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*The development of this resource was funded by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services**as part of the* ***Wisconsin Disability Benefits Network*** *Initial Training for Work Incentive Benefit Specialists.*

# Wisconsin State SSI Supplements

Wisconsin State Supplemental Security Income (SSI) is available to all Wisconsin residents who get at least $1 in federal SSI. This payment is automatic. This means that there is no separate application for this benefit. If someone is found eligible for at least $1 of federal SSI from Social Security, they will automatically also be eligible for the State SSI Supplement.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Federal Payment | State Payment |
| Eligible Individual | $914 | $83.78 |
| Eligible Couple | $1,371 | $132.05 |
| Couple—One Spouse Eligible | $914 | $130.43 |

Below are the Wisconsin State Supplement amounts for 2023:

## Independent Living

## Living In the Household of Another

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Federal Payment | State Payment |
| Eligible Individual | $609.34 | $83.78 |
| Eligible Couple | $914 | $132.05 |
| Couple—One Spouse Eligible | $609.34 | $135.05 |

The Wisconsin State Supplement payments are all-or-nothing payments. A person is either eligible to get the payment, or they are not eligible. In some situations, the payment may be lowered because some is being withheld each month to collect an overpayment in the State Supplement.

Wisconsin State Supplement payments never factor into the Federal SSI payment calculations.

## State of Wisconsin SSI Exceptional Expense Supplement (SSI-E)

### What is SSI-E?

The State of Wisconsin SSI Exceptional Expense Supplement (SSI-E or E Supp) is a cash payment. It is for certain eligible Wisconsin SSI recipients. The payment gives eligible people an extra payment of $95.99. This $95.99 payment is combined with the State of Wisconsin SSI Basic Supplement of $83.78. The total state supplement was $179.77 in 2023.

### Who is eligible for SSI-E benefits?

There are two ways someone can be eligible for SSI-E. They’re called eligibility groups. Both groups must be certified for SSI-E by a certifying agency. The following are known certifying agencies for adults:

* Individuals seeking LTC Services – ADRCs
* Family Care enrolled member – MCO
* IRIS enrolled member – ICA
* Individuals in a Behavioral Health target group – County Behavioral Health staff

The **first eligibility group** is made up of people who meet **both** of the following two criteria.

1. The SSI recipient must have expenses that are more than the SSI-E payment level

($914.00 + $83.78 + $95.99 = $1,093.77 in 2023)

2. The person must live in one of the following licensed or certified facilities:

1. Licensed family or group foster home for children
2. Licensed or certified adult family/foster home
3. Community-based residential facility (CBRF) of 20 beds or less (with some exceptions)
4. Certified residential care apartment complex (RCAC)

The **second eligibility group** for SSI-E is SSI recipients who meet **all** of the following three criteria:

1. Live in their own household or another's household
2. Pay their share of household expenses
3. Show the need for at least 40 hours of primary long-term support services each month through a functional screen and F-20817 (Assessment Worksheet for Natural Residential Setting).

Note: the primary long-term support hours are counted based on the recipient’s situation. For example:

* For a child living with their parents, only the hours of support when the parent(s) is away can be used towards the 40 hour requirement, unless the parent is physically or mentally unable to care for the child.
* For a person living with a spouse, only hours needed when the spouse is away will be counted, unless they are unable to care for their spouse.

### How do SSI recipients apply for SSI-E?

Unlike the Basic State Supplement, people need to apply for SSI-E. It is not automatic. SSI recipients who wish to apply for SSI-E should contact a certifying agency to get help applying for SSI-E.

They may also be able to contact their county human services department directly to ask for an assessment for SSI-E. The certifying agency will help them get an assessment. This determines if the SSI recipient meets SSI-E eligibility criteria. Applicants will be told in writing of the agency's decision.

The certifying agency sends approved applications to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) State SSI Program. Then, the applicant's State SSI Supplement payment will increase.

Many care management, independent living, or community treatment agencies have SSI-E application materials. They can help someone complete them and submit them to the certifying agency.

### Resources:

* [**Wisconsin DHS SSI-E website**](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/ssi/ssi_e.htm)
* [**SSI-E Handbook**](http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/ssi-e)

## Caretaker Supplement

The state of Wisconsin offers a cash benefit to federal SSI recipients who care for and live with their minor children. This benefit is called the **Caretaker Supplement, C-Sup, or CTS**. The Caretaker Supplement is $275 for the first eligible child and $165 for each additional eligible child. This is in addition to the Basic State Supplement of $83.78.

A person may be eligible for the Caretaker Supplement if they are getting at least $1 in federal SSI. There are extra non-financial and financial eligibility requirements someone must meet to get this cash payment.

### Non-Financial Eligibility

To be non-financially eligible for the Caretaker Supplement, a person must:

* Be receiving at least $1 of federal SSI
* Be a Wisconsin resident
* Live in a qualifying living arrangement
* Be the primary caretaker of their son or daughter who is 18 or younger
* Provide Social Security Number
* Cooperate with Child Support agencies
* Not be receiving W-2 payments
* Verify all income of the children

In addition, to be non-financially eligible for the Caretaker Supplement, the children of the SSI recipient must:

* Be a Wisconsin resident
* Reside with their SSI parent
* Be a U.S. citizen or qualifying immigrant
* Provide their Social Security Number
* Be under 18 years or age, or if age 18, be enrolled in secondary school and expected to graduate before turning 19.
* Not be receiving SSI

Find more information about the non-financial requirements for the Caretaker Supplement in chapter 3.1 of the [**CTS Handbook**](http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/cts/).

