
42 U.S. Code § 403

Reduction of insurance benefits

(a) Maximum benefits

(1) In the case of an individual whose primary insurance amount has been computed or recomputed under section 415(a)(1) or (4) of this title, or section 415(d) of this title, as in effect after December 1978, the total monthly benefits to which beneficiaries may be entitled under section 402 or 423 of this title for a month on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of such individual shall, except as provided by paragraphs (3) and (6) (but prior to any increases resulting from the application of paragraph (2)(A)(ii)(III) of section 415(i) of this title), be reduced as necessary so as not to exceed—

(A) 150 percent of such individual's primary insurance amount to the extent that it does not exceed the amount established with respect to this subparagraph by paragraph (2),

(B) 272 percent of such individual's primary insurance amount to the extent that it exceeds the amount established with respect to subparagraph (A) but does not exceed the amount established with respect to this subparagraph by paragraph (2),

(C) 134 percent of such individual's primary insurance amount to the extent that it exceeds the amount established with respect to subparagraph (B) but does not exceed the amount established with respect to this subparagraph by paragraph (2), and

(D) 175 percent of such individual's primary insurance amount to the extent that it exceeds the amount established with respect to subparagraph (C).

Any such amount that is not a multiple of \$0.10 shall be decreased to the next lower multiple of \$0.10.

(2)

(A) For individuals who initially become eligible for old-age or disability insurance benefits, or who die (before becoming so eligible for such benefits), in the calendar year 1979, the amounts established with respect to subparagraphs (A), (B), and (C) of paragraph (1) shall be \$230, \$332, and \$433, respectively.

(B) For individuals who initially become eligible for old-age or disability insurance benefits, or who die (before becoming so eligible for such benefits), in any calendar year after 1979, each of the amounts so established shall equal the product of the corresponding amount established for the calendar year 1979 by subparagraph (A) of this paragraph and the quotient obtained under subparagraph (B)(ii) of section 415(a)(1) of this title, with such product being rounded in the manner prescribed by section 415(a)(1)(B)(iii) of this title.

(C) In each calendar year after 1978 the Commissioner of Social Security shall publish in the Federal Register, on or before November 1, the formula which (except as provided in section 415(i)(2)(D) of this title) is to be applicable under this paragraph to individuals who become eligible for old-age or disability insurance benefits, or who die (before becoming eligible for such benefits), in the following calendar year.

(D) A year shall not be counted as the year of an individual's death or eligibility for purposes of this paragraph or paragraph (8) in any case where such individual was entitled to a disability insurance benefit

for any of the 12 months immediately preceding the month of such death or eligibility (but there shall be counted instead the year of the individual's eligibility for the disability insurance benefits to which he was entitled during such 12 months).

(3)

(A) When an individual who is entitled to benefits on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of any insured individual and to whom this subsection applies would (but for the provisions of section 402(k)(2)(A) of this title) be entitled to child's insurance benefits for a month on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of one or more other insured individuals, the total monthly benefits to which all beneficiaries are entitled on the basis of such wages and self-employment income shall not be reduced under this subsection to less than the smaller of—

- (i) the sum of the maximum amounts of benefits payable on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of all such insured individuals, or
- (ii) an amount (I) initially equal to the product of 1.75 and the primary insurance amount that would be computed under section 415(a)(1) of this title, for January of the year determined for purposes of this clause under the following two sentences, with respect to average indexed monthly earnings equal to one-twelfth of the contribution and benefit base determined for that year under section 430 of this title, and (II) thereafter increased in accordance with the provisions of section 415(i)(2)(A)(ii) of this title.

The year established for purposes of clause (ii) shall be 1983 or, if it occurs later with respect to any individual, the year in which occurred the month that the application of the reduction provisions contained in this subparagraph began with respect to benefits payable on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of the insured individual. If for any month subsequent to the first month for which clause (ii) applies (with respect to benefits payable on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of the insured individual) the reduction under this subparagraph ceases to apply, then the year determined under the preceding sentence shall be redetermined (for purposes of any subsequent application of this subparagraph with respect to benefits payable on the basis of such wages and self-employment income) as though this subparagraph had not been previously applicable.

