



Independence through employment

Does having a disability mean you cannot work?

Under current Supplemental Security Income (SSI) rules, an individual with a disability must prove they cannot work to be eligible for benefits, including health care and other independent living supports.

After an SSI award, available work incentives are difficult to navigate and little used. Many youth and families think work will risk access to health care, personal care services, and the reliability of their monthly SSI check.

CareerACCESS offers an alternative for SSI eligible youth to escape poverty and dependence. The CareerACCESS goal is to make it easy to work. A young adult working with a Career Coach would develop an Individualized Career Plan to achieve personal and professional goals.

CareerACCESS rules would allow increased earnings and remove asset limits.

CareerACCESS will be piloted in several states to serve individuals up to the age of 30. SSI eligible youth from age **18** to **28** will automatically enter CareerACCESS.

- **Eligibility** will NOT require an “incapacity to work” test.
- **Adult Coaching, Counseling, and Employment Support Services** will be managed through an Individualized Career Plan to increase success.
- **Health Care and Independent Living Supports** will remain available.
- **SSI Cash Benefit Retention and Removal of Asset Limits** will offset the cost of managing a disability while building a career.

Young adults in CareerACCESS may decide to opt out or return to the current SSI benefits program at any time. CareerACCESS will not change the SSI definition of disability currently used for blind individuals and it makes no changes in the SSI benefits currently available to blind individuals.

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