

Oct 12, 2009 09:35:37 AM, David.Vinokurov@ssa.gov wrote:

Good Morning All,

Attached is detailed information about Social Security's Online services. This information might be helpful to your staff, clients and the general public.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

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CHECK OUT OUR [ONLINE SERVICES](#)

WWW.SOCIALSECURITY.GOV

www.socialsecurity.gov. From applying for disability or spouses benefits, to obtaining a proof of income letter, changing an address or phone number, getting a replacement Medicare card or a Social Security Benefit Statement, Social Security's website can save you and your clients a lot of time.

SOCIAL SECURITY ONLINE –

www.socialsecurity.gov

- **Social Security is committed to giving the American public choices for conducting business with the agency.**

· The Internet continues to be an increasingly popular option for many Americans. More than 246 million people in North America have Internet access, and older adults are among the fastest-growing segments of the Internet market.

· Providing self-help Internet applications for the public and for Social Security's business partners are ways of responding to public preferences for online services, managing growing workloads and maintaining Social Security's high standard of service delivery.

· As retiring baby boomers choose high-tech information and service options, Social Security expects further growth in the number of people who will take advantage of its Internet services in the future.

- **Social Security has a variety of online services and information that the American people are using in increasing numbers.**

· The Social Security website offers online services and program information for beneficiaries, persons applying for benefits, employers and the general public.

· The website is among the most visited federal websites and had over 80 million visits in 2008.

- The usefulness of the website is enhanced because much of the online information is available in Spanish as well as 14 other languages. Most of the documents are also accessible to people who use screen readers, screen magnifiers and voice recognition software.

- **Protecting the privacy of the American public is a high priority at Social Security. The agency makes new services available online only when it is confident that the public's privacy is guaranteed.** Social Security uses the strongest commercially available encryption to ensure that a person's confidential information is secure as it travels over the Internet.

Online Services Offered by Social Security

- **Online Social Security Applications for Retirement, Spouse's and Disability Benefits** – www.socialsecurity.gov/applyforbenefits

- Social Security introduced a new online application in January, 2009.

- Applying for retirement benefits now takes as little as 15 minutes and can be done at a convenient time from the comfort of your home or office.
- In most case, once the retirement or spouse's application is submitted

electronically, it's done. There are no forms to sign and usually no documentation is required.

- You'll get a receipt for your online application that you can print and keep for

your records. We'll also give you a confirmation number. You can use your confirmation number to check the status of your application after you've applied.

- Social Security will process the application and contact the person if any further

information is needed. Any necessary documents can be mailed or taken to a Social Security office.

- To apply online for retirement, spouse's or disability benefit benefits, a person must:

- NOT currently be receiving Social Security benefits;

- 1 NOT have already applied for benefits; and

- Reside in the United States or one of its territories.

- If applying for retirement and/or spouse's benefits, a person must:

- Be at least 61 years and 9 months or older; and

- Plan to start benefits within 4 months.

- If applying for disability benefits, a person must also have been, or expect to be, unable to work for at least one year or have a terminal illness.

Benefit Application Statistics:

- Since the introduction of the online retirement application in November 2000, over 1 million people have filed for retirement benefits online and over 400,000 people used the agency's online retirement application service in 2008.

- In 2008 approximately 32,000 husbands and wives applied for spouse's benefits online.

- More than 250,000 online disability applications were received in 2008.

- **Check Application Status-**www.socialsecurity.gov/applyonline.

- Social Security issues confirmation numbers to applicants that

- allow them to check the status of their application online.

- Internet filers are automatically issued a confirmation number.

- 1 Non-internet filers are issued a confirmation number upon request.

- With a confirmation number, an applicant can get a status report online that gives them:

- The date the application was received;

- 1 A list of documents requested;

- 2 The address of the local Social Security office; and

- 3 The decision, if it has already been made.

- **Appeal a Disability Decision** – www.socialsecurity.gov/applyonline.

- People who disagree with a medical decision we made on their claim for disability benefits can appeal online.

