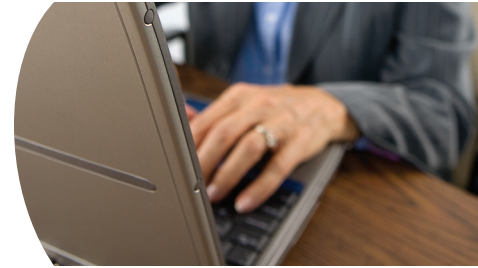


Social Security Online Claims and Services:

A Safe and Convenient Way To Do Business



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Most people are aware that they can file for retirement, disability, and/or spouse benefits either by phone or in person. There is a third way that is safe and may be more convenient that is growing in popularity- Social Security Online!

According to a recent survey, Social Security's online retirement benefit application once again ranked at the top of all Federal government websites in customer satisfaction. Social Security's "Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Costs" finished second, with several other Social Security online services making the top 10. No wonder last year more than 50 million people took advantage of doing business with us online by simply clicking www.socialsecurity.gov.

Here are some of the things you can do online:

APPLY FOR BENEFITS

You can apply for Social Security retirement, spouse or disability benefits over the Internet. If you are applying for disability benefits you'll also need to complete the disability report, which is also available online. Need to take a break or look for some records to answer the questions? That's just fine with us. You can leave and come back to complete your application or report.

After filing, you can check online for the status of the application. Documents will be signed electronically. Information you will need includes:

- Your Social Security number.
- Your date and place of birth.
- The amount you earned last year and the amount you expect to earn this year.
- The name and address of each employer for this year and last.
- Military service dates.
- Name, Social Security number, date of birth of your current /or any prior spouse, and the date and place of marriage. If appropriate, the date and place the marriage ended.
- Names, addresses, and phone numbers of medical sources if you are filing for disability.

You will be instructed on how to submit the following documents, if needed:

- Birth certificate.
- Proof of active duty military service.
- Your W-2 form and/or self employment tax returns for last year.

SEE IF YOU QUALIFY FOR SOCIAL SECURITY

You can use our online Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool, or BEST, to see which benefits you might be eligible for. Answering a series of questions will help you determine whether

you are eligible for retirement, disability or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits. You can also find out whether there is eligibility for Medicare benefits. All of this can be done by completing one simple questionnaire, and it only takes about 5-10 minutes.

REQUEST A STATEMENT

Every year we send a Social Security Statement to all workers age 25 or older. It arrives about three months before your birthday. The Statement includes a detailed report of earnings over the years, an estimate of benefits one would receive upon retirement or disability, and an estimate of how much family members would be eligible for in survivor benefits. If you can't wait for the regularly scheduled Statement, request one online and you will receive it within 2-4 weeks.

FIND THE CLOSEST SOCIAL SECURITY OFFICE

Even though there are many things you can do online sometimes you may want to talk with a Social Security representative face-to-face. If that's the case, your first step is to visit our online field office locator. Type in your ZIP code and find the Social Security office closest to you. If you are acting on be-

half of someone, we must have a signed disclosure statement from them before we can release their information to you.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR DIRECT DEPOSIT

This service can be used by any Social Security beneficiary who is thinking about opening a new bank account or changing banks and who may need to change the direct deposit of his or her benefit payments. First, they will need to get a password from Social Security online. Once the password is received, you can do business with Social Security with total confidence in the security of our web site. You also can change your home address and/or telephone number over the Internet. Again, a password will need to be obtained. An address can be changed online by answering a series of specific questions whose answers have to match the information in our records.

These are just a sample of the many services now available online from Social Security. So whatever your business needs with Social Security may be, check out our website and visit "Online Claims and Services" at www.socialsecurity.gov. Feel free to contact us at 1 (800) 772-1213 between the hours of 7 am and 7 pm Monday through Friday for more information.