

# National Beneficiary Survey Fact Sheet

## Interesting Facts from SSA's National Beneficiary Survey (NBS)

### How often do Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) beneficiaries use the internet? Do beneficiaries use the internet to access information about their disability, services, or work?

- SSDI-only beneficiaries use a computer to access the internet more often than concurrent and SSI-only beneficiaries.
- SSDI-only and concurrent beneficiaries are also more likely to use the internet to access information about disability, services, or work-related information than SSI-only beneficiaries.
- Employed beneficiaries use the internet more often than those who are not employed. Only one quarter of employed beneficiaries said they never use the internet, compared to 43 percent of those who are not employed.
- While definitions differ, usage by beneficiaries appears to be lower than in the general population. About 72 percent of American households had internet access via computer in 2015\*, while only 58 percent of beneficiaries accessed the internet via a computer at least occasionally in 2015.

### Internet Use via Computer, by Program and Employment Status

Internet use	All Beneficiaries	By Program			By Employment Status	
		SSI-only	SSDI-only	Concurrent	Employed	Not Employed
How often do you use a computer to access the internet? (%)						
At least occasionally	58.1	47.8	64.8	51.3	74.4	56.6
Daily	22.2	19.4	24.7	17.5	35.7	20.9
A few times a week	15.3	11.2	17.4	14.8	18.5	15.0
Once a week	7.5	5.3	9.4	4.5	7.9	7.5
Less than once a week	13.1	11.9	13.3	14.5	12.3	13.2
Never	41.5	52.0	34.5	48.4	25.2	42.9
Unknown	0.5	0.3	0.6	0.2	0.4	0.5
Uses the internet to access information about disability, services, or work-related information (among those who use a computer to access the internet) (%)	41.8	32.9	45.0	42.3	48.3	41.1
Sample size (unweighted)	4,062	1,563	1,666	833	445	3,617
Estimated population (weighted)	12,896,735	3,604,355	7,347,758	1,944,622	1,064,064	11,832,672

Source: 2015 National Beneficiary Survey.

Notes: Distribution of the frequency of internet use is significantly different by program and by employment status at the 5% level, chi-square test. Distribution of the use of the internet to access information is significantly different by program at the 5% level, chi-square test.

\*US Census Bureau, <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2017/acs/acs-37.pdf>. Because the NBS asks about access to the internet using a computer, we compared to internet access by desktop or laptop, excluding handhelds, via broadband internet subscription for the US general population to avoid including those with smartphone-only access (see Figure 3). Access via broadband was less than one percent lower than access with any internet subscription (see Table 1). Future rounds of the NBS will ask about internet access more generally.

If you have comments or ideas for future Fact Sheets, please contact us at [NBS.Fact.Sheets@ssa.gov](mailto:NBS.Fact.Sheets@ssa.gov). For more information about the NBS, please visit <https://www.ssa.gov/disabilityresearch/nbs.html>.