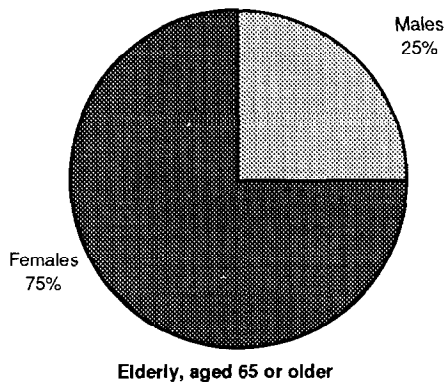
⁴ The Northeast States are Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Midwest States include Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas. The South is comprised of Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas. States in the West include Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, California, Alaska, and Hawaii.

⁵ Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1988* (108th edition), Washington, DC, 1987, page 18.

⁶ Bureau of the Census, *Note to Correspondents*, May 4, 1989, CB89-72.

⁷ *Ibid.*

Chart 1.— Age and sex



A small proportion (2 percent) of the recipients were in noninstitutional care situations. They had been placed in foster care homes or in other private residences where the placing agency retains responsibility for the services provided.

About 9 percent of all SSI recipients were institutionalized. This group is discussed in some detail below. Less than 1 percent of all SSI recipients (22,800) did not report their type of residence or were in some other type of residence.

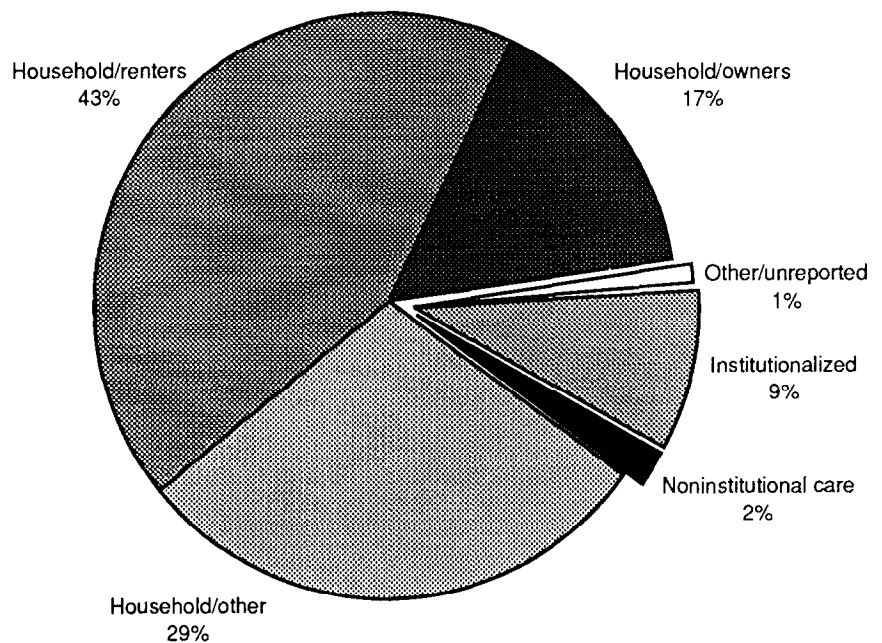
Age.— Elderly SSI recipients were much more likely to own their homes (25.9 percent) than were disabled adults (10.8 percent). Disabled adults were more likely to be in another's household (31.1 percent) than were the elderly (table 2). About 88 percent of the disabled SSI recipient children were in another's household. The elderly

and disabled adults were equally likely to be renters. The rate of institutionalization was higher for disabled adults (10.2 percent) than for the elderly (7.8 percent) or for children (7.1 percent).

Sex.—The residence pattern for female SSI recipients differed from that for males. Table 3 shows that females were more likely to own their homes (19.8 percent) than were males (12.4 percent), and they were more likely to rent (46.2 percent) than were males (36.6 percent). Males were more likely to be institutionalized (11.1 percent) than were females (7.7 percent) and were more likely to live in someone else's household (37 percent) than were females (24 percent).