- The appellant completes the “Appeal Request” and the “Appeal Report.” The Appeal will be sent to Social Security and we will review the decision.

- In 2008, the first year this service was offered, over 270,000 people filed an appeal online.

- **The Benefit Eligibility Screening Tool (BEST)** – www.socialsecurity.gov/best

- BEST is a screening program that anyone can use to find out if they are eligible for benefits from any of the programs Social Security administers.

- BEST will screen a person's eligibility for retirement, survivors, disability, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Medicare and special veterans benefits. Helpful links to publications are provided to access more detailed information about possible benefits.

- A person's date of birth is all that is needed to start. It is completely private. No answers are recorded.

- Best is also available in Spanish.

- **The Retirement Estimator** - www.socialsecurity.gov/estimator

- In 2008, Social Security introduced the online Retirement Estimator that allows people to get an immediate and personalized estimate of their future retirement benefits based on current law and real time access to their earnings record.

- Using a secure log-in that requires your name, Social Security number, date and place of birth and mother's maiden name, a person can receive an online estimate of their retirement benefits at age 62, full retirement age and age 70.
- The Retirement Estimator also allows people to create "what if" retirement scenarios, to see how much their benefits would be using different "stop work" ages and "future earnings" projections.
- The use of the Retirement Estimator is available to people who have enough Social Security credits at this time to qualify for benefits and are not:
 - Currently receiving benefits on their own Social Security record;
 - 1 A Medicare beneficiary;
 - 2 Age 62 or older and receiving benefits on another Social Security record; or
 - Eligible for a [Pension Based on Work Not Covered By Social Security](#).
- The retirement estimator was used almost 690,000 times in 2008.

- **Social Security *Benefits Planner*** – www.socialsecurity.gov/planners

- The online *Benefits Planner* contains a Retirement Planner, Disability Planner and Survivors Planner. Each planner has valuable information about these benefits and factors that can affect those benefits.
- In addition to the Retirement Estimator, the *Planner's* three other online calculators allow people to compute estimates of their future Social Security retirement benefits and current disability and survivors benefit entitlement.
- The Retirement Planner includes a link to the American Savings Education Council's Ballpark Estimate worksheet at <http://www.asec.org/ballpark/>. This link to the Ballpark worksheet lets individuals combine their estimate of future Social Security benefits with estimates of income from pensions and savings to determine if they are saving enough for a comfortable retirement.
- The Retirement Planner also contains an Earnings Limit Calculator that lets workers compute the effect of earnings on their Social Security retirement benefit if they continue working and receive benefits before their full retirement age.
- More than 4 million individuals used the online *Benefit Planner* in 2008.

- **Request a *Social Security Statement*** – www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement

- Although Social Security automatically mails *Social Security Statements* each year to workers who are 25 and older and not receiving Social Security benefits based on their own earnings, people may request a *Statement* online.
- The *Social Security Statement* gives a year-by-year display of earnings that have been reported to an individual's Social Security earnings record.
- The *Statement* also provides estimates of the benefits a worker and his or her family members may receive now and in the future.

- People who are not receiving Social Security or Medicare benefits can request a *Social Security Statement*.
- *Statements* are available in both English and Spanish.
- Over 600,000 individuals requested a *Statement* in 2008.
- **Change of Address** – www.socialsecurity.gov/coa/
 - People receiving Social Security benefits can change their address and/or telephone number via the Internet.
- To change an address online, the applicant must:
 - Get Social Security disability, retirement or survivors benefits (this does not include SSI benefits);
 - Live in, and be moving to, an address in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands or American Samoa; and
 - Request the address change for his or her own benefit payment. (A representative payee, for example, cannot use this online service.)
 - More than 320,000 beneficiaries requested a change of address online in 2008.
- **Direct Deposit** – www.socialsecurity.gov/dd

