

[Social Security](#)



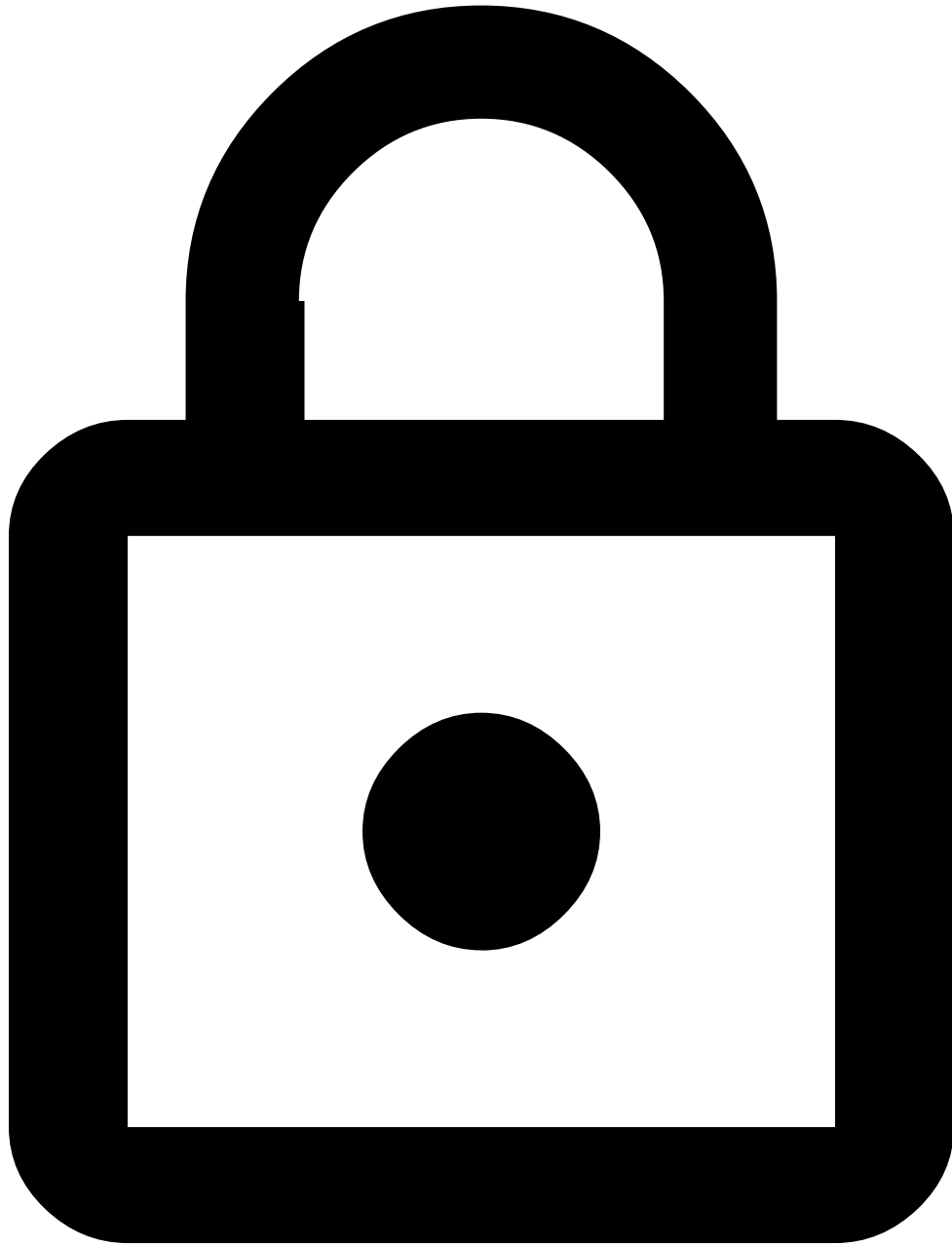
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Press Release

Wednesday, March 18, 2020

For Immediate Release



Mark Hinkle, Acting Press Officer

press.office@ssa.gov

News Release SOCIAL SECURITY

Update on Services During COVID – 19 Pandemic From Andrew Saul, Commissioner of Social Security

Print Version

“I want you to hear directly from me how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting our services. The first thing you should know is that we continue to pay benefits. Be aware that scammers may try to trick you into thinking the pandemic is stopping your Social Security payments but that is not true. Don’t be fooled.

