

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

SOCIAL SECURITY

Eligibility for Social Security is authorized by Title II of the Social Security Act. The official name is Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance (OASDI). The amount of monthly income you may obtain from Social Security is determined by how much you have contributed to Social Security. It is not based on your financial need, so if you have worked for a certain number of quarters and paid into the Social Security fund, you will be able to collect payments based on your contributions. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has a toll-free number that operates from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please have your social security number ready when you call. The contact information for SSA is listed below.

(800) 772-1213 (Voice)

(800) 325-0778 (TTY)

Website: www.ssa.gov

There is a SSA website for frequently asked questions which is located at:

ssa-custhelp.ssa.gov/app/answers/list

If you still need additional help, you may write to the Office of Public Inquiries:

Social Security Administration

Office of Public Inquiries

Windsor Park Building

6401 Security Boulevard

Baltimore, MD 21235

Contact the Social Security office nearest your residence to get more information about the various Social Security programs. To locate the office nearest your residence, you can access the online Social Security Office Locator at:

secure.ssa.gov/apps6z/FOLO/fo001.jsp.

SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY INSURANCE

Eligibility for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) is also based on your earnings, those of your spouse or your parents. If you have worked for a certain length of time and have a hearing loss, you may be eligible for SSDI. The SSA provides several pamphlets and brochures about its programs, so you may want to contact the Social Security office nearest you to request these materials. A general overview of SSDI, as well as Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can be found at:

www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

Eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), authorized by Title XVI of the Social Security Act, is based on financial need. The SSI program makes cash assistance payments to aged, blind, and disabled individuals (including children under age 18) who have limited income and resources. The amount that you may receive will depend on your income and resources. You may apply in person or over the telephone and you should inquire at the Social Security office nearest you. Telephone numbers for Social Security offices are listed under United States Government, Department of Health and Human Services, in your telephone directory. A general overview of SSI qualifications can be found at: www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/11000.html#part1

SSI and SSDI programs share many similar concepts and terms, but there are also several, very important differences in the rules affecting eligibility and benefit payments. Individuals may apply to both programs and some people are eligible for benefits under both SSI and SSDI. The term "concurrent" is used when individuals are eligible for benefits under both programs. Examples of concurrent benefits can be found at: www.socialsecurity.gov/redbook/eng/supportsexample.htm.

ASSISTANCE DOG SPECIAL ALLOWANCE PROGRAM

California Department of Social Services

Office of Services to the Blind

744 P Street, MS 8-16-94

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 657-2628 (Voice)

(916) 653-7651 (TTY)

Website: www.dss.cahwnet.gov/CDSSWEB/PG82.htm

E-mail: ADSAUser@dss.ca.gov

The Assistance Dog Special Allowance (ADSA) program provides a monthly payment to eligible persons who use a guide, signal or service dog to help them with needs related to their physical disabilities. The allowance is to help pay the cost of food, grooming and health care for the dog.

To be eligible for the ADSA program, an individual must meet all four of the following criteria:

1. Live in California.
2. Be blind, deaf, hard of hearing or disabled.
3. Use the services of a guide, signal or service dog.
4. Receive benefits from one or more of the following programs:

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- State Supplementary Payment (SSP)
- In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)
- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) (**SSDI recipients must also meet federal poverty guidelines**)
- Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants (CAPI)

DISABILITY BENEFITS 101

Website: <http://ca.db101.org/>

Disability Benefits 101 (DB101) is a benefit planning website designed to help workers, job seekers, and service providers understand the connections between work and benefits for persons with disabilities. The site presents rules for health coverage, benefits and employment programs in an easy-to-use format that assists persons with disabilities.

Since the disability experience is unique for each person, the three Benefit Planner Calculators (explained below) and the PASS program were created to assess the connection and interaction between programs and changing life situations.

