

# Social Security Column

by Annie Walters; Nevada  
Social Security Public Affairs  
Specialist

## CELEBRATING 89 YEARS OF SOCIAL SECURITY

For nearly 90 years, Social Security has provided income protection to millions of retirees, people with disabilities, their dependents, and families who've lost a family member who worked and paid Social Security taxes before they died. In addition to paying benefits, we issue millions of Social Security numbers each year, maintain wage records to make sure workers get the benefits they have earned, and much more. The scope of what we do is enormous, and we are proud to serve the American people. Whether providing service online at [SSA.gov](http://SSA.gov), over the telephone, or in person, our goal is to help you understand your eligibility for benefits and the best way to apply for them.

We also work to make sure our programs, particularly Supplemental Security Income (SSI), remain accessible to you. SSI provides monthly payments to adults and children with a disability or blindness, and to adults age 65 and older, who have limited income and resources. This year we announced that we are expanding SSI eligibility criteria by:

- Updating the public assistance household definition.
- Removing food from in-kind support and maintenance.
- Expanding rental subsidy nationwide.

Find more information about SSI at [www.ssa.gov/ssi/](http://www.ssa.gov/ssi/).

We are dedicated to protecting the well-being of the people we serve. It is important to us that every person who is eligible for benefits gets them timely and accurately. That is how we help secure today and tomorrow.

To learn more about the history of Social Security, visit [www.ssa.gov/history](http://www.ssa.gov/history). Please share this information with your friends

and loved ones who may need it.

## SOCIAL SECURITY INSTALLS NEW KIOSKS TO IMPROVE CUSTOMER CHECK-IN PROCESS

At Social Security we strive to make our services more accessible while maintaining your privacy. We installed new kiosks in most of our local offices to make it easier for you to check in and conduct business with us. The kiosks are private, easy to use without assistance, and provide consistent service to our customers.

Modifications to earlier screens have improved the check-in process, especially for our customers who are blind or have low vision. Each kiosk is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and includes the following features:

- Accessible keypads.
- Audio headphone jacks (complementary headphones are available upon request).
- Braille instructions for how to use the kiosk and report any accessibility issues.
- Built-in thermal printers and ticket dispensers.
- Enhanced 508-compatible check-in software.
- Touchscreen monitors with privacy filters.

These kiosks are just one more way we're improving the customer service experience in our offices. Last year, we began offering Mobile Check-in Express. It allows customers to use their mobile device to scan a QR code at their local office to check in for scheduled and walk-in appointments.

By turning on their device's location services and mobile notifications, visitors receive:

- An electronic ticket so they know their place in line.
- An alert when an employee is ready to help them.
- Information about their inter-

view location.

- An invitation to participate in our feedback survey.

With our new kiosks and Mobile Check-In Express, our check-in process has never been easier. To learn more about our commitment to accessibility, visit [www.ssa.gov/accessibility](http://www.ssa.gov/accessibility).

## STAY HEALTHY AND INDEPENDENT WITH SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Are you eligible for Social Security retirement benefits or already receiving them? Did you know that you can also receive healthy meals and other nutrition services through the national Senior Nutrition Program? Local meal programs in communities across the country are waiting to serve you.

As we age, we have different needs, different ways we take care of our health, and different nutrients we need to get from our food. But we don't always have enough healthy food or the desire to prepare or eat a meal. Whether you need more food, healthier food, someone to share a meal with, or better eating habits, a meal program can help.

Every day, senior nutrition programs serve almost 1 million meals to people age 60 and older. With home delivery and group meal options, you can get the food you need in a way that works best for you. They can help you avoid missing meals – and save you time and money with less shopping and cooking.

Local programs serve more than food. They also:

- Offer opportunities to connect and socialize. This improves both your mental and physical health.
- Teach you how to create a healthy eating plan. You can learn about healthy food recommendations based on your age, needs, and preferences.
- Connect you with other resources like homemaker services and transportation to help you stay connected and engaged in

your community.

It's no surprise that 9 out of 10 participants say they would recommend a senior nutrition program to a friend. We know this service can help create healthy, strong communities where people can thrive at any age.

Find a senior nutrition program in your area and help us spread the word to your loved ones, neighbors, and community. For more information on resources for older adults, please visit [elder-care.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx](http://elder-care.acl.gov/Public/Index.aspx).

To learn more about our retirement benefits, please visit [www.ssa.gov/retirement](http://www.ssa.gov/retirement).

The Senior Nutrition Program is administered by the Administration for Community Living, part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## NATIONAL SAVINGS DAY REMINDS US TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

October 12th is National Savings Day. It serves as an important reminder to plan for your financial future. Social Security is a vital part of any financial plan. We have online tools to help you understand your potential benefits and how they fit into your financial future.

Regardless of your age, you should periodically review your Social Security Statement (Statement) using your personal my Social Security account at [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](http://www.ssa.gov/myaccount). Your Statement is an easy-to-read summary of the estimated benefits you and your family could receive, including retirement, disability, and survivors benefits. You should also review your Statement annually to confirm your earnings history.

The retirement calculator in your personal my Social Security account allows you to check various benefit estimate scenarios based on the age you plan to retire. You can compare the effect different earnings and retirement start dates could have on your future benefit amount.

Please let friends and family members know how they can

*(continued on page 12)*