

# Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for Children Under 18

## **What is SSI?**

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a program in the Social Security Administration (SSA) that gives payments to children and adults with disabilities who have limited income and resources.

## **Is SSI the same as DDA (Developmental Disabilities Administration)?**

No. SSI is money that is paid to people who meet eligibility requirements, based on their disability and their income and resources. Eligibility for DDA services is based only on disability, NOT on income.

## **Is SSI the same as Medicaid?**

No. SSI is income, not healthcare coverage. But, in Washington, people on SSI are eligible for Washington Apple Health (Medicaid.) When someone gets on SSI, if they are not already on Apple Health, the SSA tells Apple Health to enroll them. The SSA manages the SSI payments, but not the healthcare coverage.

The state of Washington manages Apple Health (Medicaid.)

## **What makes a child eligible for SSI?**

Two things: the child's family must meet the SSI income and resource eligibility limits, AND the child must meet the SSA's definition of disability for children.

## **Where can I get more details about SSI for children?**

See the SSA's booklet here: <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf>

## **What are the SSI income and resource eligibility limits?**

The income chart for SSI is very confusing. That's why we suggest you call the SSA at 1-800-772-1213, or visit the local office at 9594 Mickelberry Rd NW, Silverdale, WA 98383, to find out if your family's income and resources are within the limits.

The income chart is at this link: <https://www.ssa.gov/ssi/text-child-ussi.htm>  
Scroll down to "Deeming Eligibility Chart for Children".



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## **Are there certain conditions that automatically make a child eligible for SSI?**

If a child is eligible for SSI based on income and resources and the child has a certain condition on SSA's list, SSI payments can start right away while SSA decides if the child meets their disability definition.

Some of those conditions are:

- \* Birth weight below 2 lbs, 10oz
- \* Down syndrome
- \* HIV infection
- \* Muscular dystrophy
- \* Severe intellectual disorder (age 7 or older)
- \* Total blindness
- \* Total deafness

If SSA later decides the child's disability doesn't meet their definition, the family will not have to pay back the SSI payments the child received.

## **How do I apply for SSI for my child?**

- Contact SSA at 1-800-772-1213 (or TTY at 1-800-325-0778) to find out if your family's income and resources are within the limits. To talk to a Social Security staff person, call between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday. The wait is usually shorter on Wednesday – Friday.
- If you meet the financial eligibility limits, make an appointment to do the application by phone, or in person at the SSA office. Give yourself enough time before the appointment to do the next steps below.
- Review the Child Disability Starter Kit here: [https://www.ssa.gov/disability/disability\\_starter\\_kits\\_child\\_eng.htm](https://www.ssa.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_child_eng.htm)  
It answers questions about applying for SSI for children, and has a worksheet to help you gather the information you need.
- Fill out the online Child Disability Report here: <https://secure.ssa.gov/apps6z/i3820/main.html>  
At the end of the report, they'll ask you to sign a form that gives your child's doctor(s) permission to give SSA information about his/her disability.

## **Then what happens?**

SSA will send you a letter. It can take 3 to 5 months for them to decide on your child's SSI eligibility. If you have questions while you are waiting, call SSA.

## **How do I appeal if SSI is denied?**

It is common for SSI to be denied the first time, so be sure to appeal if this happens. Make your request in writing within 65 days from the date on your denial letter. Request an online appeal from SSA (see <http://www.ssa.gov/disabilityssi/appeal.html>), call 800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778), or go to your local SSA office.