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- People who receive Social Security benefits can sign up for a change their direct deposit information on the Internet using a password.
 - In 2008, over 110,000 beneficiaries used this service.
- **Replacement Medicare Card** – www.socialsecurity.gov/medicarecard
 - Medicare beneficiaries can apply for Medicare replacement cards via the Internet.
 - Applicants complete the online form and send it electronically to the agency. The online process only takes a couple of minutes.
 - Requests are forwarded each day to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, which processes the requests and mails the new cards to beneficiaries.
 - More than 150,000 beneficiaries requested a replacement Medicare card online in 2008.
- **Request a Replacement Form SSA-1099, Social Security Benefit Statement** – www.socialsecurity.gov/1099
 - Although SSA-1099s are mailed automatically each January to everyone receiving Social Security benefits, they can request a replacement form SSA-1099 online for a

summary of their last year's Social Security benefit payments. (It does not include SSI benefits.)

- Requests for a replacement SSA-1099 can be made online beginning each February.
- The SSA-1099 can be used when completing a federal income tax return to find out if any Social Security benefits are subject to tax.
- In 2008, about 136,000 people used the service.

- **Request a Proof of Income (formerly known as a Benefit Verification) Letter** – www.socialsecurity.gov/beve

- This is a convenient online service for people who get Social Security or SSI benefits and need verification of the amount of their benefits or other information to show to another agency to obtain services or benefits.

- In 2008 more than 410,000 people used the service.

- **Get a Password** – www.socialsecurity.gov/password

- Social Security can issue a password to a person who receives Social Security benefits that allows them access to their personal account information.

- With a password, beneficiaries can review or change information online or use the automated telephone service that is accessible through our toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213. The following services are available to beneficiaries who have a password:

- Check information and benefits;
- 1 Change address and telephone information;
- 2 Request or change direct deposit; and
- 3 Change the password.

- **Representative Payee Accounting Report** – www.socialsecurity.gov/payee/

- A new service which began in 2008 allows representative payees to submit their annual accounting reports for beneficiaries to Social Security online.

- With a one-time registration, the representative payee can use this service year after year.

- **Business Services Online (BSO)** – www.socialsecurity.gov/bsowelcome.htm

- BSO consists of a suite of services to help employers conduct business with Social Security.

- BSO offers employers information on filing W-2 forms.

- The BSO Social Security Number Verification Service offers employers the ability to verify their employees' Social Security numbers (SSNs) and names and match them with Social Security's records.

- Correct names and SSNs on W-2 wage reports are the keys to successfully processing employers' annual wage reports.

- An Employer Services Liaison Officers link provides employers with access to the phone number and email address of a local Social Security specialist who can provide assistance and answer questions about submitting W-2s to Social Security.

- **Career Search** – www.socialsecurity.gov/careers

- Social Security has a webpage for individuals interested in a rewarding career in public service.

- The agency offers a diverse selection of administrative, professional, technical and specialized positions.

- Social Security always seeks qualified and talented candidates to help in the daily operation of agency programs and services to the public.

- There are special hiring options available for [veterans](#) or [individuals with disabilities](#).

- **Social Security Office Locator** - www.socialsecurity.gov/locator

- This is a service that helps an individual locate the nearest Social Security office based on his or her ZIP code.

- A person's zip code is all that is needed to find the:

- Address,

- 1 Telephone number,

- 2 Office hours, and

- 3 Directions to the nearest Social Security office.

- The Office Locator also provides the names and telephone numbers of other local, state and federal social agencies in the area that may offer services to individuals.

- **Social Security's website has helpful links to other government agency websites.**

- **FirstGov** – www.firstgov.gov

- FirstGov allows the public to search all online U.S. government resources from one site.

- Users can conduct searches faster and more efficiently by topic rather than by agency and have easy access to federal government information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- **GovBenefits** – www.govbenefits.gov

- This free, online screening program helps people find government benefit programs for which they may be eligible, along with information about how to apply.
- It contains information on more than 1,000 government programs run by federal agencies, including Social Security. The site provides direct links to those agencies.

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