(B) When two or more persons were entitled (without the application of section 402(j)(1) of this title and section 423(b) of this title) to monthly benefits under section 402 or 423 of this title for January 1971 or any prior month on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of such insured individual and the provisions of this subsection as in effect for any such month were applicable in determining the benefit amount of any persons on the basis of such wages and self-employment income, the total of benefits for any month after January 1971 shall not be reduced to less than the largest of—

- (i) the amount determined under this subsection without regard to this subparagraph,
- (ii) the largest amount which has been determined for any month under this subsection for persons entitled to monthly benefits on the basis of such insured individual's wages and self-employment income, or
- (iii) if any persons are entitled to benefits on the basis of such wages and self-employment income for the month before the effective month (after September 1972) of a general benefit increase under this title (as defined in section 415(i)(3) of this title) or a benefit increase under the provisions of section 415(i) of this title, an amount equal to the sum of amounts derived by multiplying the benefit amount determined under this subchapter (excluding any part thereof determined under section 402(w) of this title) for the month before such effective month (including this subsection, but without the application of section 422(b) ^[1] of this title, section 402(q) of this title, and subsections (b), (c), and (d) of this section), for each such person for such month, by a percentage equal to the percentage of the increase provided under such benefit increase (with any such increased amount which is not a multiple of \$0.10 being rounded to the next lower

multiple of \$0.10);

but in any such case (I) subparagraph (A) of this paragraph shall not be applied to such total of benefits after the application of clause (ii) or (iii), and (II) if section 402(k)(2)(A) of this title was applicable in the case of any such benefits for a month, and ceases to apply for a month after such month, the provisions of clause (ii) or (iii) shall be applied, for and after the month in which section 402(k)(2)(A) of this title ceases to apply, as though subparagraph (A) of this paragraph had not been applicable to such total of benefits for the last month for which clause (ii) or (iii) was applicable.

(C) When any of such individuals is entitled to monthly benefits as a divorced spouse under section 402(b) or (c) of this title or as a surviving divorced spouse under section 402(e) or (f) of this title for any month, the benefit to which he or she is entitled on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of such insured individual for such month shall be determined without regard to this subsection, and the benefits of all other individuals who are entitled for such month to monthly benefits under section 402 of this title on the wages and self-employment income of such insured individual shall be determined as if no such divorced spouse or surviving divorced spouse were entitled to benefits for such month.

(D) In any case in which—

(i) two or more individuals are entitled to monthly benefits for the same month as a spouse under subsection (b) or (c) of section 402 of this title, or as a surviving spouse under subsection (e), (f), or (g) of section 402 of this title,

(ii) at least one of such individuals is entitled by reason of subparagraph (A)(ii) or (B) of section 416(h)(1) of this title, and

(iii) such entitlements are based on the wages and self-employment income of the same insured individual,

the benefit of the entitled individual whose entitlement is based on a valid marriage (as determined without regard to subparagraphs (A)(ii) and (B) of section 416(h)(1) of this title) to such insured individual shall, for such month and all months thereafter, be determined without regard to this subsection, and the benefits of all other individuals who are entitled, for such month or any month thereafter, to monthly benefits under section 402 of this title based on the wages and self-employment income of such insured individual shall be determined as if such entitled individual were not entitled to benefits for such month.

(4) In any case in which benefits are reduced pursuant to the provisions of this subsection, the reduction shall be made after any deductions under this section and after any deductions under section 422(b)¹ of this title. Notwithstanding the preceding sentence, any reduction under this subsection in the case of an individual who is entitled to a benefit under subsection (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), or (h) of section 402 of this title for any month on the basis of the same wages and self-employment income as another person—

(A) who also is entitled to a benefit under subsection (b), (c), (d), (e), (f), (g), or (h) of section 402 of this title for such month,

(B) who does not live in the same household as such individual, and

(C) whose benefit for such month is suspended (in whole or in part) pursuant to subsection (h)(3) of this section,

shall be made before the suspension under subsection (h)(3). Whenever a reduction is made under this subsection in the total of monthly benefits to which individuals are entitled for any month on the basis of the wages and self-employment income of an insured individual, each such benefit other than the old-age or disability insurance benefit shall be proportionately decreased.

(5) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, when—

(A) two or more persons are entitled to monthly benefits for a particular month on the basis of the wages and

self-employment income of an insured individual and (for such particular month) the provisions of this subsection are applicable to such monthly benefits, and

(B) such individual's primary insurance amount is increased for the following month under any provision of this subchapter,

then the total of monthly benefits for all persons on the basis of such wages and self-employment income for such particular month, as determined under the provisions of this subsection, shall for purposes of determining the total monthly benefits for all persons on the basis of such wages and self-employment income for months subsequent to such particular month be considered to have been increased by the smallest amount that would have been required in order to assure that the total of monthly benefits payable on the basis of such wages and self-employment income for any such subsequent month will not be less (after the application of the other provisions of this subsection and section 402(q) of this title) than the total of monthly benefits (after the application of the other provisions of this subsection and section 402(q) of this title) payable on the basis of such wages and self-employment income for such particular month.

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