

a appropriate Vocational Rehabilitation program that began before their 18th birthday. The benefits may continue until the participation in the program or the program ends.

Impairment- Related Work Expenses (IRWE)s

For SSI purposes, SSA will deduct the costs of certain impairment-related items and services a beneficiary needs to work when figuring their monthly payment amount. Examples of IRWEs include: modifications to a vehicle needed to travel to work; attendant care services performed in a work setting; medical devices; home modifications needed to permit access to leave the home to go to work; routine drugs and medical services needed to control a beneficiary's disabling condition; the cost of a service animal including food, licenses, and veterinary supplies.

Plan to Achieve Self-Support (PASS)

A PASS plan allows a beneficiary to set aside other income besides his/her SSI payment and/or resources for a certain period of time so that the beneficiary can pursue a work goal. A PASS plan must be approved by the SSA. It can allow money to be set aside for educational expenses; vocational training; starting a business; supported employment services including a job coach, attendant care, equipment and tools needed to work; and transportation. The income and resources set aside under this plan, do not count when deciding SSI eligibility and payment amount.

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SSI For Youth Who Want To Work

Employment Supports for Youth Who Receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI)



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What is ADAP?

The Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP) provides legally-based advocacy services to Alabamians with disabilities to protect, promote, and expand their rights.

Through a program called "Protection and Advocacy for Beneficiaries of Social Security" (PABSS), ADAP advocates and attorneys provide Social Security beneficiaries free assistance to help them overcome barriers that are preventing them from working or from pursuing higher educational opportunities.

What is SSI?

SSI is Supplemental Security Income provided through the Social Security Administration to children and adults who meet Social Security's definition of disability. SSI provides cash payments to children and transition-aged youth who meet SSA's definition of disability, provided the student and their families meet income eligibility.

SSA has different rules for eligibility for children under age 18 and rules for adults over age 18

- **Under age 18: (Children's SSI)** A child under age 18 may qualify for SSI if the child has a medically determined physical or mental impairment that causes marked and severe functional limitations expected to last for not less than 12 months.
- **Over age 18: (Adult SSI)** A youth over age 18 is considered an adult by the Social Security Administration's rules. An adult qualifies for SSI if he/she has a medically determined physical or

mental impairment that prevents him/her from engaging in substantial gainful activity. In 2010, substantial gainful activity means working and earning more than \$1000 per month. At age 18 some young adults will qualify for SSI benefits for the first time because their parents' income will no longer be counted or "deemed" to them.

What is the Age 18 redetermination of benefits?

The law requires children who receive SSI to have their medical eligibility for SSI reviewed at the age of 18. This is known as the Age 18 medical redetermination review.

SSA's guidelines for adult eligibility will apply. Some children will not be eligible for Adult SSI even though their medical condition and ability to function have not changed.

What are SSI Employment Supports?

Employment supports offer ways for SSI beneficiaries to continue receiving their SSI checks while they work. Generally, SSI payment amounts may be reduced by earnings or other income after certain allowable deductions are taken. Normally, working increases a beneficiary's net income even if SSI payments are reduced.

Exclusions include:

- **General Income Exclusion (GIE)** SSA does not count the first \$20 a beneficiary receives in a month. This amount will be applied first to unearned income.
- **Earned Income Exclusion (EIE)** SSA does not count the first \$65 in earnings in a month. One-half of the remaining earnings are not

counted when SSA figures the SSI payment amount.

- **Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE)** If a student is under the age of 22 and regularly attending school, SSA in 2010 does not count up to \$1640 of earned income per month for a maximum of \$6,600 per year when figuring a student's SSI check. The exclusion amount is adjusted each year based on the cost-of-living. The student earned income exclusion is applied before the general income exclusion or the earned income exclusion.

Other Employment Supports include:

Continued Payment under a Vocational Rehabilitation Program or Individual Education Plan (Section 301)

This allows youth upon reaching age 18 who do not meet the eligibility requirements under the adult rules to continue to receive Children's SSI beyond the age of 18 up to the age of 22 while they remain in school under an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or

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