

Social Security Essentials

Updated April 4, 2005

Alabama

With a debate raging over the future of Social Security, it's time to look at some of the facts about what it means for Alabama.

Social Security is Important to Alabama

- Number of people receiving Social Security benefits in Alabama: **867,601^a**
- Percentage of total Alabama population receiving Social Security benefits: **19%^b**
- Rank among 50 states in percentage of population receiving benefits: **6th**
- Annual federal government Social Security payments into Alabama: **\$7.9 billion^c**
- Percentage of Alabama personal income from Social Security: **6.9%^e**
- Rank among 50 states in percentage of state income from Social Security: **4th**

Social Security Helps Retirees

- Number of people receiving Social Security retirement benefits in Alabama, including spouses and eligible children of retirees: **528,243^f**
- Percentage of those age 65 and over receiving Social Security benefits: **93%^g**
- Number of recipients age 65 and over in Alabama who rely on Social Security for half or more of their income: **267,000ⁱ**
- Percentage of recipients age 65 and over in Alabama who rely on Social Security for half or more of their income: **66%ⁱ**
- Number of recipients age 65 and over in Alabama who rely on Social Security for 90% or more of their income: **135,000ⁱ**
- Percentage of recipients age 65 and over in Alabama who rely on Social Security for 90% or more of their income: **34%ⁱ**
- Percentage of those age 65 and over in Alabama who would have incomes below the poverty line without Social Security: **53%^h**
- Percentage of Alabama Social Security beneficiaries that receive retirement benefits (the rest receive disability and survivors Social Security benefits): **61%^f**

Social Security Helps the Disabled and Their Families

- Number of people in Alabama receiving Social Security disability benefits, including spouses and children of disabled workers: **196,077^f**
- Percentage of Alabama Social Security beneficiaries that receive disability: **23%^f**

Social Security Helps Widows, Widowers and Their Families

- Number of people in Alabama receiving Social Security survivors benefits, including spouses and children of deceased workers: **143,281^f**
- Percentage of Social Security beneficiaries that receive survivors benefits: **17%^f**

Social Security Helps Children

- Number of Alabama children under age 18 receiving Social Security: **73,410^c**
- Percent of all Alabama beneficiaries that are children: **9%^d**

For more information on the Social Security program and the debate over its future, go to <http://www.epinet.org/socialsecurity>

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Notes and Sources:

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- e. For 2002. Social Security Administration. 2003. *Annual Statistical Supplement*. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. 2004. *Annual State Personal Income*. <<http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2003/index.html>>,
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- f. As of December 2003. EPI summation of data from Social Security Administration. 2003. *OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County*.
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- g. December 2003 beneficiaries as a percentage of July 2003 population. Social Security Administration. 2003. *OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County*. US Bureau of the Census. 2003. *Annual Estimates of the Civilian Population by Selected Age Groups for the United States and States: July 1, 2003 and April 1, 2000*.
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- h. Arloc Sherman and Isaac Shapiro, "Social Security Lifts 13 Million Seniors Above the Poverty Line: A State-by-State Analysis," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 24, 2005.
- i. Ettlinger, Michael and Jeff Chapman. 2005 *Social Security and the Income of the Elderly*. Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute.

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