Geographic region.—When the analysis focused on types of residence by region, some interesting regional patterns emerged (table 4). Recipients in the South were much more likely to own

Chart 2.— Types of residences



3,724,100 recipients in households

Table 2.—Number of SSI recipients, by age, sex, and type of residence, October 1986–September 1987

Type of residence	Total	Elderly	Disabled adults	Disabled children
Total				
Total	4,199,400	1,940,500	2,021,300	237,600
Household	3,724,100	1,766,500	1,747,000	210,700
Owner	720,400	502,800	217,500	(1)
Renter	1,797,100	895,400	899,900	(1)
Another's	1,206,500	368,300	629,600	208,600
Noninstitutional care	79,000	16,600	52,800	9,600
Institutional	373,500	151,400	205,400	16,800
Other or unreported	22,800	(1)	11,200	0
Male				
Total	1,493,300	479,000	877,000	137,200
Household	1,277,100	431,800	724,800	120,300
Owner	185,100	120,300	64,700	0
Renter	545,900	227,900	317,000	(1)
Another's	546,000	83,600	343,100	119,300
Noninstitutional care	37,600	(1)	28,000	(1)
Institutional	165,800	41,000	112,800	12,000
Other or unreported	7,900	0	7,900	0
Female				
Total	2,706,100	1,461,500	1,144,300	100,300
Household	2,447,100	1,334,500	1,022,100	90,500
Owner	535,400	382,400	152,800	(1)
Renter	1,251,200	667,400	582,900	(1)
Another's	660,500	284,700	286,500	89,300
Noninstitutional care	41,500	12,000	24,800	(1)
Institutional	207,700	110,400	92,600	(1)
Other or unreported	(1)	(1)	(1)	0

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

Table 3.—Number and percentage distribution of SSI recipients, by sex and type of residence, October 1986–September 1987

Type of residence	Total		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	4,199,400	100.0	1,493,300	100.0	2,706,100	100.0
Household	3,724,100	88.7	1,277,100	85.2	2,447,100	90.4
Owner	720,400	17.2	185,156	12.4	535,400	19.8
Renter	1,797,100	42.8	545,900	36.6	1,251,200	46.2
Another's	1,206,500	28.7	546,000	36.6	660,500	24.4
Noninstitutional care	79,000	1.9	37,600	2.5	41,500	1.5
Institutional	373,500	8.9	165,800	11.1	207,700	7.7
Other or unreported ..	22,800	.6	7,900	.5	(1)	(1)

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

their homes (25 percent) than were those in the Northeast (7.2 percent), Midwest (13.1 percent), or West (14 percent). Recipients in the Northeast (50.4 percent) and West (48.1 percent) were more likely to rent than were recipients in the Midwest (44.6 percent) or the South (35.8 percent). Also, recipients in the South (6.8 percent) and West (8.4 percent) were less likely to be institutionalized than were recipients in the Northeast (11.7 percent) or Midwest (11.6 percent).

Type of Home Owned

About 720,400 SSI recipients had an ownership interest in their homes. Homeowners included in the survey were classified by the type of home they owned (table 5). As the tabulation below shows, most of these recipients lived in nonfarm homes.

Type of residence owned	Percent
Nonfarm home	82.2
Trailer or mobile home...	12.1
Farm	4.7

A few owned trailers or mobile homes, and fewer still owned farms.

Household Composition

The number of persons living in an SSI household tends to be small. Of the 3.7 million SSI recipients living in a household, about 40 percent were living alone (table 6). An additional 24.5 percent lived with only one other person. Only about 13 percent of the recipients lived with four persons or more (chart 3).

