

START SURVEY

The Social Security Administration is testing a preliminary version of the Disability Perceptions Survey. Your responses to this version of the survey will be used to help SSA create the final survey. That final survey will give the Agency a better understanding of people’s knowledge about SSDI and their likelihood of applying for benefits in the future. By collecting Social Security Numbers along with survey responses in the final version, SSA will be able to learn about who applies for SSDI, and find out what additional information they might need about the program. Your responses to this survey will NOT be used to determine eligibility for benefits, but will only be used for research purposes.

What is your Social Security Number?

____ _ -- ____ _ -- ____ _

[IF SSN NOT COMPLETED]

Please note that in order to complete the survey and be eligible for the incentive, we need your Social Security Number. Would you be willing to provide this information?

____ _ -- ____ _ -- ____ _ Social Security Number

[] I do not wish to provide this information

We understand that you do not want to provide your SSN. Can you please tell us the last 4 digits of your SSN?

____ _ Last four digits of Social Security Number

How familiar are you with the **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** program?

- 1. Very familiar
- 2. Somewhat familiar
- 3. Familiar
- 4. Not at all familiar

How familiar are you with **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** program?

- 1. Very familiar
- 2. Somewhat familiar
- 3. Familiar
- 4. Not at all familiar

This survey is about the **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** program. This program provides benefits to *workers* who have a disabling condition that prevents them from working.

There is another program, called the **Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program**, which also provides benefits to *eligible disabled individuals*.

Please note that this survey is about SSDI only, not SSI. Listed below are key facts about SSDI and how it is different from SSI.

Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)	Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
Earned by workers paying Social Security taxes on their wages	Not required to have a work history
Not need based	Need based
	Eligibility depends on income and resources
Benefit amounts are based on earnings	Benefit amounts are not based on earnings .
	There is a maximum monthly payment
Provides benefits to disabled workers	Provides benefits to disabled adults
	Provides benefits to disabled children
Provides benefits to adults disabled since childhood	
Provides benefits to certain dependents	Does not provide benefits to dependents

Part 1. Background and Future Outlook

The following questions concern your personal experience with SSDI; your future outlook on health, work, and the possibility of having to apply for disability benefits; and your preferred methods for receiving information related to the SSDI program.

- F1. Have you ever applied, or are you currently applying for Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) disability benefits?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No → **GO TO F2.1**

- F1a. What was the outcome of the application?
 - a. Awarded benefits and still receiving them
 - b. Awarded benefits but no longer receiving them
 - c. Awaiting a decision on the application
 - d. Denied and currently appealing the decision
 - e. Denied

F2.1: Thinking about family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, and acquaintances who are 18 to 64 years old, do you know anyone who has a disabling condition that limits their ability to work?
By disabling condition we mean anything that makes it hard for people to work, or hard to work as many hours as they would like, or limits the type of work they can do.

- a. Yes
- b. No →SKIP TO F4a

F2.2 [IF F2.1=YES, KNOW SOMEONE]: Have any of the people you know with a disabling condition applied for SSDI disability benefits?

- a. Yes
- b. No →SKIP TO F2.5

F2.3 [IF F2.2=YES] How many people do you know who have applied for disability benefits?
_____ people

IF NUMBER OF PEOPLE=0, SKIP TO 2.5

F2.4: [IF F2.3 >1; R KNOWS MORE THAN ONE PERSON WHO APPLIED, ADD: Please think about the person you know best who has applied for disability benefits.] What is the current status of this person's application for SSDI disability benefits?

- a. Awarded benefits and still receiving them
- b. Awarded benefits but no longer receiving them
- c. Awaiting a decision on the initial application
- d. Denied and currently appealing the decision
- e. Denied
- f. Don't know

F2.5: Have any of the people you know with disabling conditions not yet applied for SSDI disability benefits?

- a. Yes
- b. No →SKIP to F4a

F2.6 How many people with disabling conditions do you know who have not yet applied for SSDI disability benefits?

_____ people

IF NUMBER OF PEOPLE=0, SKIP TO F4a.

F2.7: [IF F2.6>1; R KNOWS MORE THAN ONE PERSON WHO HAS NOT YET APPLIED, ADD: Please think about the person you know best who has not yet applied for benefits.] Is this person planning to apply for SSDI disability benefits?

- a. Yes → SKIP TO F4a
- b. No
- c. Don't know → SKIP TO F4a

F2.8: [IF F2.7=NO] What are the reasons why this person does not plan on applying for SSDI disability benefits?

- a. They still work or are able to work
- b. They do not meet SSA's definition of disability
- c. They do not have the required work history
- d. They have reached the age of retirement and receive Social Security retirement benefits
- e. Unaware of SSDI benefits
- f. Not willing to apply due to the stigma attached to receiving benefits
- g. Don't know how to apply
- h. Other (specify)

F4a: In the past year, did you look for any information about SSDI?

