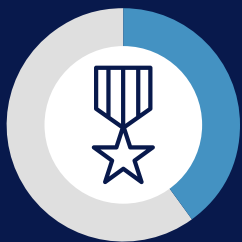


GEORGIA VETERANS

SOCIAL SECURITY & SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME

INTRODUCTION

For 90 years, Social Security has been the foundation of economic security for retired and disabled Americans and their families, including veterans. Social Security is part of the contract our government made with everyone in the workforce, including those who served in the military. Under the Trump administration, cuts to Social Security's staffing, local offices and, most surprisingly, funding are threatening to break that contract. Georgia's veterans worked hard for this country and earned their Social Security benefits. To honor their sacrifice, we must protect Social Security.



MORE THAN 4 IN 10 GEORGIA
VETERANS RELY ON SOCIAL
SECURITY.

PRODUCED BY:



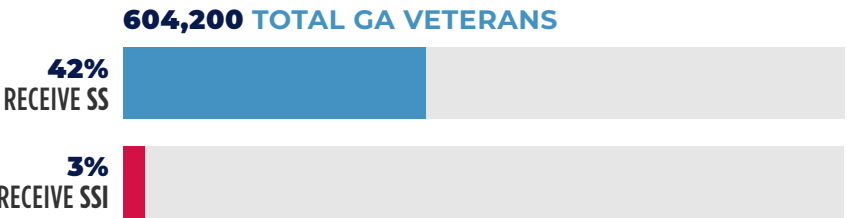
GROUNDING FACTS:

Georgia's Veterans Rely on Social Security

About 604,200 veterans live in Georgia. When they signed up to serve, the earned benefit of Social Security was part of their contract with the U.S. government.

More Than Four in Ten Georgia Veterans Receive Social Security

Forty-two percent of Georgia veterans – 251,000 vets – receive income from Social Security, such as retirement benefits or disability benefits. About 18,100 veterans receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which supports low-income people with disabilities.



One in Seven Georgia Veterans Are Women

About 77,700 of Georgia's veterans are women – one in eight Georgia veterans – with 21 percent receiving Social Security income.

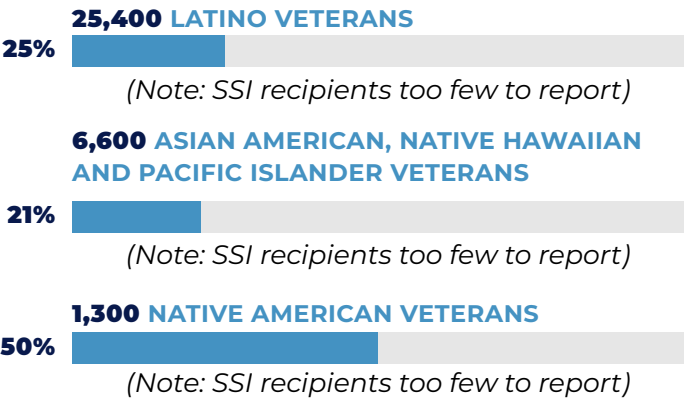
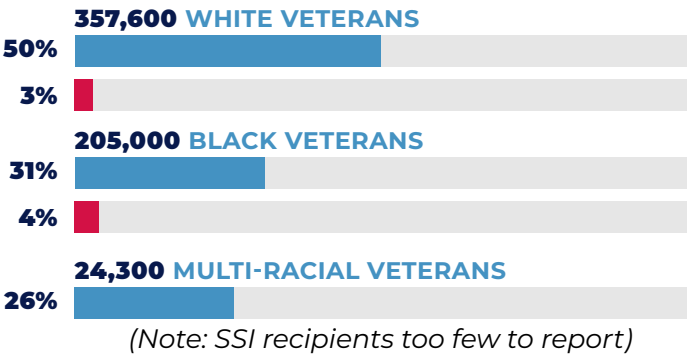


(Note: SSI recipients too few to report)

CONTEXT: Social Security and SSI are especially important for women, who tend to be paid less over a lifetime due to time spent out of the workforce for caregiving, discrimination and other factors.¹

Social Security Is a Promise to All Veterans

Georgia's veterans are diverse, and veterans in every racial/ethnic group have earned their Social Security benefits.



CONTEXT: For generations, military service has represented an important pathway toward fair treatment, opportunity and belonging for communities of color that faced discrimination in many other careers.² Today's military and veterans are increasingly diverse.³

Even Before Retirement Age, Veterans Depend on Social Security

Fifty-two percent of Georgia's veterans are under the age of 62 (the youngest age someone can start claiming Social Security retirement benefits). Veterans under 62 make up 40 percent of all veterans who receive SSI.



