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Social Security Benefits and Same Sex Couples

In a landmark case, on June 26, 2015 the U.S. Supreme



Court issued a decision stating that same-sex couples have a constitutional right to marry in all states and the District of Columbia. Essentially, this decision gives the same marriage rights to same-sex couples that heterosexual couples receive.

The 2015 decision came on the heels of an earlier 2013 ruling where the Court opened the door for same-sex married couples to have the same eligibility for federal benefits as traditional married couples. However, same-sex couples residing in states that did not recognize their marriage did not have that same opportunity until this year.

Effect of Recognizing Same-Sex Marriages on



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BLOG

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Social Security Benefits

The decision has profound implications for the financial aspects of marriage including taxes, IRAs and estate planning. There are also important eligibility changes for Social Security benefits.

Previously, same-sex couples did not qualify for spousal Social Security Retirement (SSR) or [Social Security Disability \(SSDI\) benefits](#) if the marriage wasn't legally recognized. With the marriages now considered legal, workers and spouses will have more options when applying for benefits. For example, a lower-earning spouse can have access to the higher-earning spouse's earning records.

Also, a spouse of a disabled worker who is collecting SSDI benefits may be able to receive a spousal disability benefit. This is valuable protection for a family whose major breadwinner is no longer able to work. Importantly, eligible children of same-sex couples now can receive SSR, SSDI and survivor benefits.

Status of Same-Sex Couples Social Security Applications

The Social Security Administration's [website](#) states that the agency is still working with the Department of Justice to analyze the Court's decision and provide more instructions for claimants.

Until then, applicants who believe they may be eligible for benefits are encouraged to [apply](#) right away.

Special Information for Those Receiving Supplemental Security Income

Same-sex marriages count in determining eligibility for [Supplemental Security Income](#) and the amount of payment. All changes including marital status must be [reported](#) to the Administration.

Navigating the complex Social Security system is a daunting task, especially if you have eligibility questions. Our firm has the right expertise to help you with your initial application or with any subsequent denial and appeal.

From My Blog

If you've suffered an [injury](#) at work that keeps you from returning to work for a long period of time, you can get support for your lost wages and medical bills through workers' compensation insurance. You should inform your employer that an accident happened,



that you were hurt, and that you plan on seeking out medical attention right away. Then, you can receive financial support as you recover.

Some types of injuries have symptoms that don't immediately need medical attention, but get worse over time. If you've suffered a head injury while working, you may only feel a little nauseous or dizzy. If you later develop more severe symptoms and can no longer work, it may prove challenging to receive workers' compensation benefits because you didn't immediately seek out medical attention. [Read more](#)

The Hollywood Bowl: A Treasured Landmark



One of Southern California's most sparkling gems is the [Hollywood Bowl](#). Besides being the seasonal home of both the Los Angeles

Philharmonic and the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra, it's a mecca for summer music in all genres and a public park and picnic ground.

The Bowl's humble origins began in a natural amphitheater known as the "Daisy Dell" Bolton Canyon. Its inaugural performance was at an Easter sunrise service in 1921 complete with makeshift wooden benches and a simple awning over the stage. Since then, virtually every renowned classical artist and conductor has performed at this stunning venue.

An early highlight at a 1938 performance of Wagner's opera *Die Walküre* included genuine fire and smoke along with costumed Valkyries riding white horses down the hillsides. Not to be outdone, coloratura Lily Pons set the attendance record in 1946 at 25,410 tickets! However, a different seating configuration and stricter fire regulations now keep the maximum seating level at a more manageable 17,376.

The Beatles' 1964 show where tickets sold out in 3 ½ hours saw hundreds of teenaged girls camping out on nearby streets. Since then, the [list](#) of stars and groups appearing at the Bowl reads like a virtual "Who's Who" of rock and roll.

Dance events have included Moscow's Bolshoi Ballet at the height of the Cold

War in 1967. At that same event, folk dance groups from Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia also performed and the lines of ticket buyers stretched from the box office down an adjacent street. Dance performances now showcase diverse companies including India, China, Mexico, Brazil and West Africa.

If you or a loved one has been denied [Worker's Compensation](#) or Social Security Disability (SSDI) benefits, it's important to get an attorney experienced in these types of cases involved immediately. **Call 800-438-7734** for your initial free consultation, either in our office or in the comfort of your own home. The Kenton Koszdin Law Office, [Social Security attorney in Van Nuys](#), can help you navigate the application process for the best possible outcome for you and your family.

