

Social Security Helps Survivors of Fallen Military Service Members

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Families of fallen military service members bear significant burdens from the loss of their loved one. Lives are changed forever. Aside from the emotional devastation, the financial hardships placed on such families can be difficult. Often, if a death occurs, a two-income household must make do with one income.

Social Security provides income for surviving families of military service members.

Monthly Social Security benefits may be paid to widows or widowers and unmarried children who are younger than age 18 (or up to age 19 if they are attending elementary or secondary school full time). Benefits may be payable to biological and adopted children, stepchildren, grandchildren, or step grandchildren. In addition, under certain circumstances, dependent parents also may qualify.

Almost 2 million children receive Social Security survivors benefits with an average benefit payment of about \$750 a month. That's nearly one and a half billion dollars a month in survivors benefits for children.

More than 4.3 million surviving spouses and parents receive survivors benefits with an average monthly payment of about 1,100. That's more than 4.7 billion dollars a month in survivors benefits for spouses and parents.

You can apply for survivors benefits by telephone or at any Social Security office. To learn more about survivor's benefits, read our publication, *Survivors Benefits*. You can find it online at www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/10084.html or call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) and ask that a copy be mailed to you.

We at Social Security can never replace the love and life that has been lost. But we can and do honor armed forces members who have made the ultimate sacrifice, and in many cases, we're able to help families financially. On Memorial Day and every day, Social Security holds the highest respect for all who have given their lives in defense of our nation.