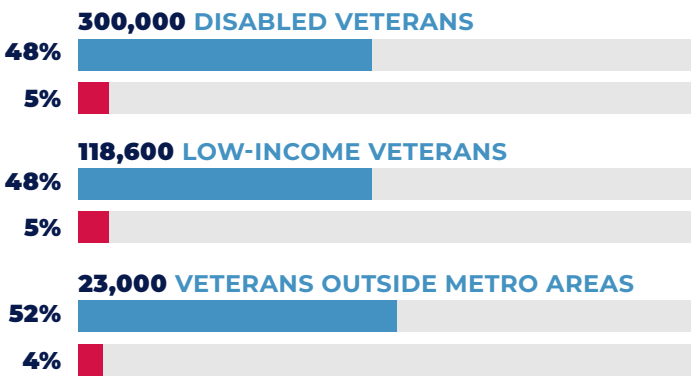
DEEP DIVE:

How Specific Factors Shape Veterans' Experience

For veterans, Social Security is the cornerstone of economic stability amid a rising cost of living. The benefits they earned through service are especially vital for disabled veterans, those with low incomes and those living outside of major metropolitan areas.

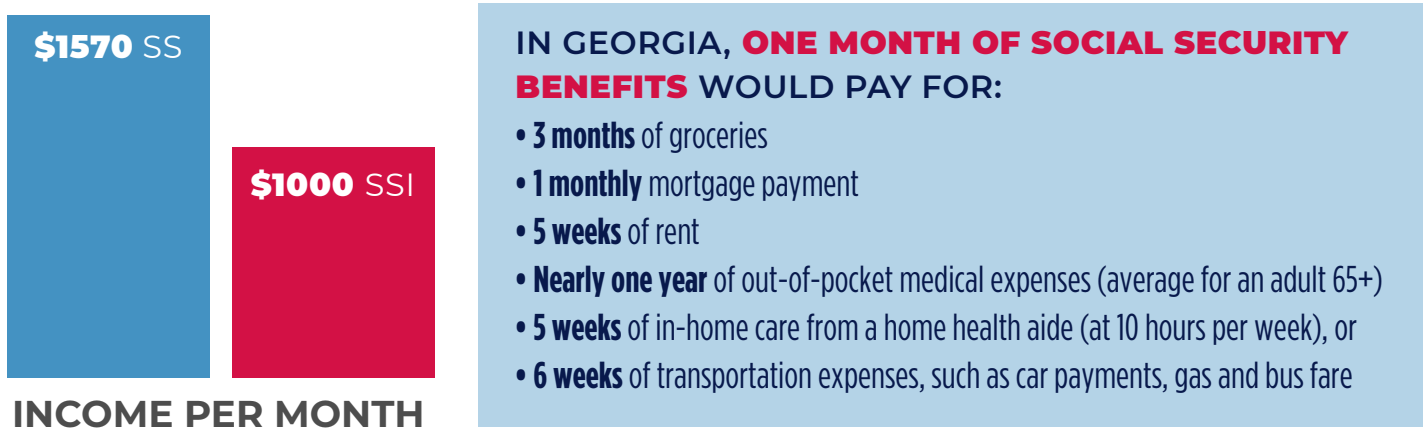
Social Security Supports Large Shares of Disabled, Low-Income & Rural Veterans

More than half of rural veterans and nearly half of veterans with disabilities (including those with service-connected disabilities and non-service-connected disabilities) and low-income veterans receive Social Security. These groups can face barriers including higher medical costs, fewer providers where they live and longer travel to VA and other health care providers on top of everyday cost of living challenges.⁴



Without Social Security, Veterans Could Struggle to Make Ends Meet

For a veteran who is not in the labor force (for example, retired or not working due to disability), a typical monthly Social Security check is about \$1,570, amounting to half of their income, and a typical SSI check is just \$1,000. A late or lost check could mean disaster for household budgets that are already stretched thin.



STORIES FROM THE FIELD:

Personal Stories of Veterans' Experience



Ed Anderson

Ed Anderson says that Veterans Affairs (VA) saved his life over 25 years ago by providing him with specialized mental health care that civilian therapists were not able to. Now today, as both a veteran and former school teacher, Ed is finding that many of his health care benefits — through both private insurance and the VA — have been disrupted after retirement. Ed says that VA services are noticeably slower, with appointment delays and longer prescription wait times. Veterans Affairs is the world's largest and most specialized health care system and serves a unique population, and older veterans, like Ed, have endured a "triple whammy" of cuts to VA services alongside cuts to Social Security, and Medicare and Medicaid. The veteran population is aging, and yet the Trump Administration wants to privatize the VA which would only further erode benefits and vastly downgrade its quality of care. The impact might not be immediate for some, but, Ed says to "give it time and you will be impacted by the depths of these cuts that are being made."

STORIES FROM THE FIELD:

Continued



“A person’s quality of care shouldn’t be based on their zip code. We have proudly served our country and that service should be honored. Our government must keep its promise to fully fund Social Security and the VA. Both of these programs are lifelines for seniors like me and we rely on them to live with dignity.”