- a. Yes
- b. No → GO TO F4d

F4b: Where did you look for information? (yes/no)

- a. My employer
- b. A doctor's office or health clinic
- c. Family or friends
- d. State unemployment office
- e. Workers' compensation office
- f. Social Security Administration (SSA)
- g. Another government agency
- h. Another source (such as an attorney, insurance company, nonprofit organization) (please describe)

F4c: How helpful was the information that you found?

- a. Very helpful
- b. Somewhat helpful
- c. Not very helpful

- d. I was not able to find any information

[SKIP F4d. GO TO F6]

F4d: In the past year, have you heard anything about SSDI from any of the following sources? (yes/no)

- a. My employer
- b. A doctor's office or health clinic
- c. Family or friends
- d. State unemployment office
- e. Workers' compensation office
- f. Social Security Administration (SSA)
- g. Another government agency
- h. Another source (such as an attorney, insurance company, nonprofit organization) (please describe)

F6: Based on what you know about the SSDI program, how likely is it that you will apply for disability benefits

[IF AGE 62 OR UNDER: in the next 5 years / IF AGE 63 to 64 YEARS: before you turn 67]?

[7-point scale: Not very likely to extremely likely]

[] I am already on SSDI

F7. In the next 5 years, do you expect your health to improve, get worse, or stay about the same?

- a. Improve
- b. Get worse
- c. Stay about the same

Now we would like to ask you a question about your current employment.

Demographics Q5: Are you currently working for pay at a job or business?

- a. Yes, full-time
- b. Yes, part-time
- c. No, not working [GO TO P6]

F8a. In the next 5 years, if you developed a long-term health problem and lost your job, would you apply for disability benefits?

- a. Yes

- b. Yes, but only if I could not find another job or otherwise make ends meet
- c. No, would not apply

[IF F8a=YES, ONLY IF COULD NOT MAKE ENDS MEET, GO TO F8b. ELSE GO TO P6.]

F8b. Which of the following resources would you rely on? (yes/no)

- a. [IF age=57 or over] I would apply for early retirement benefits through Social Security
- b. I would try to collect an early pension or other retirement benefit from a previous employer
- c. I would try to find another job
- d. I would support myself through savings, income from a spouse's job, or other source of income
- e. I would apply for unemployment benefits

P6. Do you think of the SSDI disability program as a "welfare program"?

- a. Yes
- b. No

P8: Some individuals who potentially qualify for disability benefits do not apply. Which of the following do you think is the most common reason for not applying for these benefits?

- a. They like their jobs
- b. They earn more from working than they would receive in benefits
- c. They feel there is social stigma attached to receiving benefits
- d. They think the application process is long and complicated
- e. Other

Part 2. General Knowledge [K] of the Social Security Disability Programs

The following questions ask about your general knowledge of the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program. Your answers to these questions will help SSA understand what people know and don't know about SSDI and help us figure out how to better inform people about this benefit. Please answer them as best you can by yourself, without looking up any of the answers. Your best estimate is fine.

K1. How long must a health problem last to be considered disabling for receipt of SSDI benefits?

- a. 6 months
- b. 12 months
- c. 5 years

- d. The health problem must be permanent
- e. Don't know / not sure

K2. Does ability to find a job matter in qualifying for SSDI benefits?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know / not sure

K3. What, if any, are the requirements for receiving SSDI benefits?

- a. The disabling condition is considered severe
- b. The disabling condition prevents working at substantial levels
- c. The disabling condition has lasted, or is expected to last, twelve months or more
- d. All of the above
- e. None of these are requirements
- f. Don't know / not sure

K5. Does SSA ever check to see if SSDI beneficiaries are still disabled?

- a. No, disability is considered permanent
- b. Yes, every year
- c. Yes, every 3 years
- d. Yes, at least every 7 years
- e. Don't know / not sure

P1. Thinking about the U.S. as a whole, what percentage of the working age population do you think receive SSDI disability benefits **at some point in their lives**? By 'working-age population', we mean people ages 18 to 64. This includes people in that age range who are not working

- a. Less than 10%
- b. 10-20%
- c. 20-30%
- d. More than 30%
- e. Don't know / not sure

P2. Thinking about the U.S. as a whole, what percentage of 18 to 64 year olds do you think are **currently receiving** SSDI disability benefits?

- a. Less than 5%
- b. 5-10%
- c. 10-15%
- d. More than 15%
- e. Don't know / not sure

- P3. Thinking about the U.S. as a whole, what percentage of SSDI disability applicants do you think are ultimately approved for benefits?
- a. Less than 10%
 - b. 10-25%
 - c. 25-50%
 - d. More than 50%
 - e. Don't know / not sure
- P4. Thinking about last ten years, do you think it has become easier or harder to receive SSDI disability benefits?
- a. Easier
 - b. Harder
 - c. About the same
 - d. Don't know / not sure
- P5. On average, about how much of a person's work-related income do you think SSDI benefits will cover? Do you think SSDI will cover all, most, about half, or less than half of what people would otherwise earn through work?
- a. All
 - b. Most
 - c. About half
 - d. Less than half
 - e. Don't know / not sure

Part 3. Examples: Dealing with Disability

We are nearly done. Just one more section.

