

Social Security Column

GET YOUR SOCIAL SECURITY STATEMENT ONLINE

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If you would like to get a *Social Security Statement*, which provides estimates of your future benefits, it is now available online at www.socialsecurity.gov.

“Our new online *Social Security Statement* is simple, easy-to-use and provides people with estimates they can use to plan for their retirement,” said Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security. “The online *Statement* also provides estimates for disability and survivors benefits, making the *Statement* an important financial planning tool. People should get in the habit of checking their online *Statement* each year, around their birthday, for example.”

In addition to helping with financial planning, the online *Statement* also provides workers a convenient way to determine whether their earnings are accurately posted to their Social Security records. This feature is important because Social Security benefits are based on average earnings over a person’s lifetime. If the information is incorrect, the person may not receive proper benefits.

The online *Statement* provides you the opportunity to save or print the document for future reference, or to have handy for discussions with family members or a financial planner.

According to the American Customer Satisfaction Index, users are giving the online *Statement* a score of 89, making it competitive with our other top-rated, best-in-government online services, such as the *Retirement Estimator* and online retirement application.

To get a personalized online *Statement*, you must be age 18 or older and must be able to provide information about yourself that matches information already on file with Social Security. In addition, Social Security uses Experian, an external authentication service provider, for further verification. You must provide identifying information and answer security questions in order to pass this verification. Social Security will not share your Social Security number with Experian, but the identity check is an important part of this new, thorough verification process.

When your identity is verified, you can create a “My Social Security” account with a unique user name and password to access your online *Statement*. In addition, your online *Statement* includes links to information about other online Social Security services, such as applications for retirement, disability, and Medicare.

For more information about the new online *Statement*, please visit www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement.

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