- [Benefits and Work Calculator](#): If a person is currently on disability benefits, this illustrates the benefit changes should he or she take a job.
- [School and Work Calculator](#): Many benefits program rules change upon a person's 18th birthday; this will help an individual navigate these changes.
- [Medi-Cal for the Working Disabled Calculator](#): Determines an employed individual's eligibility for the Medi-Cal 250% California Working Disabled Program. This is a benefit in addition to those that a person may already be receiving.
- [PASS Program](#): Should someone wish to set aside money to subsidize a career goal, the Supplemental Security Income's (SSI's) Plan for Achieving Self Support (PASS) can assist in saving money toward this goal while the SSI benefits help pay for basics such as food and shelter.

DISABLED PARKING PLACARD

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) will issue a disabled parking placard to a deaf-blind person. This placard is transferable from vehicle to vehicle whenever the person with sight loss is a passenger. It is usable in specially marked disabled parking spaces and will enable the driver to park free at parking meters. Permanent parking placards for permanent disabilities are valid for two years and there is a substantial penalty for misuse. There is **no fee** for a permanent parking placard, its replacement, or for a travel placard.

Information About Placards For Disabled Persons:

www.dmv.ca.gov/pubs/brochures/fast_facts/ffvr07.htm

Application for Disabled Person Placard or Plates (Form REG 195):

www.dmv.ca.gov/forms/reg/reg195.htm

Scheduling DMV Appointments: (800) 777-0133 (Voice)

DISCOUNTS AT STATE PARKS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

Attn: Disabled Discount Pass Program

1416 9th Street, Room 144

Sacramento, CA 95814

(800) 777-0369, ext. 2 (Voice-Toll Free)

(916) 653-8280 (Voice)

Website: www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1049

Application Website: www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1049

California State Parks offer a Disabled Discount Pass. For a small fee, a *lifetime pass* is issued to applicants who are eligible. The pass entitles you to a 50 percent discount on basic facility use fees including day parking, camping and boat/day parking. The pass may be used at all parks and recreation sites operated by the State of California except Hearst Castle at San Simeon.

DISCOUNTS AT U.S. GOVERNMENT NATIONAL PARKS AND OTHER RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL – NATIONAL PARKS AND FEDERAL RECREATIONAL LANDS PASS– ACCESS

Website: www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm

Similar to the State of California, the U.S. Government also offers a discount pass. This is known as the **Pass**. This lifetime pass, for persons with permanent disabilities, allows access to use of national parks, campgrounds and other federally operated recreational facilities either free or at reduced rates. Documentation of disability is required to obtain the pass. The Access Pass must be obtained in person at a participating Federal recreation site or office. Many local tourist attractions such as museums, amusement

parks-and reserves also offer discounts to persons with disabilities. Always remember to ask if the attraction you are visiting has a special rate for persons with disabilities.

FREE POSTAGE

CONSUMER ADVOCATE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE

475 L'enfant Plaza, SW Room 4012

Washington, DC 20260-2200

(800) 275-8777 (Voice-Toll Free-Customer Service)

(800) 222-1811 (Voice-Track and Confirm Information)

(202) 268-2284 (Voice-Local DC Area)

(877) 889-2457 (TTY-Toll Free)

Website: <http://about.usps.com/publications/pub347.pdf>

The U.S. Postal Service allows visually impaired persons (this applies to deaf-blind individuals) to send and receive books, recorded material, certain types of equipment and other mail free-of-charge if they are registered at the local post office. In the right top corner of the envelope, you will need to place the words "FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND OR HANDICAPPED". You may send for a copy of the pamphlet, "Mailing Free Matter for Blind and Visually Handicapped Persons" from the Office of the Consumer Advocate.

TAX BENEFITS

People who have both visual and hearing impairments, who are certified as legally blind are eligible for a special deduction on their income taxes in addition to the standard deductions they may be entitled to. They will need a statement from their doctor affirming visual impairment and it must be attached to their tax returns. Persons with a hearing loss may be able to deduct cost and repair of special telephone equipment and/or the persons with hearing loss. The amount of these fixed deductions depends on filing status and the amount may vary from year to year. There may also be additional deductions based on a visual impairment. To view possible deductions, consult the Internal Revenue Service's "Tax Highlights for Persons with Disabilities" (Publication 907) at: www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p907.pdf.