

Transition: Social Security Disability Insurance to Retirement

SSDI Fact Sheet 2026

When will I start receiving Social Security Retirement if I receive Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)?

You will receive this once you reach your full retirement age, which is based on the year you were born:

Year Born	Full Retirement Age
before 1937	65 years
1938	65 years/2 months
1939	65 years/4 months
1940	65 years/6 months
1941	65 years/8 months
1942	65 years/10 months
1943 through 1954	66 years
1955	66 years/2 months
1956	66 years/4 months
1957	66 years/6 months
1958	66 years/8 months
1959	66 years/10 months
1960 and later	67 years

Note: SSDI beneficiaries do not have the option of deferring their retirement to age 70.

Will my monthly cash benefits change?

Maybe. If you worked while receiving SSDI, your benefit amount may increase when you retire. However, your monthly cash benefit will not be less than your current SSDI cash benefit.

Do I need to notify Social Security about retiring?

No. Social Security will switch your SSDI benefit to a Retirement benefit once you reach full retirement age.

Can I take early retirement?

Yes. At age 62 individuals may apply for a **reduced** Retirement Insurance Benefit. A person who receives SSDI may want to consider applying for early retirement when SSDI:

- Stops due to medical recovery
- Stops due to employment
- Payments are reduced due to Workers' Compensation

What happens when I apply for early retirement and go to work?

Retirement work rules differ from SSDI work rules. Consult with Social Security about these differences.

What happens when I reach full retirement age and go to work?

- You will not be subject to continuing medical reviews.
- Work income will not impact Retirement cash benefits.
- Work Incentives such as Trial Work Period, Extended Period of Eligibility, and Impairment Related Work Expenses cannot be used; the only exception is the [Plan to Achieve Self-Support \(PASS\)](#), if approved before turning 65.

What will happen if I reach full retirement age and receive a Childhood Disability Benefit (CDB)?

Nothing. There is no way to qualify for Retirement benefits based on a parent's work record. Therefore, you will continue getting your CDB cash benefits and the same SSDI work rules will continue to apply.

What will happen if I reach full retirement age and receive a Disabled Widow(er)'s Benefit (DWB)?

DWB will convert automatically to Social Security Widow(er)'s Insurance Benefit (WIB). You will receive your WIB without any limit on your earnings. Previous DWB work rules and continuing medical reviews will no longer apply. You will no longer be able to participate in the Ticket to Work program. The only work incentive you can continue using is a PASS (if it was approved prior to age 65.) The earliest a widow or widower can start receiving WIB is based on age.

Please see: [Transition: SSDI to Retirement](#).

For more information see [Social Security Retirement Benefits](#).

For more information about
Work Without Limits Benefits Counseling
call toll-free
1-877-YES-WORK (1-877-937-9675)
or visit workwithoutlimits.org