Age.—Elderly recipients (52 percent) were more likely to live

Table 4.—Number and percentage distribution of SSI recipients, by region and type of residence, October 1986–September 1987

Type of residence	Total		Northeast		Midwest		South		West	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	4,199,400	100.0	823,300	100.0	701,400	100.0	1,766,900	100.0	907,800	100.0
Household	3,724,100	88.7	705,900	85.7	594,900	85.0	1,626,400	92.0	797,000	87.8
Owner	720,400	17.2	59,600	7.2	91,200	13.1	442,500	25.0	127,200	14.0
Renter	1,797,100	42.8	415,200	50.4	312,600	44.6	632,800	35.8	436,500	48.1
Another's	1,206,500	28.7	231,100	28.1	191,100	27.3	551,100	31.2	233,300	25.7
Noninstitutional care	79,000	1.9	15,400	1.9	22,900	3.3	15,000	.8	25,700	2.8
Institutional	373,500	8.9	96,000	11.7	81,100	11.6	120,200	6.8	76,200	8.4
Other or unreported	22,800	.6	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

Table 5.—Number and percentage distribution of SSI recipient homeowners, by age and type of home, October 1986–September 1987

Type of home owned	Total		Elderly		Disabled adults		Disabled children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	720,400	100.0	502,800	100.0	217,500	100.0	(1)	100.0
Nonfarm	592,000	82.2	417,000	82.9	174,900	80.4	(1)	(1)
Farm	33,700	4.7	28,000	5.6	(1)	(1)	(1)	0
Trailer/mobile	87,400	12.1	52,400	10.4	34,800	16.0	(1)	(1)
Other or unreported	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

alone than were disabled adults (34 percent). Households with recipient children were somewhat larger than those of disabled adults and much larger than those with elderly recipients.

Sex.—Females were much more likely (45.8 percent) to live alone than were males (29.7 percent). Many elderly females (760,200) lived alone in their households. They accounted for 18.1 percent of all SSI recipients.

Relationship to Other Household Members

The wide variety of relationships between SSI recipients and

members of their households is shown in the tabulation below.

Household composition	Percent
Recipient lives alone	40
Adult recipient lives with—	
Spouse or spouse and minor children	13
Minor children	2
Recipient lives with—	
Parent or parent and siblings	10
Other related adults (not parent or sibling)	14
Nonrelated adults	2
Related and nonrelated adults	1
Other	16

The number of different relationships underscores the difficulty in describing the "typical" SSI household.

Age.—The households of the 210,700 children who are SSI recipients lend themselves most easily to creating a stereotype. About 76 percent of these children either lived only with their parents or only with parents and siblings (table 7).

Elderly recipients had a somewhat more complicated pattern of household relationships. About 52 percent of the elderly recipients lived alone, and an additional 15 percent lived with either a spouse

Table 6.—Number of SSI recipients in households, by age, sex, and size of household, October 1986–September 1987

Size of household	Total	Elderly	Disabled adults	Disabled children
Total				
Total	3,724,100	1,766,400	1,747,000	210,700
Recipient lives alone	1,500,600	910,000	590,400	(1)
Recipient lives with—				
1 person	911,700	465,000	425,100	21,500
2 persons	502,800	151,700	304,000	47,000
3 persons	316,700	87,400	175,400	53,800
4 persons	204,400	62,100	102,700	39,700
5 persons	125,700	36,500	63,700	25,400
6 persons	65,200	19,900	34,800	10,400
7 persons or more	60,800	9,600	38,100	13,100
Unreported	36,300	20,500	15,200	(1)
Male				
Total	1,277,000	431,900	724,800	120,200
Recipient lives alone	378,800	149,700	229,100	(1)
Recipient lives with—				
1 person	341,000	173,200	155,400	12,400
2 persons	207,800	43,000	140,900	24,000
3 persons	141,600	23,900	84,300	33,400
4 persons	82,100	12,000	49,200	20,900
5 persons	56,400	13,500	27,500	15,500
6 persons	26,200	(1)	15,600	(1)
7 persons or more	33,800	(1)	18,400	9,200
Unreported	9,300	(1)	(1)	(1)
Female				
Total	2,447,100	1,334,500	1,022,100	90,500
Recipient lives alone	1,121,800	760,200	361,300	(1)
Recipient lives with—				
1 person	570,700	291,900	269,700	9,200
2 persons	295,000	108,800	163,200	23,100
3 persons	175,000	63,500	91,100	20,400
4 persons	122,300	50,100	53,500	18,700
5 persons	69,200	23,100	36,200	10,000
6 persons	39,000	14,300	19,200	(1)
7 persons or more	33,300	8,700	21,200	(1)
Unreported	20,700	14,100	(1)	0

