

Solutions, Strategies, Answers

Newsletter of the 18 Social Security Administration offices in
Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Lehigh, Monroe, Montgomery, Northampton, and Philadelphia counties



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The Autism Spectrum & the Blue Book

It's been commonly called **The Blue Book** because, well, it had a blue cover. Its proper name is **Disability Evaluation Under Social Security** and it provides health professionals with an explanation of SSA's disability programs. It also includes the **Listing of Impairments**. For each major body system, the Listing explains when impairments are considered severe enough to prevent an adult from working. In the case of minor children applying for Supplemental Security Income (SSI), it explains how an impairment causes marked functional limitations.

To illustrate where the Blue Book fits in the disability decision-making process, let's look at SSA applications based on **Autism Spectrum Disorder**. We selected autism because of its increased numbers over the last two decades. To meet the Blue Book disability requirements ... (1) there must be medical documentation of qualitative deficits in both verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as in social interaction ... *and* ... documentation of significantly restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. Also, (2) there must be extreme limits of one, or marked limits of two, of the following areas of mental functioning: understanding, remembering, or applying information; interacting with others; concentrating, persisting, or maintaining pace; and adapting or managing oneself.

We do not publish a hard copy of the Blue Book because we update the Listings online. You can find it at [Disability Evaluation Under Social Security \(ssa.gov\)](https://ssa.gov)

When Was the Last Time You Heard Someone Use the Word "Vicissitudes"?

Or perhaps the question should be ... *Have you ever heard anybody use the word 'vicissitudes'?* Well, it's probably been a while, so let's start with the Merriam-Webster definition:

"Vicissitudes are favorable or unfavorable events or situations that occur by chance; fluctuations of state or condition ..."

Now, enough of our little guessing game. Probably the most notable use of the word was by President Franklin Roosevelt on **August 14, 1935**:

"We can never insure one hundred percent of the population against one hundred percent of the hazards and vicissitudes of life, but we have tried to frame a law which will give some measure of protection to the average citizen and to his family against the loss of a job and against poverty-ridden old age."

By now you probably figured that, this being a Social Security newsletter and all, that FDR was speaking about the new Social Security Act that he signed into law 90 years ago. Yes, this month we mark 90 years!



Today, just under 70 million people receive monthly benefits – either retired or disabled workers, their families, or the families of deceased workers. The battle against life's vicissitudes continues!

[Social Security History](#)



Guard Your Card

You probably carry like a bazillion cards with you – credit cards, supermarket cards, health cards, and who knows what cards. But one card you shouldn't carry with you is your Social Security card. If it falls into the wrong hands, it can expose you to the major headache of identity theft.

Sometimes you do need to show your card to someone. But in many situations, you only need to know your Social Security number; you do not need to show the actual card. Let's review when you do not need to show your card.

Evidence for Work

Several documents can be used instead of your SSN card, such as a birth certificate, a permanent resident card or alien registration receipt, an employment authorization document, or form I-94 or form I-94A.

Evidence for Dept. of Motor Vehicles or driver license (REAL ID)

Pennsylvania is the only state that requires you to show your actual Social Security card. For all other states, acceptable evidence includes a W-2 form, pay stubs, form SSA-1099, or other types of 1099 forms.

Tax Purposes

You only need to know your SSN; you do not need to show your card.

Applying for various types of assistance

You should not need to show your card to apply for certain benefits. You can simply provide your SSN for benefits such as housing, health insurance, and food assistance.

Guard Your Card

If you need a replacement card, go to our [Social Security number & card | SSA page](#) and answer a few questions to determine the best way to apply. You may be able to start – and possibly complete – the process online. However, if you need to visit us, you may have the option to self-schedule an appointment online to show your required documents and finish the process. If you can't self-schedule, contact us to make an appointment.



Why So Many Different Pay Days?

People often wonder why some Social Security beneficiaries get their check on one day while others get theirs on a different day. It all comes down to **payment cycling**. Every month we make payments to **over 74 million people** under the Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) programs. For many years we paid Social Security to everyone on the third day of each month, with SSI recipients receiving their checks on the first of the month. At the beginning of the month, this check schedule resulted in an increasing and uneven workload pattern that negatively affected the public's ability to gain access to our local offices as well as getting through to our national toll-free 800 number. And with so many people receiving paper checks years ago, bank lines were very long on check day. In essence, everything was jammed up!

To improve service, SSA implemented payment cycling for Social Security beneficiaries whose claims were filed on or after May 1, 1997. Payment cycling provides payment days on multiple Wednesdays, with a person's day of birth determining their individual check day. Here's how it works:

<u>Day of Birth</u>	<u>Check Day</u>
Born from the 1 st to the 10 th	Second Wednesday
Born from the 11 st to the 20 th	Third Wednesday
Born from the 21 st to the 31 st	Fourth Wednesday

Beneficiaries cannot appeal the assignment of a payment day, as there is no provision to change it unless an error occurred that involved the person's day of birth.

When payment cycling began in 1997, it only affected people who were just starting to receive benefits. People who were already on the rolls continued to receive their benefit on the third of the month. Indeed, today about 32% of beneficiaries still receive on the third.

Payment cycling does not affect SSI payments.

SSI recipients always receive their benefit on the first of the month. If they also receive Social Security, they receive that check on the third rather than a Wednesday.

When the regular pay date is a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, we send Social Security benefits and SSI payments on the last business day before the weekend or holiday. This ensures that beneficiaries have access to their financial institutions on the day we pay their benefits.

Schedule of Social Security Benefit Payments - 2025

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