



# SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME ELIGIBILITY & LIMITATIONS

Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is a federal program designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people who have little or no income. SSI provides cash to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter. Eligibility for SSI is based on your assets and income. It is less stringent than the level of review for Social Security Disability Benefits (SSD). If you have not worked enough to qualify for SSD you may still qualify for SSI.

## How Many Assets/Resources May I Have While Still Being Eligible For SSI?

The Social Security Administration (SSA) does not consider assets when making a determination as to one's eligibility for disability benefits. However, countable assets are factored into eligibility for Supplemental Security Income. This is because the SSA believes those with significant countable assets are more capable of providing for their support than those with limited or no assets whatsoever.

The SSA refers to your assets as "resources." The limit for countable resources an SSI applicant can own depends on their age and marital status. This is because the SSA may hold, or as they say "deem" a fraction of your spouse, parent, or parent spouse's resources as your own due to your relationship with that person. However, as detailed below, not all resources count towards this limitation.

### Un-Married Adult Applicants:

The resources limit for a single individual applying for SSI is \$2,000. An applicant with more than \$2,000 in resources is ineligible for SSI.

### Married Applicants:

The limit for countable resources for a couple is \$3,000. A married applicant with more than \$3,000 in resources is ineligible for SSI.

### Applicants Under Age 18:

If a child under the age of 18 lives with one parent, \$2,000 of the parent's total countable resources will not be factored in. If the child lives with two parents, \$3,000 of the parents' total countable resources will not be factored in.

## **Resources considered by the SSA in their analysis include:**

- Cash;
- Bank Accounts;
- Stocks & U.S. Savings Bonds;
- Land;
- Personal Property;
- Vehicles;
- Life Insurance Policies (\$1,500 or more);
- Deemed Resources;
- Anything else one owns which could be changed to cash and used for shelter or food.

## **Resources NOT considered by the SSA in their analysis include:**

- The home you live in;
- The land you live on;
- Household goods and personal effects (including wedding rings);
- Life Insurance Policies (\$1,500 or less);
- Grants, scholarships, fellowships, or gifts made in contemplation of education are excluded for 9 months after being received;
- Burial spaces for your or your immediate family;
- Burial funds for you or your spouse valued at \$1,500 or less;
- Retroactive social security disability or SSI disability benefits for up to 9 months after being received.

## **How Much Income Can I Have While Still Being Eligible For SSI?**

In 2018, the income limit for SSI is the Federal Benefit Rate (FBR) which caps individual income at \$750.00/month and \$1,125/month for couples. If your income exceeds these amounts, you are not eligible for SSI.

Income is not calculated in the traditional sense and comprises more than just your wages. For SSI purposes, income includes: earned income, unearned income, in-kind income, and deemed income. You should know the Social Security Administration's review is extensive and covers more than is practical to detail in this article. As such, here is a general overview:

## **Earned Income:**

Wages, net earnings from self-employment, certain royalties, honoraria, and sheltered workshop payments.

## **Unearned Income:**

All income that is not earned, such as Social Security Benefits, pensions, State disability payments, unemployment benefits, interest income, and cash from friends and relatives.

## **In-Kind Income:**

Food or shelter received for free or less than fair market value.

## **Deemed Income:**

Part of the income of your spouse with whom you live, your parent(s) with whom you live, or your sponsor (if you are an alien) earns.

Your specific income is relevant information for SSI as it offsets the benefit you receive. Meaning, the more countable income you have, the less SSI benefits you will receive. If your countable income exceeds the allowable limit, you will not receive SSI benefits. You should know not all income is calculated and several exclusions exist which reduce income making it easier to qualify for SSI.

The SSI Application Process Can Be Tricky To Navigate - Let Us Guide You

The majority of SSI applications are denied at the initial level of review. Often, this is due to incomplete paperwork or inadequate medical documentation rather than the merits of the applicant themselves. Avoid the hassle and delay; contact Stampone Law. We will guide you through every step of your claim working efficiently while providing the personal attention you deserve.