Recipe of the Month:

Gingerbread–Pumpkin Yule Log



Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- Nonstick cooking spray for baking
- 1 cup all–purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ¼ teaspoon salt

- ½ cup granulated sugar or sugar substitute blend* equivalent to ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup canned pumpkin
- ¼ cup molasses
- Powdered sugar

- 1 recipe Pumpkin Cream Filling (see below)
- Fresh rosemary sprigs (optional)
- Fresh cranberries (optional)

Directions:

1. Allow eggs to stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, lightly coat a 15x10x1-inch baking pan with nonstick spray for baking. Line the bottom of the pan with waxed paper or parchment paper; coat with nonstick spray for baking. Set pan aside. In a small bowl, stir together flour, baking powder, pumpkin pie spice, and salt; set aside.

2. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large bowl, beat eggs with an electric mixer on high speed for 5 minutes. Gradually add granulated sugar, beating until well mixed. Stir in pumpkin and molasses. Fold in flour mixture. Spread batter evenly into prepared pan.

3. Bake about 15 minutes or until top springs back when lightly touched. Immediately loosen edges of cake from pan and turn cake out onto a towel sprinkled generously with powdered sugar. Slowly peel off waxed paper. Starting from a short side, roll up towel and cake into a spiral. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Meanwhile, prepare Pumpkin Cream Filling.

4. Unroll cake; remove towel. Spread cake with Pumpkin Cream Filling to

within 1 inch of edges. Roll up cake and filling into a spiral. Trim ends. Cover and chill for 2 to 48 hours before serving. To serve, place cake roll on a platter. If desired, garnish with rosemary sprigs and cranberries and sprinkle top with powdered sugar. Makes 10 servings.

Pumpkin Cream Filling

Ingredients

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup canned pumpkin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups frozen light whipped topping, thawed

Directions:

1. In a medium bowl, combine pumpkin and ground ginger. Fold in thawed frozen light whipped dessert topping.

Recipe Courtesy of: DiabeticLivingOnline.com

What's Happening in Southern California in December 2015

Dec. 1 – 6, 2015

Riverdance
Hollywood Pantages, Hollywood

Dec. 12, 2015

Jingle Bell Run/Walk
Balboa Park, San Diego

Dec. 1 – 12, 2015

Shrek, The Musical
Morgan Wixson Theatre, Santa Monica

Dec. 1 – 25, 2015

Holidays at Universal CityWalk
CityWalk Hollywood, Universal City

Dec. 3 – 6, 2015

Black Girl: Linguistic Play
REDCAT, Walt Disney Concert Hall
Complex, LA

Dec. 4 – 6, 2015

Harvest Festival Original Art & Craft
Show
Fairplex, LA

Dec. 5, 2015

San Diego Steam Maker Festival
Del Mar Fairgrounds

Dec. 5, 2015

Miracle on Anaheim Street
Long Beach Playhouse

Dec. 5 – 20, 2015

The Santaland Diaries
Santa Monica Playhouse

Dec. 5 – 20, 2015

Master Chorale Christmas Events
Walt Disney Concert Hall, LA

Dec. 5 – 20, 2015

All About Santa
Santa Monica Playhouse

Dec. 12, 2015

Upperclassmen Holiday Spectacular
The Studio Collaborative, Long
Beach Playhouse

Dec. 12 – 13, 2015

Echo Park Craft Fair
Mack Sennett Studios, LA

Dec. 12 – 13, 2015

Renegade Craft Fair
Grand Park, Downtown, LA

Dec. 13, 2015

San Diego Bay Parade of Lights
Shelter Island to Ferry Landing, San
Diego

Dec. 13 – 15, 2015

The International Music Festival
Conference
Sheraton San Diego Hotel & Marina,
San Diego

Dec. 20, 2015

Holidays with Bach
The Broad Stage, Santa Monica

Dec. 24, 2015

LA County Holiday Celebration
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, LA

Dec. 6, 2015

German Christmas Market
7561 Center Ave, Huntington Beach

Dec. 8 – 31, 2015

Idina Menzel: If/Then
Hollywood Pantages, Hollywood

Dec. 9 – 14, 2015

Disney on Ice: Frozen
Staples Center, LA

Dec. 27, 2015

3rd Annual San Diego Holiday Half
Marathon 2015
Penasquitos Drive, San Diego

Dec. 31, 2015

New Year's Eve Musical Revue
Santa Monica Playhouse

Dec. 31, 2015

The San Diego Tango Festival
Kona Kai Resort & Marina, San
Diego



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