To protect you and help stop the spread of this coronavirus, we cannot accept visitors in our offices at this time. There are several other ways you can get help. Many services are available online at www.socialsecurity.gov. If you have a critical need that you cannot address online, we can help you over the phone.

Please visit our COVID-19 web page at www.socialsecurity.gov/coronavirus/ to find out what services we are continuing and which ones we are suspending, how to contact us, and important information about deadlines we are extending to ease the burden on you and medical providers during this pandemic.”

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Press Release

Monday, March 16, 2020

For Immediate Release



Mark Hinkle, Acting Press Officer

press.office@ssa.gov

News Release SOCIAL SECURITY

Effective March 17, 2020, Social Security Offices Will Only Offer Phone Service

**** Online Services Remain Available ****

Print Version

All local Social Security offices will be closed to the public for in-person service starting Tuesday, March 17, 2020. This decision protects the population we serve—older Americans and people with underlying medical conditions—and our employees during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. However, we are still able to provide critical services.

Our secure and convenient online services remain available at www.socialsecurity.gov. Local offices will also continue to provide critical services over the phone. We are working closely with the [Centers for Disease Control](#)

[and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), state and local governments, and other experts to monitor COVID-19 and will let you know as soon as we can resume in-person service.

If you need help from Social Security:

- First, please use our secure and convenient online services available at www.socialsecurity.gov/oneservices. You can apply for retirement, disability, and Medicare benefits online, check the status of an application or appeal, request a replacement Social Security card (in most areas), print a benefit verification letter, and much more – from anywhere and from any of your devices. We also have a wealth of information to answer most of your Social Security questions online, without having to speak with a Social Security representative in person or by phone. Please visit our online Frequently Asked Questions at www.socialsecurity.gov/ask.
- If you cannot conduct your Social Security business online, please check our [online field office locator](#) for specific information about how to directly contact your local office. Your local office still will be able to provide critical services to help you apply for benefits, answer your questions, and provide other services over the phone.
- If you already have an in-office appointment scheduled, we will call you to handle your appointment over the phone instead. If you have a hearing scheduled, we will call you to discuss alternatives for continuing with your hearing, including offering a telephonic hearing. Our call may come from a PRIVATE number and not from a U.S. Government phone. Please remember that our employees will not threaten you or ask for any form of payment.
- If you cannot complete your Social Security business online, please call our National 800 Number at 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778). Our National 800 Number has many automated service options you can use without waiting to speak with a telephone representative. A list of automated telephone services is available online at www.socialsecurity.gov/agency/contact/phone.html.

To get more Social Security news, follow the Press Office on Twitter [@SSAPress](#).

Press Release

Thursday, March 05, 2020

For Immediate Release



Mark Hinkle, Acting Press Officer

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News Release SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security and OIG Announce National ‘Slam the Scam’ Day

Print Version

Andrew Saul, Commissioner of Social Security, and the agency continue raising public awareness about telephone impersonation schemes during the Office of the Inspector General’s (OIG) national ‘Slam the Scam’ Day on March 5. Social Security and OIG have made concerted efforts to educate the public about these scams – in which fraudulent callers mislead victims into making cash or gift card payments to avoid arrest for purported Social Security number problems. As Commissioner Saul testified to Congress, the agency has taken swift actions, including helping OIG create a dedicated online reporting tool at oig.ssa.gov, providing people who call the agency with updated information on the scams and how to report them, increasing employee and public outreach and education, and establishing a Social Security/OIG workgroup to maximize resources and ensure a cohesive response.

“It is appalling that scammers are playing on emotions like fear to get people to act without thinking,” Commissioner Saul said. “Everyone should just hang up, and never give out their personal information. People should go online to oig.ssa.gov to report these Social Security scams.”

Scammers are sophisticated and there are many variations to this fraud. For example, a caller may say he is from Social Security and that the person's Social Security number is suspended or has been used in a crime. The caller identification may be spoofed to appear to originate from a government number. Fraudsters may text or email fake documents in attempts to get people to comply with their demands. These scams have become the #1 type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission and Social Security.

Social Security will never tell you that your Social Security number has been suspended, contact you to demand an immediate payment, ask for your credit or debit card numbers over the phone, ask for gift cards or cash, or promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money.

