

Social Security: Vital to Maine Women and Families

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Social Security is a family insurance plan that provides retirement benefits and life and disability insurance to Maine's working families.

- About 1 in 4 residents – about 315,000 people – receives disability, survivor, and/or retirement benefits from Social Security.
- 93.6 percent of residents 65 and older receive Social Security benefits.
- About 24,900 children receive Social Security benefits because of the loss of a parent's income due to death, disability or retirement.
- About 73,500 disabled workers and their family members receive Social Security benefits.
- About 21,800 widowed spouses receive Social Security survivor's benefits. (Nationally, women represent virtually all (98.0 percent) of spouses receiving survivor benefits.)

Maine women depend on modest Social Security benefits to get by.

- Women are a majority of both adult beneficiaries and beneficiaries 65 and older.
- The average Social Security benefit for women 65 and older is about \$12,100 per year, compared to about \$16,100 for men 65 and older.
- Older women rely more on income from Social Security than older men do. Median income for women 65 and older living alone is \$18,600 per year – and Social Security represents 65.1 percent of that amount. Median income for comparable men is \$26,700 – and Social Security represents 49.4 percent of that amount.

Social Security is a critical anti-poverty program for Maine women and families.

- Social Security lifted 109,100 residents out of poverty, including 4,200 children.
- Social Security dramatically reduced poverty rates for women 65 and older: from 48.7 to 11.0 percent for all women 65 and older, and from 62.0 to 19.8 percent for older women living alone.
- Social Security also reduced rates of deep poverty (living below 50 percent of the federal poverty line) for older women from 36.9 to 2.1 percent.

Sources: Social Security Administration, Annual Statistical Supplement to the Social Security Bulletin, 2013, *available at* <http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/supplement/2013/index.html>, and OASDI Beneficiaries by State and County, 2012, *available at* http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/statcomps/oasdi_sc/2012/table01.html Calculations of Social Security's share of median household income and impact on poverty based on U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey (CPS), Annual Social and Economic Supplement (2010-2012, averages 3 years) (using CPS Table Creator, *available at* <http://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html>).