

## How do you qualify for Social Security retirement benefits?



You qualify for Social Security by earning credits as you work and pay Social Security taxes.

- You need 40 credits (10 years of work) and you must be 62 or older
- Each \$1,470 in annual earnings gives you one credit (earnings requirements can change annually)
- You can earn a maximum of 4 credits per year

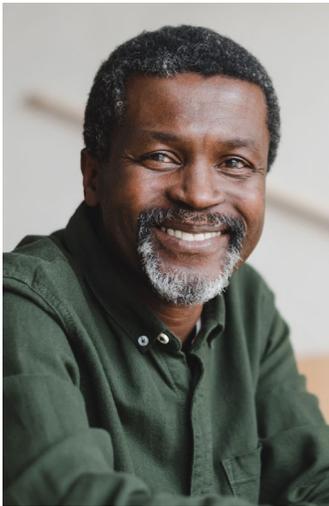
More information on earning credits at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10072.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10072.pdf).

## How does Social Security determine your benefit?

Your Social Security benefit is based on your lifetime earnings. Social Security adjusts or “indexes” your actual earnings to account for changes in average wages since the year the earnings were received.

Your average indexed monthly earnings are calculated using the 35 years in which you earned the most. Social Security applies a formula to these earnings and arrives at your basic benefit, or “primary insurance amount.” This is how much you would receive at your full retirement age.

More information on benefit calculations at [www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10070.pdf](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10070.pdf).



### Social Security Full Retirement Age

YEAR OF BIRTH	FULL RETIREMENT AGE
1943–1954	66
1955	66 & 2 months
1956	66 & 4 months
1957	66 & 6 months
1958	66 & 8 months
1959	66 & 10 months
1960+	67



*Scan or click to visit [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov) for up to date details and information*



## Applying for benefits



Social Security recommends that you apply for benefits four months before you want to receive your first payment.

There are three options available to apply:

- Online at **ssa.gov**
- By phone at **1-800-772-1213**
- At a Social Security **office**

If you would like to meet with someone, plan to schedule the meeting several months in advance.