



# Michigan Updates

*A Social Security Newsletter for Employment Support Updates*



## National Breast Cancer AWARENESS MONTH

You or a loved one may qualify for **expedited**

## SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS

under our **Compassionate Allowances** guidelines



For more information, visit  
[www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances)



October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month. If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with breast cancer that has metastasized or is inoperable, you or they may qualify for expedited Social Security Disability benefits under our Compassionate Allowances program.

For more information, visit [www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances)

## **SSI Smart Phone Wage Reporting Easier than Ever!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**If you are currently working and receive SSI benefits, you may be able to report your wages to us using our smartphone app!**

To start using the app, you must first visit a local Social Security office. If unsure of where your local office is, go to [www.socialsecurity.gov/locator](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/locator). There, one of our representatives can make sure you qualify to use the app. Then, he or she can set you up correctly in our system and train you on the process.

Read about this and other ways to report your wages while on SSI at <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssiwagereporting/>

**If you get SSI, you may be able to report your wages using our smartphone app!**

To start using the app, you must first visit a local Social Security office. There, one of our representatives can make sure you qualify to use the app. Then, he or she can set you up correctly in our system and train you on the process.



[www.socialsecurity.gov/ssiwagereporting](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/ssiwagereporting)





## Working From Home Helped Lisa Seeley Achieve Financial Independence and Expand Her World

The You Can Work series continues to spotlight the achievements of job seekers with disabilities who found their path to a better future with help from Social Security's Ticket to Work program. Our new Success Story features Lisa Seeley.

If you are a person with a disability, being able to work from home may offer a solution that could allow you to meet career and financial goals. Working from home is just one of many job accommodations that may provide the flexibility you need to enter the workforce. Through Social Security's Ticket to Work program, you can get free career counseling and guidance on job accommodations. That's what Lisa Seeley did when agoraphobia, a severe anxiety disorder, restricted her life and her ability to work.

"Crowds and open spaces were very difficult for me to handle," she recalls. "... I had to move into a group home [because] my mom and I didn't know how to deal with my agoraphobia and panic disorder. I was lucky to be able to receive Social Security disability benefits, and ...the treatments I needed to get healthy again."

She found help with an authorized Ticket to Work service provider known as an Employment Network (EN). Through the Ticket program, ENs across the country help job seekers with disabilities prepare for the workforce, find employment, or advance in their current position. Because she was concerned about whether her condition would be compatible with working in an office environment or commuting, Lisa wondered whether working from home would be an option.



Lisa's EN, [Employment Options, Inc. \(EO\)](#), helped her plan her future. She received career counseling and advice about job accommodations. Lisa credits employment and the help she received through Ticket to Work with improvements in her life. She believes that working has been essential to her recovery. She no longer relies on Social Security benefits, and says that life is "wonderful."

Lisa found her path to a better future. Find yours. Visit [choosework.net](http://choosework.net) for more inspiring [stories](#), and learn how Social Security's [Ticket to Work](#) program can help you.

## **If you cannot work due to a disability, maybe Social Security can help**

Disability is something most people do not like to think about; however, the unfortunate reality is this: the chances that you will become disabled are probably far greater than you realize. Studies show that a 20-year-old worker has a more than one in four chance of becoming disabled before reaching retirement age.

Social Security pays benefits to people with disabilities through the Social Security disability insurance program, which is financed by Social Security taxes. If you qualify, you can receive a monthly disability benefit from Social Security for as long as your disability keeps you from working. The amount of your benefit is based on your average lifetime earnings. Potential Medicare coverage is dependent on several factors and usually starts after you receive disability cash benefits for 24 months.

When you work and pay Social Security taxes, you earn credits. The number of credits you need to qualify for disability benefits depends on your age, and some of the work must be recent. For example, if you become disabled after age 31, you need to have worked at least a total of 10 years, including five of those having been worked within the past 10 years. But if you become disabled before age 24, you need only one and a half years of work in the past three years.

If you have a disability that keeps you from working, the time to get started with your application is now. That's because it takes time to determine whether you qualify for benefits. It usually takes about three to five months for a medical decision from the state agency that evaluates your condition. If your application is approved, your first Social Security disability payment will be made for the sixth full month after the date we determine that your disability began.

Take advantage of our online disability starter kits. You will find them on our disability website at [www.socialsecurity.gov/disability](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability). Once you complete the online disability starter kit and you're ready to apply, the most convenient way to do that is also online. Just go to the same disability website at [www.socialsecurity.gov/disability](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability).

**1 out of 4  
20-year olds  
will become  
disabled  
before age 67**

1-in-4 20-year olds become disabled before age 67

**If you become disabled,  
Social Security can help.**

## Social Security, SSI, and Medicare

### What you need to know about these vital programs in American Sign Language

Social Security presents a video in American Sign Language with essential information to help you understand the benefits offered under our Retirement, Disability, Survivors, Medicare and Supplemental Security Income programs.



<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/multimedia/video/asl/>

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## ***Future Michigan Updates***

*If you would like to be placed on the mailing list to receive future Michigan Updates or be removed from the mailing list, send an email to [Vonda.vantil@ssa.gov](mailto:Vonda.vantil@ssa.gov)*

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