

National Center for Benefits Outreach and Enrollment

Helping Seniors and Adults with Disabilities Access Benefits

\$250 Payment is on Its Way to You! For People Living in Residential Facilities

Good news! Just about everyone living in facilities like yours, whether it's a nursing home, assisted living facility or board and care home, will receive a one-time payment from the U.S. government of \$250 in May 2009, thanks to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, signed into law in February 2009.

This money is yours. Your home or facility is not allowed to take it to pay your bill, even if you get help from your state paying for your care.

Your questions answered...

Who's getting a one-time payment?

Anyone who gets a Social Security benefit, Railroad Retirement, or Veterans Administration (VA) disability pension. Also, most people who get Supplemental Security Income (SSI) will receive a one-time payment.

What if I only get SSI?

If you live in a nursing home and get a monthly SSI benefit of \$30, you will not receive a one-time payment.

When do I get my payment?

No later than June 4th, 2009, although most payments will go out in May.

What do I have to do to get my payment?

Nothing!

You will receive a notice in April explaining that the payment is coming. In May, the extra \$250 payment will come to you in the same way you get your usual benefit (such as Social Security, Railroad Retirement, VA or SSI). If your usual monthly benefit is directly deposited into your bank account, the extra payment will also be directly deposited. If your usual payment arrives in the mail, the extra payment will be mailed to you, too.

If your benefit goes to your nursing home or other facility, so will your one-time payment. But, just like your home must set aside your personal needs allowance for your use, the nursing home must also give you your \$250 one-time payment to use as you choose.

I'm on Medicaid, do I have to use the one-time payment to help pay for my care?

No. This one-time payment is yours, and you can use it as you choose.

Can I keep the one-time payment?

You can save it if you want to. But be sure it will not put your savings over the asset limit for any programs you may receive as of February 2010.

What if I don't get my \$250 by June 4, 2009?

If you do not get your \$250 by June 4th, call Social Security at 1-800-772-1213. You can ask your Ombudsman for assistance too.

What if my nursing home takes my \$250?

Talk with your Ombudsman immediately! This money is yours. It does not belong to your nursing home.

If I get Social Security and SSI, or Social Security and a Veterans Administration pension, how many one-time payments will I get?

No matter how many benefits you receive you will get only one \$250 one-time payment. However, if you are married, you and your spouse will each get a one-time payment.

How will this payment affect other benefits I get now, like Medicaid or Food Stamps?

If you get government benefits such as Medicaid, this payment won't affect your eligibility or the amount of your benefits until the 10th month after you get it (February 2010).

Where can I get more information?

Go to <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/payment/>. Or ask your nursing home, or your Ombudsman for help getting more information from the Social Security Administration.

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Stimulus Payment to Social Security Recipients to Arrive in May's Mail

Last Updated: 4/6/2009

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (a.k.a. the stimulus bill), Congress has authorized one-time \$250 payments to most Social Security, Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries. Checks to those who were eligible for benefits under the programs during November or December 2008 or January 2009 will begin hitting the mail in early May and continue through the month.



According to the Social Security Administration (SSA), the payments will be distributed to beneficiaries in the same manner that they currently receive their benefit (either by check, debit card, or direct deposit) but the payments will not be included in the same transaction as a beneficiary's regular monthly payment. This means that beneficiaries should be on the lookout for two separate payments during May.

People with special needs who receive both SSDI and SSI benefits will receive only one \$250 payment, and SSDI beneficiaries under age 18 (or 19 if they are still in school) will not receive any payments at all. However, anyone receiving a payment does not have to worry about the additional income affecting his government benefits -- the stimulus payments do not count as "income" for either program, and will not count as an available resource for nine months following receipt of the funds.

The SSA has created an online pamphlet describing the payments and providing additional details for beneficiaries. You can read the pamphlet [here](#).

(The pamphlet is in PDF format. If you do not have the free PDF reader installed on your computer, download it [here](#).)

For an ElderLawAnswers roundup of how the stimulus bill aids the elderly, click [here](#).

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