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

or with a spouse and minor children. About 18 percent of elderly recipients lived with related adults⁹ other than their spouse or parents.

Disabled adults were the most difficult to categorize. About 34 percent lived alone. An additional 13 percent lived only with their spouse or with only their spouse and minor children. More than 12 percent of these SSI recipients lived with only parents or with parents and siblings, and nearly 11 percent lived with only related adults other than a spouse or their parents.

In many SSI households, members have such a wide range of relationships that they seem to defy categorization. About 16 percent of the households did not fit into any of the categories provided on the data base.

Sex.—Female recipients were almost twice as likely as males to live alone and also were almost twice as likely as males to live in a household with only other related adults (other than spouse or parents). Males were more likely (19.1 percent) to live with a spouse or a spouse and minor children than were females (10.5 percent). Adult males were almost three times as likely as adult females to live with only parents.

Multiple Recipient Households

Unlike the situation under the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, where a household typically has multiple AFDC recipients, SSI households do not generally contain several SSI recipients. Of the 3.7 million SSI

⁹ In this section, "adults" refers to all persons aged 18 or older.

recipients in SSI households, only 688,400 (18.4 percent) live in a household with another SSI recipient. Most multirecipient situations involved a married recipient couple. Only about 11 percent of all SSI recipients who lived with other SSI recipients live with two or more recipients (table 8).

Age.—Of the 369,200 elderly recipients in a multirecipient household, about 70 percent had their spouse as the only other SSI recipient in the household. An additional 20 percent of the elderly recipients had a single relative (other than a spouse) as the only other SSI recipient in the household.

Among disabled adult SSI recipients, the pattern was quite different. Of the 279,100 disabled adults in a multirecipient household, almost 32 percent had a spouse as