Social Security employees do occasionally contact people--generally those who have ongoing business with the agency--by telephone for business purposes. Typically, the agency calls people who have recently applied for a Social Security benefit, someone who is already receiving payments and requires an update to their record, or a person who has requested a phone call from the agency. If there is a problem with a person's Social Security number or record, in most cases Social Security will mail a letter.

For more information, please view Social Security's PSA addressing the telephone impersonation scheme online at www.youtube.com/socialsecurity and below:



To get more Social Security news, follow the Press Office on Twitter [@SSAPress](https://twitter.com/SSAPress).

Press Release

Monday, February 24, 2020
For Immediate Release



Mark Hinkle, Acting Press Officer
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News Release SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security Modernizing its Disability Program Decades Old Rule Updated to Reflect Today's Workforce

Print Version

Social Security Commissioner Andrew Saul announced a new final rule today, modernizing an agency disability rule that was introduced in 1978 and has remained unchanged. The new regulation, "Removing the Inability to Communicate in English as an Education Category," updates a disability rule that was more than 40 years old and did not reflect work in the modern economy. This final rule has been in the works for a number of years and updates an antiquated policy that makes the inability to communicate in English a factor in awarding disability benefits.

"It is important that we have an up-to-date disability program," Commissioner Saul said. "The workforce and work opportunities have changed and outdated regulations need to be revised to reflect today's world."

A successful disability system must evolve and support the right decision as early in the process as possible. Social Security's disability rules must continue to reflect current medicine and the evolution of work.

Social Security is required to consider education to determine if someone's medical condition prevents work, but research shows the inability to communicate in English is no longer a good measure of educational attainment or the ability to engage in work. This rule is another important step in the agency's efforts to modernize its disability programs.

In 2015, Social Security's Inspector General recommended that the agency evaluate the appropriateness of this policy. Social Security owes it to the American public to ensure that its disability programs continue to reflect the realities of the modern workplace. This rule also supports the Administration's longstanding focus of recognizing that individuals with disabilities can remain in the workforce.

The rule will be effective on April 27, 2020.

To get more Social Security news, follow the Press Office on Twitter [@SSAPress](https://twitter.com/SSAPress).

Press Release

Tuesday, January 21, 2020

For Immediate Release



Mark Hinkle, Acting Press Officer

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News Release SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security Launches New Campaign to Fight Scammers

Print Version

The Social Security Administration launched a new Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign to continue warning people about the ongoing nationwide telephone impersonation scheme. The PSAs feature a message from Social Security Commissioner Andrew Saul. Social Security and its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) continue to receive reports about fraudulent phone calls from people falsely claiming to be Social Security employees. The scammers mislead victims into making cash or gift card payments for help with purported identity theft, or to avoid arrest for bogus Social Security number problems.

"I want every American to know that if a suspicious caller states there is a problem with their Social Security number or account, they should hang up and never give the caller money or personal information. People should

then go online to oig.ssa.gov to report the scam call to Social Security,” said Commissioner Saul.

People should also be on the lookout for a new version of this scam. Fraudsters are now emailing fake documents in attempts to get people to comply with their demands. Victims have received emails with attached letters and reports that appear to be from Social Security or the OIG. The letters may use official letterhead and government jargon to convince victims they are legitimate; they may also contain misspellings and grammar mistakes.

The new PSA addressing the telephone impersonation scheme is available online at www.youtube.com/socialsecurity and below:



Social Security employees do occasionally contact people--generally those who have ongoing business with the agency--by telephone for business purposes. However, Social Security employees will never threaten a person, or promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money. In those cases, the call is fraudulent and people should just hang up.

Generally, the agency mainly calls people who have recently applied for a Social Security benefit, someone who is already receiving payments and requires an update to their record, or a person who has requested a phone call from the agency. If a person is not in one of these situations, they normally would not receive a call from the agency.

Social Security will not:

- Tell you that your Social Security number has been suspended.
- Contact you to demand an immediate payment.
- Ask you for credit or debit card numbers over the phone.
- Require a specific means of debt repayment, like a prepaid debit card, a retail gift card, or cash.
- Demand that you pay a Social Security debt without the ability to appeal the amount you owe.
- Promise a Social Security benefit approval, or increase, in exchange for information or money.

If there is a problem with a person's Social Security number or record, in most cases Social Security will mail a letter. If a person needs to submit payments to Social Security, the agency will send a letter with instructions and payment options. People should never provide information or payment over the phone or Internet unless they are certain of who is receiving it.

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