

Visited on 07/14/2017

Social Security

Determinations Of Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)

Automatic
Determinations

SGA for the Blind—applies to Social Security benefits, but does *not* apply to Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits

Substantial gainful
activity amounts

The formula for determining the SGA amount for the blind is set by law and is applicable only if a cost-of-living increase becomes effective for December of the year in which a determination of the SGA amount would ordinarily be made. Because there is a cost-of-living increase for December 2016, the formula can be applied.

Wage-indexed
amounts

According to the formula, the monthly SGA amount for statutorily blind individuals for 2017 is such SGA amount for 1994 multiplied by the ratio of the national average wage index for 2015 to that for 1992, or, *if larger*, such SGA amount for 2016 (\$1,820). If the amount so calculated is not a multiple of \$10, we round it to the nearest multiple of \$10.

Calculation details

Amounts in formula	1994 monthly SGA amount	\$930
	1992 average wage index	22,935.42
	2015 average wage index	48,098.63
Computation	\$930 times (48,098.63 divided by 22,935.42) equals \$1,950.33, which rounds to \$1,950	
Higher amount	\$1,950 exceeds the corresponding amount for 2016, so the amount for 2017 is \$1,950	

SGA for the Non-Blind Disabled—applies to Social Security and SSI benefits

The method used to adjust the SGA for non-blind individuals is similar to that used for blind individuals and was published in the *Federal Register* (FR 65 82905) on December 29, 2000. The monthly SGA

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amount for non-blind disabled individuals for 2017 is such SGA amount for 2000 multiplied by the ratio of the national average wage index for 2015 to that for 1998, or, *if larger* such SGA amount for 2016 (\$1,130). If the amount so calculated is not a multiple of \$10, we round it to the nearest multiple of \$10.

Calculation details

Amounts in formula	2000 monthly SGA amount	\$700
	1998 average wage index	28,861.44
	2015 average wage index	48,098.63
Computation	\$700 times (48,098.63 divided by 28,861.44) equals \$1,166.58, which rounds to \$1,170	
Higher amount	\$1,170 exceeds the corresponding amount for 2016, so the amount for 2017 is \$1,170	