Chart 3.— Number of individuals in SSI recipient's household

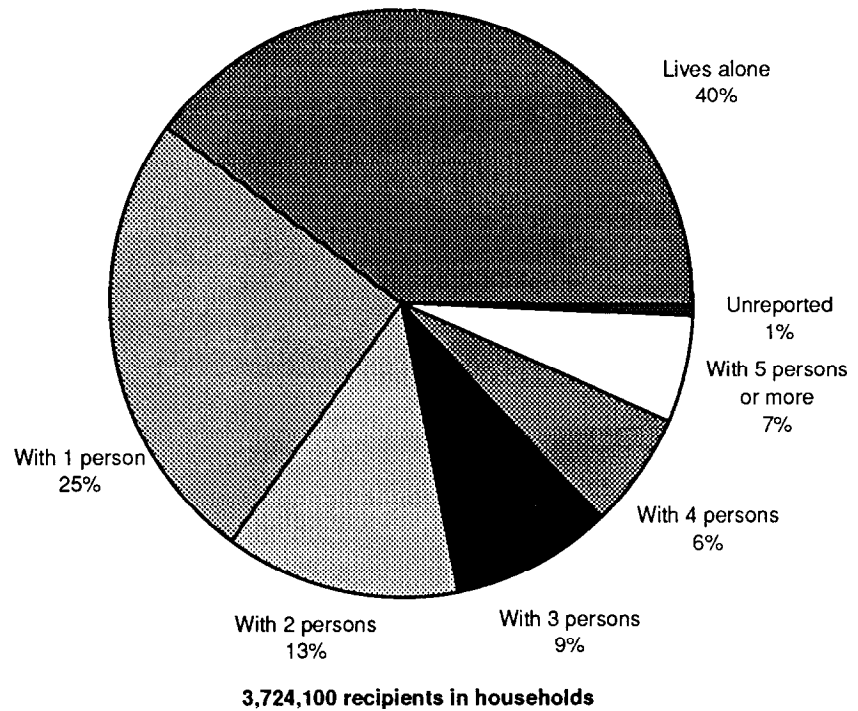


Table 7.—Number and percentage distribution of SSI recipients in households, by age and household composition, October 1986–September 1987

Household composition	Total		Elderly		Disabled adults		Disabled children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	3,724,100	100.0	1,766,400	100.0	1,747,000	100.0	210,700	100.0
Adult recipient lives—								
Alone	1,513,800	40.6	918,900	52.0	594,700	34.0	(1)	(1)
With spouse or spouse and minor children	501,600	13.5	267,100	15.1	234,200	13.4	(1)	(1)
With minor children	89,900	2.4	15,300	.9	74,200	4.2	(1)	(1)
Recipient lives with—								
Parent(s) or parent(s) and siblings	385,500	10.4	(1)	(1)	218,500	12.5	160,600	76.2
Only other related adults (not spouse or parents)	515,700	13.8	320,700	18.2	188,800	10.8	(1)	2.9
Only nonrelated adults	90,600	2.4	31,400	1.8	58,400	3.3	(1)	(1)
Only related and non-related adults	24,300	.7	7,900	.4	13,500	.8	(1)	(1)
Other or unreported	599,200	16.1	197,200	11.2	362,800	20.8	39,300	18.7

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

Table 8.—Number and percentage distribution of SSI recipients in multirecipient households, by age and relationship of recipients, October 1986–September 1987

Household composition	Total		Elderly		Disabled adults		Disabled children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	688,400	100.0	369,200	100.0	279,100	100.0	40,300	100.0
Recipient and—								
Spouse only	346,000	50.3	257,400	69.7	88,700	31.8	0	0
1 relative	228,000	33.1	72,300	19.6	128,400	46.0	27,300	67.7
2 relatives or more	74,600	10.8	23,600	6.4	39,600	14.2	11,500	28.5
1 nonrelated person	29,300	4.3	13,500	3.7	15,200	5.0	(1)	(1)
Other	10,500	1.5	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

the only other SSI recipient in the household. An additional 46 percent had a single relative (other than a spouse) as the only other SSI recipient in the household.

Two-thirds of the children in a multirecipient SSI household lived with one relative who also received SSI payments. For more than one-fourth of the children, two or more of their relatives in the same household were also SSI recipients.

Recipients in Institutions

Institutionalization is a factor in determining both eligibility and the correct benefit payment rate. Generally, residents of public institutions are ineligible for SSI unless one of the following four exceptions applies:¹⁰

- The public institution is a medical treatment facility and

Medicaid pays more than 50 percent of the cost of care;

- The public institution is a publicly operated community residence that serves no more than 16 residents;
- The public institution is a public emergency shelter for the homeless; or
- The individual is in a public institution primarily to receive educational or vocational training.

The Federal SSI payment currently is limited to \$30 (the limit was \$25 at the time of the survey) to any institutionalized individual in either a public or private medical treatment facility, if Medicaid is paying more than 50 percent of the cost of the individual's care.

About 9 percent (373,500) of the 4.2 million SSI recipients were in an institution (table 9). Institutions differ from households by the existence of a proprietor; the number of individuals cared for; and the established formal structure for food, shelter, and treatment or services to individuals not related to the proprietor. Institutions do not include hotels, motels, or boarding houses.

