



## Immigrant Eligibility for Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

### What is Supplemental Security Income?

**Supplemental Security Income**, called **SSI**, is a state program that gives you cash to pay for basic needs like food, clothing, and shelter. Sometimes people call this program Social Security.

### Can I get SSI?

You can get SSI if you have low income AND:

- You are 65 years old or older;
- You are blind; **or**
- You have a disability. (Having a “disability” means you have a serious physical or mental health problem and cannot work full-time for at least 12 months.)

**If you are in the United States lawfully, you can get SSI if you are elderly or disabled and have low income.**

### How do I get SSI?

To get help from Maine’s SSI program, you need to show you can’t get federal SSI because of your immigration status.

You will need to take these steps:

1. Apply for SSI from Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

You can find your local DHHS office here:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ofi/offices/index.html>

or you can call DHHS at (207) 624-4168

2. Get a “technical denial” from the federal Social Security Administration (SSA) based on immigration status.

To schedule an appointment at your local SSA Office, call the customer service line at 1-800-772-1213 between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday.

You can find your local SSA office here: <https://www.ssa.gov/locator/>

- PLEASE NOTE: A denial from SSA should not require a disability determination.
3. Give proof of the technical denial from SSA to DHHS.
- PLEASE NOTE: Your SSI benefits should start the date you first applied with DHHS.

**For questions about public programs, contact:**

Maine Equal Justice (MEJ)  
Phone number 207-626-7058, extension 205, or go to  
[maineequaljustice.org/about-us/contact-us/](http://maineequaljustice.org/about-us/contact-us/) and leave a message online

**For questions about immigrant status you can contact:**

Immigrant Legal Advocacy Project (ILAP)  
Phone number 207-780-1593 or toll-free at 1-800-497-8505  
Email address: [ilap@ilapmaine.org](mailto:ilap@ilapmaine.org)

126 Sewall Street Augusta, Maine 04330-6822

Fax: (207) 621-8148 [www.maineequaljustice.org](http://www.maineequaljustice.org)