### Financial Eligibility

There are also financial eligibility criteria for a person to be eligible for the Caretaker Supplement. A household must meet both Gross and Net Income Tests. Certain types of income (such as SSI income and Child Support income) are not counted.

There is also an asset test for eligibility. The asset limit is $1,000 (not including assets of SSI recipients).

Find more information about financial eligibility in chapter 3.2 of the [**CTS**](http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/cts/)[**Handbook**](http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/cts/).

### Application

People can apply for the Caretaker Supplement at local county or tribal economic support offices or online: [**Caretaker Supplement Application**](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forms1/F2/F22571.pdf).

### Appeals

Individuals have a right to request a hearing for decisions they disagree with about the Caretaker Supplement. Individuals must ask for a hearing within 45 days after getting the decision. Requests must be addressed to:

Department of Administration

Division of Hearings and Appeals

P.O. Box 7875

Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7875

### Resources:

[**More information about the Caretaker Supplement**](http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/ssi/caretaker.htm)

# Wisconsin State-Only Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Before January 1996, Social Security administered the Wisconsin state supplements for people getting SSI. A person’s countable income was compared to the Federal Benefit Rate **plus** the Wisconsin State Supplement amount.

The state supplement was not an all-or-nothing payment. People could get some of the state supplement payment if their countable income was:

* **More** than the SSI maximum federal payment
* **Less than** the SSI maximum payment plus the State Supplement amount

This meant that some people got federal SSI plus the state supplement money, while others got only a portion of the state supplement.

Wisconsin decided to change this policy in January 1996. Then, people could get the state supplement if they were getting at least $1 of federal SSI. Wisconsin did not want to cause a loss of cash benefits and Medicaid for those getting only a portion of the state supplement (who were not eligible for any federal SSI). These people were protected through the creation of the **State-Only SSI** program. This group is also sometimes called “Grandfathered Eligibility Status.” Around 17,500 people got continued eligibility for state SSI cash benefits and Medicaid.

Ongoing State-Only SSI payments are all-or-nothing payments. A person’s payment amount is based on what their payment was at the time of the rule change. These amounts are not adjusted. There are both non-financial and financial eligibility criteria that must be met for someone to stay eligible for State-Only SSI benefits.

## Non-financial eligibility

To be non-financially eligible for State-Only SSI, a person must:

1. Be grandfathered as a State-Only SSI recipient in December 1995
2. Live in Wisconsin
3. Live in an SSI allowable living arrangement (based on federal SSI rules)
4. Have a disability determination
5. Complete the State-Only SSI Annual Eligibility Review

If someone continues to meet these criteria, they will be non-financially eligible for State-Only SSI.

## Financial eligibility

State-Only SSI has both asset and income limits for eligibility.

#### Asset Limit

People who get state-only SSI have the same asset limits as federal SSI recipients. To stay eligible, countable assets must be less than:

* $2,000 for an individual
* $3,000 for a couple

Assets that are excluded for federal SSI (for example, one vehicle, and a home that someone owns and lives in) are also excluded for State-Only SSI.

#### Income Limit

An individual can lose eligibility for State-Only SSI if their countable income is more than the State-Only SSI Countable Income Threshold of $1,093.77 (2023). The State-Only Countable Income Threshold is determined by the following:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| $914.00 | SSI Federal Benefit Rate (2023) |
| +$ 83.78 | WI Basic State Supplement  WI SSI-E |
| **$1,093.77** | **2023 Countable Income Threshold** |

Countable income for State-Only SSI is calculated the same way as countable income for the federal SSI program. The same SSI income exclusions apply to State-Only SSI.

For State-Only SSI, **only the income of the recipient is considered when calculating countable income. A spouse’s income is not counted for State-Only SSI countable income calculations.**

Like federal SSI, if a person has countable **unearned income** that is more than $1,093.77 (for 2023), they will lose payments and Medicaid. They are not eligible for State-Only SSI in this situation. The State-Only SSI Program reviews the unearned income received by each State-Only SSI recipient from SSA data and the State Data Exchange (SDX and BENDEX).

If a person’s **earned income** causes the total countable income to exceed the State-Only Countable Income Threshold, payments will also stop. However, a person who is not eligible for a State-Only payment due to countable earned income will stay eligible for Medicaid through the Continued Medicaid Eligibility 1619(b) work incentive.

The **Continued Medicaid Eligibility 1619(b)** annual income thresholds for federal SSI also apply to State-Only SSI recipients. A person may be able to establish a higher individual annual threshold if they have exceptional medical expenses.

Earned income is monitored yearly through reviews done by the State-Only SSI Program.

**State-Only SSI Example**: Ryan gets a Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) monthly payment of $820. He also gets a State-only SSI payment of $55. Ryan also recently began working 10 hours per week at $8 per hour. Is he still eligible for his State-Only SSI payment? 1619(b) Medicaid?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| $820 | Unearned Income (SSDI) |
| - $20 | General Income Exclusion |
| **$800** | **Countable Unearned Income** |
| $344 | Gross Earned Income |
| - $65 | Earned Income Exclusion |
| $279 | Earned Income Exclusion Continued |
| ÷ 2 | **Countable Earned Income** |
| $800.00 | Countable Unearned Income |
| + $139.50 | Countable Earned Income |
| **$939.50** | **Total Countable Income** |

Ryan’s total countable income ($939.50) is less than the 2023 State-Only Countable Income Threshold. He is still eligible for his State-only SSI payment. His Medicaid continues.

## Termination of State-Only SSI

A recipient could lose State-Only SSI if they stay in nonpayment status for more than 12 months in a row.

## Resources:

Find more information on State-Only SSI in section 3.1 in the [**SSI Administration Handbook**.](http://www.emhandbooks.wi.gov/ssi-admin/)

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