Of the 373,500 SSI recipients in institutions, 21.1 percent were in a public medical treatment facility (chart 4). A public medical treatment facility is an establishment that is the responsibility of a governmental unit and that provides medical or remedial care to some or all of its residents. Examples include Federal, State, and local hospitals, as well as skilled-nursing facilities, nursing homes, and intermediate-care facilities. Institutions are certified as medical facilities under State Medicaid plans. Among the institutionalized SSI population, disabled adults were more likely (25.9 percent) to be in a public medical facility than were elderly recipients (13.7 percent). Males were more likely (24.2 percent) to be in these facilities than were females (16.8 percent).

¹⁰ Two other exceptions have been added: (1) Beginning in July 1987 (near the end of the study period) recipients may have their payments continued for up to 2 months after they are institutionalized, if they participate in a work incentive program under section 1611(e)(1)(E) of the Social Security Act; and (2) beginning in July 1988 (after the study

period was concluded), recipients may have their benefits continued for up to 3 months after they are institutionalized, if their stay in the institution is not expected to exceed 90 days and the SSI payments are needed to maintain their home (section 1611 (e)(1)(G) of the Social Security Act).

An additional 35.7 percent of the institutionalized recipients were in a private medical treatment facility. The elderly (52.4 percent) were more likely to be in a private facility than were disabled adults (23.5 percent). Females (41.8 percent) were more likely than males (28.1 percent) to be in a private facility.

About 11 percent of the institutionalized recipients were in private nonprofit residential care institutions. These institutions are tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code, and they are not accredited by the State as medical treatment facilities. They do, however, offer some special programs including occupational therapy, entertainment, social

activities, counseling, and protective services. Disabled adults (15 percent) were more likely than elderly recipients (6 percent) to be in this type of facility.

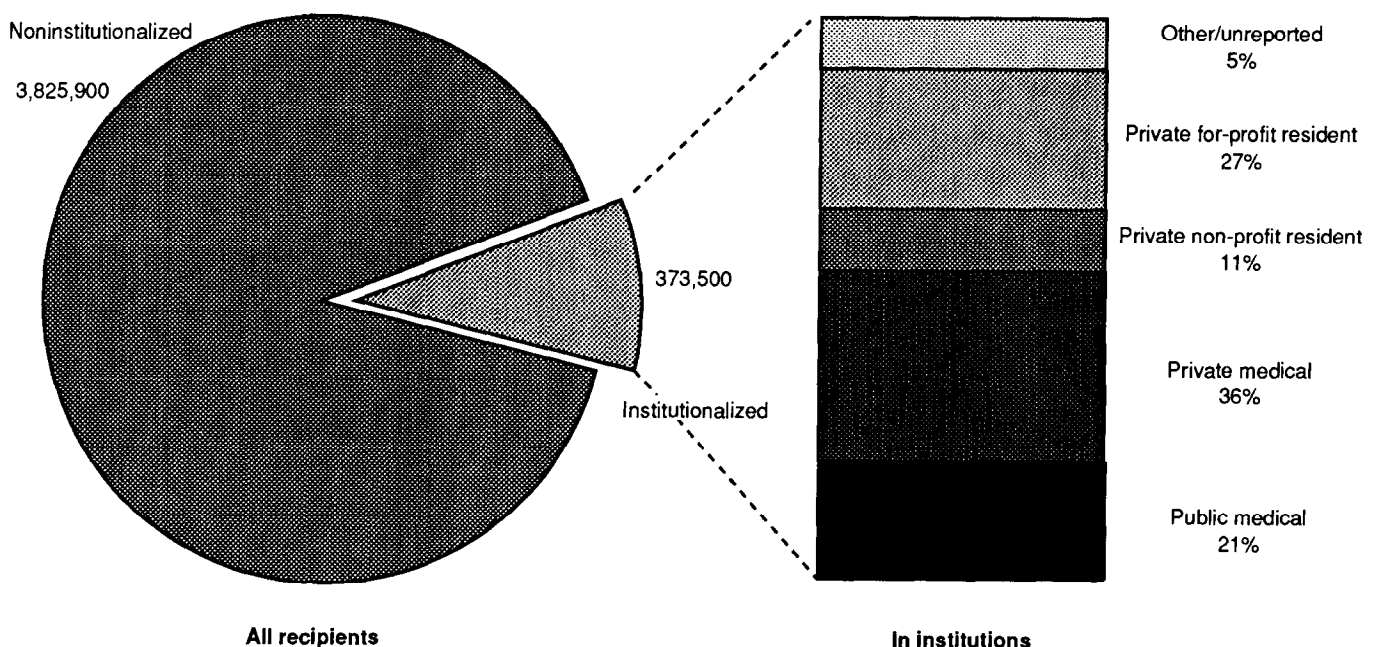
Proprietary for-profit residential care and education or vocational training facilities housed 27 percent of institutionalized individuals. These facilities are not tax exempt and are

