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**SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA
WORKERS'
COMPENSATION
BLOG**

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Can My Social Security Disability Benefit Amount Change?

If you or a family member is receiving Social Security Disability (SSDI) benefits, you should be aware of a few scenarios that may change the amount of your payments.

Annual Cost of Living Increases

Every year, the cost of living is evaluated and, if appropriate, SSDI and other Social Security Administration

(SSA) payments are increased. 2017's increase of 0.3% is the smallest in the program's history, except for a few years when there was no increase. Increases are mandated by law and based on a Consumer Price Index as provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Working While Receiving SSDI Benefits

Under certain circumstances, you are able to work and receive SSDI benefits at the same time. However, if you work above a level that the SSA considers "substantial," your SSDI benefits will eventually stop. For 2017 the amount that is considered "substantial" will be \$1,170 per month (\$1,950 for those who are blind). If you earn more than those thresholds, the SSA will deem you as no longer disabled.

If you plan on returning to work, the SSA provides a Trial Work Period where you can try working for as much as 9 months and still receive your SSDI benefits. You can learn more at the SSA's brochure Working While Disabled.

SSDI Continuing Disability Reviews

Because many conditions that prevent you from working can improve over time, the SSA reviews SSDI cases periodically to ensure that you are still unable to work because of your disability.

The period between continuing disability reviews varies based on whether your chance of medical improvement is expected, possible or not expected. If at any review the SSA determines that you are able to return to work, your SSDI benefits will stop. Read more in the SSA brochure on disability reviews.

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Receiving Other Public, State or Federal Disability or Pension Benefits

If you become eligible for certain benefits your SSDI payments may be reevaluated. The applicable benefits include disability or pension benefits from public, state or federal programs as well as Workers' Compensation and benefits derived from civil service employment.

Reaching Full Retirement Age

Upon reaching full retirement age, your SSDI benefits will be converted to Social Security retirement benefits; the amount will remain the same.

From My Blog:

Social Security Administration Unclear on Same Sex Benefits

It has been about six months since same-sex marriage became the law of the land. Yet, there are still legal hoops for same-sex couples to jump through. The Social Security Administration has still not implemented changes regarding benefit eligibility for same-sex spouses. Many are now caught in legal limbo regarding same-sex eligibility and retroactive spousal benefits.

Spousal benefits are an important part of Social Security. So, it is crucial for the SSA to get this right. Difficult cases that must be determined include same-sex married couples that want to seek benefits back to the date they originally filed, even if that date was before their state recognized their marriage. The SSA also has to determine what to do with widowed spouses who were married before the Supreme Court ruling. Read the rest »

<http://www.kentonslawoffice.com/blog/social-security-claims-process/social-security-administration-unclear-same-sex-benefits>



History of Our Colorful Tournament of Roses Parade

We are very fortunate to have here in California one of the most colorful and historical parades in the U.S.

Today's Tournament of Roses Parade complete with elaborate, computer-animated floats had a humble beginning. Back in the winter of 1890, Pasadena's Valley Hunt Club wanted to promote their beautiful region as the "Mediterranean of the West" with an event that included races, games, polo and tug of war. The club added a parade showcasing carriages decorated with hundreds of blooms to celebrate the abundance of fresh flowers available here year round.

Over the years the festival expanded to include motorized floats, marching bands, games with exotic animal races and bronco busting demonstrations. As the event grew, in 1895 the Tournament of Roses Association was formed to handle the expanding celebration.



Although traditionally on New Year's Day, the 2017 parade will be on Monday, January 2 as no parades are held on Sunday. Whether you watch it live on Pasadena's Colorado Boulevard or from the comfort of your couch, here are a few amazing facts about our beautiful and unique Rose Parade:

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- All float surfaces must be covered in natural materials like flowers, plants, seaweed, bark, nuts, seeds or vegetables and no artificial materials are allowed.
- It takes 30 roses to cover just one square foot! You'll see approximately 18 million blooms in the parade.
- This year's Grand Marshalls will be Olympic athletes Greg Louganis, Janet Evans and Allyson Felix.
- Choosing a Rose Queen and her Court is a 90-year old tradition.
- Participating marching bands are chosen two years in advance.
- Equestrians are always a big part of the parade. Watch for the famous Budweiser Clydesdales and miniature therapy horses from Ohio.

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 **Herbed Chicken & Spinach Soup**

Enjoy this hearty soup for dinner -- let your crockpot do the work!

Ingredients

- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 can (16 ounces) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 14-1/2 ounces chicken broth
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 medium sweet red pepper, chopped
- 1 celery rib, chopped
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh rosemary or 1/4 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh thyme or 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 3 cups fresh baby spinach
- 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese



Directions

In a 3-qt. slow cooker, combine the first 13 ingredients. Cover and cook on low for 4-5 hours or until chicken is tender. Stir in spinach; cook 30 minutes longer or until spinach is wilted. Top with cheese. Yield: 4 servings.

Recipe courtesy of tasteofhome.com

Can My Social Security Disability Benefit Amount Change?



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This newsletter is intended to educate the general public about probate, trusts, wills, and other issues. It is for information purpose only and should not be constructed as legal advice. Prior to acting on any information contained in this publication, you should consult with experienced, competent counsel regarding your specific situation.

What's Happening in VanNuys & Southern California

Jan 1 - 21

The King & I
Hollywood Pantages Theatre
Los Angeles, CA
<http://hollywoodpantages.com/showinfo.php?id=70>

Jan 2

Coronado Kayak Tour
Ferry Landing Marketplace
San Diego, CA
<http://sandiego.eventful.com/events/coronado-kayak-tour/-E0-001-069670975-2@2017010213>

Jan 2

128th Rose Parade
Orange Grove Blvd. & Colorado Blvd
Pasadena, CA
<https://www.tournamentofroses.com/events/roseparade>

Jan 20

Jefferson Starship
The Rose
Pasadena, CA
<http://losangeles.eventful.com/events/jefferson-starship/-E0-001-097703181-9>

Jan 21

R&B Rewind Festival
Microsoft Theatre
Los Angeles, CA
<http://losangeles.eventful.com/events/rb-rewind-festival/-E0-001-096425521-5>

Jan 21

The Peking Acrobats
Richard & Karen Carpenter Center
Long Beach, CA
<http://www.discoverlosangeles.com/what-to-do/events/peking-acrobats-4>

Jan 22

Styx
Saban Theatre
Beverly Hills, CA
<http://losangeles.eventful.com/events/styx/-E0-001-096946389-1>

Jan 24 - 29

Rent
Hollywood Pantages Theatre
Los Angeles, CA
<http://hollywoodpantages.com/showinfo.php?id=83>