

Benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA) During the COVID-19 Pandemic

During the emergency period caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, all local Social Security Administration offices are closed to the public. Social Security is still open, but with a much smaller number of employees.

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Q: Will I still get my benefits while Social Security offices are closed?

A: Yes. You should continue to get your benefit in the same way you got it before the pandemic.

Q: I did not get my benefits this month. What should I do?

A: Call Social Security. You can look up the number for your local office here: <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>. You can also call Legal Aid at (513) 241-9400 or 1-800-582-2870 to ask for help.

Q: I already get Social Security and need to tell them about a change (address, bank information, income, death, representative payee.) Can I do that while the SSA offices are closed?

A: Yes. Social Security is still able to process changes during the COVID-19 pandemic. You can make these changes online here: <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/>. You can also make these changes by calling your local office, or by calling 1-800-772-1213.

Q: Can I apply for benefits from Social Security during the pandemic?

A: Yes. However, during this emergency period when their offices are closed, the SSA is making decisions in only very limited cases. They are only reviewing applications from people who have very severe disabilities/medical conditions. Unless your condition is very severe, it will take longer than normal for Social Security to make a decision in your case.

Q: How do I apply for benefits from Social Security?

A: You can apply:

- Online at <https://www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability/>
- By phone at 1-800-772-1213, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday.
- By mail. You can mail your application to your local Social Security office. You can look up address information here: <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>.

If you apply for Social Security during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is a good idea to call Social Security a few weeks after offices reopen to make sure they have your application.

Q: I applied for benefits from Social Security before the offices closed but I have not heard anything from them. Do I need to reapply?

A: No. During this emergency period, while their office are closed, Social Security is only reviewing applications from people who have severe disabilities. Even if you applied before the Social Security offices closed, it will likely take a long time before you hear from Social Security. It is a good idea to call Social Security a few weeks after their offices reopen to check on the status of your application.

Q: Social Security asked me to send in information for my pending claim. I am having trouble getting this information to them because everything is closed.

A: Social Security has agreed to give people extra time to turn in documents or information. If you are having trouble getting something to Social Security in time to meet a deadline, it is a good idea to write down why you cannot meet the deadline. For example, you cannot fax something because public libraries are closed or you cannot get medical records because your doctor's office is closed. You can give this information to Social Security when the local offices open up.

Q: I have a hearing scheduled for my Social Security. Will I still have it?

A: Social Security will not hold in-person hearings their offices are closed. If you have an in-person hearing scheduled, someone should call you to see if you want to have your hearing by phone instead. If you do not want to have your hearing by phone, you can ask that you have your hearing in-person when offices reopen. It might take a while for you to have your hearing rescheduled if you want an in-person hearing. If you have not heard from anyone about your upcoming hearing, call the number on your hearing notice.

Q: I have tried to call Social Security a few times but I never get through. Is there anything else I can do?

A: Many people have questions about Social Security right now, so you may have to wait on the phone for a long time before you can speak with someone. If you can, try to call during times of day when other people are less likely to call (early in the morning).

Q: I cannot find my Social Security card. Can I get a new one during the pandemic?

A: You can ask for a replacement Social Security card online at <https://www.ssa.gov>. You can also call your local office and ask for a printout of your Social Security number. They will not be able to send you a new card. You can look up the number for your local field office here: <https://secure.ssa.gov/ICON/main.jsp>.

Q: Where Can I Get More Information?

A: Social Security has more information about what you can expect from Social Security during the coronavirus pandemic at: <https://www.ssa.gov/coronavirus/>. You can also follow Social Security on Facebook or Twitter for regular updates.

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If you have questions or need legal assistance, please call the
Legal Aid line at **(513) 241-9400**
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