Donna Wesley

As a retired federal employee and Air Force veteran who has proudly served her country for most of her adult life, Donna Wesley believes it’s shameful that she is facing so many challenges accessing health care despite having both Veterans Affairs (VA) benefits and Social Security. On top of the problems with the system – staff shortages, long wait times, poor communication – Donna now has to worry about whether she’s being treated differently because of how she votes. Donna says the Trump administration is politicizing the benefits she and many others have worked hard for and it’s not right. As a senior and veteran, Donna has already experienced significant barriers to care, such as long waits for mammograms and pap smears, despite being high-risk. Donna’s brother, who is also a veteran, also struggled accessing cancer care and mental health support, and Donna’s ex-husband, an Air Force veteran, recently died because he was waiting on a transplant list. Despite these challenges, Donna remains hopeful that the system can change for the better. She is grateful for the staff and caregivers who supported the family during her ex-husband’s illness. Donna has recently visited the Pike County VA and shares that the communication and care she received are positive examples of what’s possible at other facilities.

APPENDIX:

Methodology

The data analysis uses the 2019-2023 American Community Survey accessed via [IPUMS USA, University of Minnesota](#). We use a five-year dataset to have a sufficient sample size to analyze state-level data. Racial groups include people who identify as Latino and/or Hispanic and Latinos may be of any race. People are identified as having a disability in this analysis if they responded that they have difficulty in one or more of the following six realms: vision, hearing, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care and independent living. People may have multiple disabilities. This is a limited definition of disability that excludes a portion of disabled people. While people across the income spectrum may have difficulty making ends meet, in this analysis we define “low-income” as having household income below 200 percent of the federal poverty line.

	Total population	Receives Social Security Population	Share	Receives SSI Population	Share
Nonveterans	7,831,100	1,357,300	17%	230,500	2.9%
Veterans	604,200	251,000	42%	18,100	3.0%
Men veterans	526,500	234,900	45%	16,300	3.1%
Women nonveterans	77,700	16,000	21%	1,800	2.3%
Native American veterans	1,300	700	50%	*	*
Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander veterans	6,600	1,400	21%	*	*
Black veterans	205,000	62,700	31%	8,200	4.0%
Latino veterans	25,400	6,300	25%	*	*
Multiracial veterans	24,300	6,200	26%	*	*
White veterans	357,600	177,700	50%	8,800	2.5%
Low income veterans (below 200% federal poverty line)	118,600	56,500	48%	6,200	5.2%
Metro area veterans	412,100	156,800	38%	11,800	2.9%
Nonmetro area veterans	23,000	11,900	52%	900	4.1%
Disabled veterans	300,000	143,300	48%	13,800	4.6%
Under 62 veterans	314,000	14,000	4%	7,300	2.3%
62 and older veterans	290,200	237,000	82%	10,800	3.7%

Source: National Partnership for Women & Families analysis using American Community Survey 2019-2023 five-year dataset via IPUMS.org. Racial groups include people who identify as Latino and/or Hispanic and Latinos may be of any race.

APPENDIX:

Methodology

- ¹ National Partnership for Women & Families. (2025, March). *America's Women and the Wage Gap*. Retrieved 7 August 2025, from <https://nationalpartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/americas-women-and-the-wage-gap.pdf>
- ² Congressional Research Service. (2019, June 5). Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Armed Services: Background and Issues for Congress. Retrieved 7 August 2025, from <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/R44321.pdf>. See also Library of Congress. (n.d.) *Legacies of Service: Celebrating Native Americans*. Retrieved 7 August 2025, from <https://www.loc.gov/collections/veterans-history-project-collection/serving-our-voices/diverse-experiences-in-service/legacies-of-service-celebrating-native-americans/>; Hallsell, T. (2024). "It is encouraging to see this much progress"; *Malmstrom Air Force Base and Civil Rights Activism in Great Falls, Montana, 1947–1984*. Retrieved 7 August 2025, from <https://www.malmstrom.af.mil/Portals/43/20240300%20%28U%29%20Hist%20TAH%20MAFB%20and%20CR%20Activism%20in%20GF.pdf>
- ³ Shaeffer, K. (2023, November 8). *The changing face of America's veteran population*. Pew Research Center Publication. Retrieved 7 August 2025, from <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/11/08/the-changing-face-of-americas-veteran-population/>
- ⁴ Goodman, N., Morris, M., Morris, Z., & McGarity, S. (2020, October). *The Extra Costs of Living with a Disability in the U.S. — Resetting the Policy Table*. National Disability Institute Publication. Retrieved 7 August, 2025, from: <https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/extra-costs-living-with-disability-brief.pdf>; U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2024, May 15). *VA Health Care: Opportunities to Improve Access for Veterans Living in Rural Areas*. Retrieved 7 August 2025, from <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-24-107559>