



PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

HIV ADVOCACY & SERVICES SINCE 1995

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OREGON HIV/AIDS CASE MANAGEMENT

Thank you to these amazing Partnership folks for wrapping the Partnership building in a red ribbon for World AIDS Day!!

Next Meeting
January 12th



We hope that everyone had wonderful holidays!
We wish all our community partners a wonderful 2016 full of
joy, laughter and peace!

SOCIAL SECURITY EVOLVES TO SERVE CUSTOMERS

By Alan Edwards, Social Security Public Affairs

Social Security is at the forefront of adapting and meeting the ever-changing needs of our customers. Technology plays an important role in helping us provide the world-class customer service America expects and deserves. And we're changing to keep current with new laws and judicial rulings as well.

One way we've evolved is by developing the *my Social Security* account. Once you enroll for a free account at www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount, Social Security can help you estimate your future retirement or disability benefits, or manage them if you are already receiving benefits. You can do all of this easily and securely from the comfort of your home or office.

Social Security listens to your needs as we improve the technologies that enhance the customer experience. We continue to look for new services to add to *my Social Security* to make it an even more powerful resource for you and your family.

Another way we're evolving is by adapting to legal and social changes. In 1935, when Social Security was created, the definition of "family" was different than it is today. On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court issued a decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, holding that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry in all states. As a result, more same-sex couples will be recognized as married for purposes of determining entitlement to Social Security benefits or eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments.

Not only have we adapted to provide benefits for same-sex spouses, but transgender people can now change the gender marker on their Social Security records based on identity, with no requirement for reassignment surgery.

Our mission at Social Security is to deliver services that meet the changing needs of the public. By keeping the public informed of their benefit estimates with *my Social Security* and adapting to our changing society, we will continue to achieve our goals and help you achieve yours. No matter who you are, you deserve the benefits of Social Security. Find out more at www.socialsecurity.gov.

ACCESS AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE AND THE INSURANCE MARKETPLACE

By Alan Edwards, Social Security Public Affairs

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides Americans with better health security by expanding coverage, lowering healthcare costs, guaranteeing more choice, and enhancing the quality of care for all Americans. Everyone is entitled to affordable healthcare.

Under the law, a new “Patient’s Bill of Rights” gives the American people the stability and flexibility they need to make informed choices about their health. Some of the benefits of this coverage include:

- **Ending Pre-Existing Condition Exclusions for Children:** Health plans can no longer limit or deny benefits to children under 19 due to a pre-existing condition.
- **Keeping Young Adults Covered:** If you are under 26, you may be eligible to be covered under your parent’s health plan.
- **Ending Arbitrary Withdrawals of Insurance Coverage:** Insurers can no longer cancel your coverage just because you made an honest mistake.

Guaranteeing Your Right to Appeal: You now have the right to ask that your plan reconsider its denial of payment.

Open enrollment began in November and ends January 31. Compare healthcare plans so that you can find the best one for you, and sign up before the enrollment period ends. You can learn more about the insurance marketplace and how to apply for benefits at www.healthcare.gov.

If you are 65 or older, you are entitled to Medicare. Certain people younger than age 65 can qualify for Medicare, including those who have disabilities and those who have permanent kidney failure. The program helps with the cost of healthcare, but it does not cover all medical expenses or the cost of most long-term care.

You can access everything you need for Medicare, including online applications and publications, at www.socialsecurity.gov/medicare.

Social Security and affordable healthcare go hand-in-hand. The Affordable Care Act and Medicare help ensure that you and your family are covered.

Social Security Q & A's

Question:

What is a *Social Security Statement*, and how can I get a copy?

Answer:

Your online *Social Security Statement* gives you secure and convenient access to your earnings records. It also shows estimates for retirement, disability, and survivors benefits you and your family may be eligible for. You can get your personal *Statement* online by using your own [my Social Security account](#). If you don't yet have an account, you can easily create one.

To set up or use your account to get your online *Statement*, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount.

We also mail *Statements* to workers attaining ages 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60 and older, three months prior to their birthday, if they don't receive Social Security benefits and don't have a [my Social Security account](#). If you don't want to wait for your *Statement*, you can access it online, whatever time of year you need it.

Question:

Is there a time limit on collecting Social Security disability benefits?

Answer:

Your disability benefits will continue as long as your medical condition does not improve and you remain unable to work. We will review your case at regular intervals to make sure you are still disabled. If you are still receiving disability benefits when you reach full retirement age, we will automatically convert them to retirement benefits. Learn more by reading our publication, *Disability Benefits*, at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs.

Question:

I get Social Security because of a disability. How often will my case be reviewed to determine if I'm still eligible?

Answer:

How often we review your medical condition depends on how severe it is and the likelihood it will improve. Your award notice tells you when you can expect your first review using the following terminology:

Medical improvement expected — If your condition is expected to improve within a specific time, your first review will be six to 18 months after you started getting disability benefits.

Medical improvement possible — If improvement in your medical condition is possible, your case will be reviewed about every three years.

Medical improvement not expected — If your medical condition is unlikely to improve, your case will be reviewed about once every five to seven years.

For more information, visit www.socialsecurity.gov.

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