Table 9.—Number and percentage distribution of institutionalized SSI recipients, by age and type of institution, October 1986–September 1987

Type of institution	Total		Elderly		Disabled adults		Disabled children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	373,500	100.0	151,400	100.0	205,400	100.0	16,800	100.0
Public medical	78,700	21.1	20,800	13.7	53,200	25.9	(1)	(1)
Private medical	133,500	35.7	79,400	52.4	48,200	23.5	(1)	(1)
Private nonprofit residential	42,300	11.3	9,100	6.0	30,800	15.0	(1)	(1)
Proprietary for-profit residential	102,000	27.3	40,800	26.9	58,300	28.4	(1)	(1)
Other or unreported	17,100	4.6	(1)	(1)	14,900	7.3	(1)	(1)

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

Chart 4.— Percentage distribution of SSI recipients by type of institution



not accredited by the State as medical treatment facilities. Like their tax-exempt counterparts, they offer a range of services. Similar percentages of disabled adults and elderly recipients were in this type of facility.

A small group (4.6 percent) of the institutionalized recipients were either in some other kind of facility or the code was not reported. Other types of facilities include public or private educational institutions and publicly operated community residences serving no more than 16 residents.

Mobility of SSI Recipients

The SSI recipients in this study tended to be mobile in terms of their housing. As the data in table 10 show, 31.5 percent had changed their address one or more times during the 3-year period preceding the survey. Children were most likely to move, and elderly recipients were the least likely. If one were to look at type of residence, recipients in the "other" category were the most likely (73.9 percent) to have changed their addresses, followed by recipients in a noninstitutional care situation (46.6 percent), recipients in an institution (42.5

percent), renters (37.3 percent), "other householders" (33.1 percent), and homeowners (6 percent). Males were a bit more likely to move at least once than were females.

Summary

No single living arrangement profile accurately describes the "typical" SSI recipient.

Nevertheless, several patterns emerged from this study of 4.2 million SSI recipients.

About 36 percent of all SSI recipients lived alone in their own households. Elderly recipients are more likely to live alone than are disabled adults. About 18 percent of all SSI recipients are elderly women living alone in their households.

For about 12 percent of the SSI recipient population, the living arrangement is in their own household with only their spouse or with only their spouse and minor children. Elderly recipients and disabled adults were equally likely to be in this category.

Another 12 percent of the SSI recipient population live in a household with only other related adults (other than a spouse or parents). Elderly recipients are more

likely to be in this category than are disabled adults or children.

About 9 percent of all SSI recipients live in an institution. Disabled adults are more likely to be institutionalized than are the elderly or children.

Nearly one-third of the recipients changed their address at least once during the 3-year period preceding the study. As would be expected, homeowners showed the least propensity to move.

Technical Appendix

The cases in this study were identified during the Quality Assurance (QA) Review process of the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. The SSI-QA system is designed to provide statistically reliable information about how well the SSI program is operating. The Social Security Administration uses the SSI-QA data to determine the frequency and causes of incorrect determinations of eligibility and payment amounts. A monthly sample selection is performed to obtain approximately 1,400 cases nationally. This stratified random sample is selected from Metropolitan Statistical Areas within the agency's administrative regions.

