Watch the 2011 Social Security retirement webinar

- Link to the recorded webinar: [www.ssa.gov/webinars/social_security_benefits.html](http://www.ssa.gov/webinars/social_security_benefits.html).
  - How Some Public Employee or Teacher Pensions May Affect Social Security Retirement Benefits
- Watch this webinar then read the FAQs below for important updates that apply in 2015.
- The webinar walks you through how the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) may affect Social Security retirement benefits of workers whose employers do not withhold Social Security taxes from their salary.

FAQs and updates to the webinar information

1. **How do I apply for Social Security retirement benefits?**
   Apply online for your Social Security retirement benefits or schedule an appointment at your local Social Security office.

2. **How far in advance can I apply for Social Security retirement benefits?**
   You can apply for Social Security retirement benefits when you are at least 61 years and 9 months of age and want your benefits to start in the next three months. Even if you are not ready to retire, you still should sign up for Medicare three months before your 65th birthday.

3. **What is the maximum monthly Social Security retirement benefit?**
   The maximum benefit depends on the age a worker chooses to retire. For example, a worker retiring at full retirement age in 2015, the maximum amount is $2,663. This figure is based on earnings at the maximum taxable amount for every year after age 21.

4. **What is the Windfall Elimination (WEP) Provision?**
   Under the Windfall Elimination Provision, your Social Security retirement or disability benefit is figured using a modified formula when you are also entitled to a pension from a job where you did not pay Social Security tax. As a result, you will receive a lower Social Security benefit than if you were not entitled to a pension from this job. For example, if you are age 62 in 2014, the maximum monthly reduction in your Social Security benefit as a result of this provision is $413.00. This amount is updated annually. This provision reduces, but does not totally eliminate, your Social Security benefit. See the WEP publication, in the resources section below, for more information.
   
   **WEP calculation for a worker who turns 62 in 2014**
   Social Security uses a three tier computation on your “Average Indexed Monthly Earnings” (AIME).
   
   - 40% of first $816 of AIME
   - 32% of next $4,101 of AIME
   - 15% of remainder AIME

   *At the time this form was printed, 2015 data was not available.*

February 2015
5. **What is the Government Pension Offset (GPO) Provision?**
   Under the Government Pension Offset Provision, any Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit to which you become entitled may be offset if you also receive a Federal, State or local government pension based on work where you did not pay Social Security tax. The offset reduces the amount of your Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit by two-thirds of the amount of your pension. For example, if you get a monthly pension of $600 based on earnings that are not covered under Social Security, two-thirds of that amount, $400, is used to offset your Social Security spouse or widow(er) benefit. If you are eligible for a $500 widow(er) benefit from Social Security, you will receive $100 per month from Social Security ($500 - $400 = $100). Even if your pension is high enough to totally offset your spouse or widow(er) Social Security benefit, you are still eligible for Medicare at age 65. See the GPO publication in the resources section below for more information.

6. **How much can I earn while receiving Social Security retirement benefits?**
   See Social Security web page:
   [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/whileworking.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/whileworking.htm)

**Resources**

Social Security Administration [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

Factors That May Affect Your Social Security Retirement [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/qualify.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/qualify.htm)

State Government Employment [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/stateandlocal.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/stateandlocal.htm)


Government Pension Offset (GPO) [www.ssa.gov/pubs/10007.html](http://www.ssa.gov/pubs/10007.html)

   - Click on the “WEP Online Calculator” to calculate your Social Security retirement benefits

Apply Online for Social Security Retirement Benefits [http://ssa.gov/pgm/retirement.htm](http://ssa.gov/pgm/retirement.htm)

Social Security FAQs [https://faq.ssa.gov/ics/support/splash.asp](https://faq.ssa.gov/ics/support/splash.asp)

Social Security Full Retirement Age [http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/ageincrease.htm](http://www.socialsecurity.gov/pubs/ageincrease.htm)