This section includes some brief hypothetical scenarios about people in various health-related and employment circumstances. Following each scenario are a few questions about your views on the person's particular situation. Please answer these questions to the best of your ability. There are no right or wrong answers.

- V1. Sam is 40 years old. He has worked his entire adult life as a construction worker. Sam recently developed pain in his back and legs. The pain is present almost all of the time. Sam takes medication for the pain, which helps somewhat, but he still has a difficult time moving around and lifting things at work.
- A. If you were in Sam's situation, how likely would you be to apply for SSDI disability benefits?
[7-point scale: Not at all likely to apply - Extremely likely to apply]
 - B. How likely do you think Sam is to qualify to receive SSDI disability benefits?
[7-point scale: Not at all likely to qualify - Extremely likely to qualify]

D. If Sam had been experiencing symptoms for more than a year, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [DURATION]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]

E. Deleted

F. Deleted

G. If Sam were able to do another job instead of construction, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [ANOTHER JOB]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

H. Deleted

I. Deleted

J. Deleted

V2. Mary is 57 years old. She is a bilingual customer service worker. She has a mild mental impairment caused by a recent stroke. Mary is still five years away from the earliest age that she can file for retirement benefits. She is struggling to make ends meet.

A. If you were in Mary's situation, how likely would you be to apply for SSDI disability benefits?
[7-point scale: Not at all likely to apply - Extremely likely to apply]

B. How likely do you think Mary is to qualify to receive SSDI disability benefits?
[7-point scale: Not at all likely to qualify - Extremely likely to qualify]]

C. Deleted-

D. Deleted

E. If Mary's mental impairment was more severe, do you think she would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [SEVERITY]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

F. If Mary became unable to work as a bilingual customer service worker, do you think she would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [CURRENT JOB]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

G. Deleted-

H. Deleted-

I. Deleted-

J. Deleted

V3. Diane is a 30-year-old attorney. In her free time she is a competitive cyclist who regularly participates in races. Yesterday, Diane was hit by a car while biking and broke her leg. She is recovering from her injury. She is expected to be off work for 9 months during her recovery.

A. If you were in Diane's situation, how likely would you be to apply for SSDI disability benefits?

[7-point scale: Not at all likely to apply - Extremely likely to apply]

B. How likely do you think Diane is to qualify to receive SSDI disability benefits?

[7-point scale: Not at all likely to qualify - Extremely likely to qualify]]

C. Deleted

D. If Diane had been experiencing symptoms and out of work for more than a year, do you think she would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [DURATION]

[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

E. Deleted-

F. If Diane became unable to work as an attorney, do you think she would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [CURRENT JOB]

[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

G. Deleted

H. Deleted

I. Deleted

J. Deleted

V4. Bill is 58 years old and has a high school education. He has worked most of his life at an auto manufacturing plant. He has developed severe arthritis as a result of this work. Six months ago, his auto plant relocated overseas and Bill was laid off. He has since developed clinical depression. He has not been able to get another manufacturing position in his rural area.

A. If you were in Bill's situation, how likely would you be to apply for SSDI disability benefits?

[7-point scale: Not at all likely to apply - Extremely likely to apply]

B. How likely do you think Bill is to qualify to receive SSDI disability benefits?

[7-point scale: Not at all likely to qualify - Extremely likely to qualify]]

C. Deleted-

D. Deleted-

E. Deleted-

F. Deleted

G. If Bill were able to do another job instead of manufacturing, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [ANOTHER JOB]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

H. If Bill were further from retirement age, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [AGE]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

I. If Bill had more education, such as a master's degree, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [EDUCATION]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

J. Deleted

V5. Daniel is 48 years old and never finished high school. He only speaks Spanish and has asthma. He has worked most of his adult life, but has trouble finding and keeping a job. It is not clear if his health problems or other issues contribute to his difficulties in finding and keeping a job.

A. If you were in Daniel's situation, how likely would you be to apply for SSDI disability benefits?
[7-point scale: Not at all likely to apply - Extremely likely to apply]

B. How likely do you think Daniel is to qualify to receive SSDI disability benefits?
[7-point scale: Not at all likely to qualify - Extremely likely to qualify]]

C. Deleted

D. Deleted

E. If Daniel's health problems were more severe, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [SEVERITY]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

F. Deleted

G. Deleted-

- H. If Daniel were closer to retirement age, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [AGE]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

- I. If Daniel had more education, such as a high school diploma, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [EDUCATION]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

- J. If Daniel were able to speak English, do you think he would be more likely or less likely to qualify for SSDI benefits? [ENGLISH PROFICIENCY]
[7-point scale: Definitely less likely - Definitely more likely]]

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