**Changes to SSI and SSDI Benefits if you Work**

Special rules set up by the Social Security Administration make it possible for people who receive cash benefits to work and receive monthly SSI or SSDI payments.

<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/>

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI)**

SSI is a cash assistance program for people who:

-Have a disability as determined by the Social Security Administration.

-Have limited income and resources (like cash or savings accounts).

If you receive SSI and you go to work, your income will increase! Your SSI check may go down, but the money you earn at work will more than make up for it. The amount your SSI check goes down depends on how much money you earn at work. If your job is your only source of income, the first $85 per month you earn will not change your SSI check. After the first $85, your SSI check will go down 50¢ for each $1 you earn at work.

**To Calculate the Amount of your new SSI Check Amount and your new Total Monthly Income:**

* **New SSI Amount** = Current SSI Check Amount – *Amount of SSI Check Reduction*
* *Amount of SSI Check Reduction* = (Gross monthly wages - $85) ÷ 2

Let’s break it down:

Gross monthly wages - $85 = Subtotal

Sub-total divided by two = ***Amount of SSI check reduction***

* **New Total Monthly Income** = Gross Monthly Wage + New SSI Amount
* Your New Total Monthly Income **IS ALWAYS MORE THAN** Your Current SSI Amount

**SSI and Medical Benefits**

As long as you continue to receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits, you will continue to remain eligible for the same medical coverage. Section 1619(b) of the Social Security Act provides this protection. To qualify for continuing Medicaid coverage, a person must:

* Have been eligible for an SSI cash payment for at least 1 month;
* Still meet the disability requirement; and
* Still meet all other non-disability SSI requirements; and
* Need Medicaid benefits to continue to work; and
* Have gross earnings that are insufficient to replace SSI, Medicaid and publicly funded attendant care services*. (Earnings needed to replace SSI are $1505)*

**SSI EXAMPLE**

For example, if your **current SSI Check Amount = $710**

NOTE: 2013 SSI Federal Benefit Rate = $710

and if you work 20 hours per week at minimum wage ($7.25), then your **Gross Monthly Wage = $580**

Let’s calculate your new total monthly income

$580-$85 = $495, then $495 / 2 = $247.50 = Amount of SSI Check Reduction

$710 - $247.50 = $462.50 = New Monthly SSI Check

$462.50 + $580 = **$1042.50 = New Total Monthly Income**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Current SSI Check Amount | $710.00 |
| Gross Monthly Wage | $580.00 |
| Subtotal  *= Gross Monthly Wage - $85* | $495.00 |
| SSI Check Reduction Amount  *= Subtotal ÷ 2*  | $247.50 |
| New SSI Amount  *= Current SSI Check – SSI  Check Reduction* | $462.50 |
|  |  |
| New Total Monthly Income  *= Gross Monthly Wage +  New SSI Amount* | **$1,042.50** |

The above calculation is an example only and only the Social Security Administration can determine an individual’s benefit rate. The example assumes the individual does not receive any in-kind support and maintenance (ISM) or unearned income and that they are not using any work incentives, such as Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS), Impairment-Related Work Expenses (IRWE), Blind Work Expenses (BWE) or Student Earned Income Exclusion.

**SSI Benefits Calculator**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Current SSI Check Amount |  |
| Gross Monthly Wage |  |
| Subtotal  *= Gross Monthly Wage - $85* |  |
| SSI Check Reduction Amount  *= Subtotal ÷ 2*  |  |
| New SSI Amount  *= Current SSI Check – SSI  Check Reduction* |  |
|  |  |
| New Total Monthly Income  *= Gross Monthly Wage +  New SSI Amount* |  |

**SSDI - Social Security Disability Insurance**

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is a cash assistance program for people who have a disability and who have worked in the past and paid Social Security taxes. You may also qualify for SSDI if you are considered to have a disability and are the family member of someone who worked and paid Social Security taxes.

Note: Monthly Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA) amount for 2013 is $1040

**Trial Work Period**

The Trial Work Period is a set of 9 months in a five-year period in which you earn more than a certain amount of money (in 2013, $750). The months that count toward your Trial Work Period do not have to be consecutive. During the Trial Work Period you will receive full SSDI benefits no matter how much you earn as long as your work activity is reported and you have a disabling impairment. That is, during a Trial Work Period, you keep your entire SSDI check. If you return to work and are in your Trial Work Period, your Medicare health care benefits will not change.

<http://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/twp.html>

**Extended Period of Eligibility**

You may be eligible for an Extended Period of Eligibility after you’ve used the nine months of your Trial Work Period. The Extended Period of Eligibility is a 36-month period in which you will continue to receive cash benefits any time your monthly income is below SGA ($1040 for 2013). That is, you stay in Continuous Period of Eligibility as long as income is less than $1040 (2013).

<http://www.ssa.gov/oact/cola/sga.html>

**Important to know: You need to report any changes in income (like getting a job) to the Social Security Administration.**

**SSDI and Medical Benefits**

And as long as you continue to receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefit payments, you will continue to remain eligible for the same medical coverage.

There are also Work Incentives that allow you to continue your medical coverage once you begin earning enough that you stop receiving SSDI payments. If you currently receive medical coverage through Medicare, you can continue to be eligible for coverage for at least 93 months (that’s almost eight years) after the last month of your Trial Work Period.