Table 10.—Number and percentage distribution of SSI recipients who changed residence during 3-year period preceding survey, by age and mobility, October 1986–September 1987

Number of residence changes	Total		Elderly		Disabled adults		Disabled children	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	4,199,400	100.0	1,940,500	100.0	2,021,300	100.0	237,600	100.0
None	2,879,600	68.6	1,510,900	77.9	1,247,700	61.7	121,000	50.9
One	875,600	20.9	331,000	17.1	475,600	23.5	69,000	29.0
Two	285,700	6.8	78,100	4.0	178,400	8.8	29,100	12.2
Three	97,200	2.3	15,400	.8	69,900	3.5	11,900	5.0
Four or more	61,300	1.5	(1)	(1)	49,800	2.5	(1)	(1)

¹ Sampling error too large for presentation (less than 7,500).

From October 1986 to September 1987, approximately 15,000 persons eligible for SSI payments were selected for this review.

Each recipient participates in an extensive interview that includes the review and verification of documentary proof. Collateral contacts verify the statements made during the interview. Discrepancies in case information are identified and payment error determinations are made as required. The results of the review are then transmitted to the QA computer system to generate statistical data.

Estimates based on the QA sample may differ from the figures that would have been obtained had all, rather than a sample, of the records been used. These differences are termed sampling variability. The standard error is a measure of sampling variability—that is, the variation that occurs by chance because a sample is used. The standard error is used to describe confidence intervals. The confidence interval represents the extent to which the sample results can be relied on to describe the results that would occur if the entire population (universe) had been used for data compilation rather than the sample.

In about 68 percent of all possible probability samples with the same selection criteria, the universe value would be included in the interval from one standard error below to one standard error above the sample estimate. Similarly, about 95 percent of all possible samples will give estimates within two standard errors, and about 99 percent will give estimates within 2 1/2 standard errors.

Tables I and II provide approximations of standard errors of

estimates shown in the preceding article. Table I presents approximate standard errors for the estimated number of recipients from the QA sample file. Table II presents approximations of standard errors for the estimated percentage of persons from the QA sample file. The reliability of an estimated

percentage depends on both the size of the percentage and the size of the number on which the percentage is based. The standard errors are expressed as percentage points and the bases are shown as inflated to the actual size of the universe from which the sample was drawn. In both tables, linear interpolation may be used to obtain values not specifically shown.

Table I.—Approximations of standard errors of estimated numbers of persons from the Quality Assurance file

Size of estimate (inflated)	Standard error
7,500	1,600
10,000	1,850
25,000	3,000
50,000	4,300
75,000	5,300
100,000	6,200
250,000	10,500
500,000	16,500
750,000	21,800
1,000,000	27,000
2,500,000	56,350
5,000,000	103,900

Table II.—Approximations of standard errors of estimated percentages of persons from the Quality Assurance file

Size of base (inflated)	Estimated percentage				
	2 or 98	5 or 95	10 or 90	25 or 75	50
7,500	3.0	4.6	6.3	9.1	10.6
10,000	2.6	4.0	5.5	7.9	9.2
25,000	1.6	2.5	3.5	5.0	5.8
50,000	1.1	1.8	2.5	3.6	4.1
75,000 .....	.9	1.5	2.0	2.9	3.4
100,000 .....	.6	1.3	1.7	2.5	2.9
250,000 .....	.5	.8	1.1	1.6	1.9
500,000 .....	.4	.6	.8	1.1	1.3
750,000 .....	.2	.5	.6	.9	1.1
1,000,000 .....	.2	.4	.6	.8	.9
2,500,000 .....	.1	.3	.4	.5	.6
5,000,000 .....	.1	.2	.3	.4	.4