

## Social Security Column

### BE THE FIRST TO KNOW: ONLINE COLA NOTICES

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We are constantly expanding our online services to give you freedom and control when doing business with us. Our new online cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) notices are another example of our commitment in this area. Soon, you'll be the first to know your new benefit amount! Later this year, we will post the Social Security COLA notices online for retirement, survivors, and disability beneficiaries with a *my Social Security* account. The COLA announcement usually occurs in October, but final benefit amounts won't be calculated and available until December, when we send COLA notices that contain the benefit amount for the next calendar year.

These COLA notices will now be available to view and save via the Message Center inside *my Social Security*. The Message Center is a secure, convenient portal where you can receive sensitive communications we don't send through email or text.

This year, you will still receive your COLA notice by mail. In the future, you will be able to choose whether you receive your notice online instead of on paper.

Online notices will not be available to representative payees, individuals with foreign mailing addresses, or those who pay higher Medicare premiums due to their income. We plan to expand the availability of COLA notices to additional online customers in the future.

Remember, our services are always free of charge. No government agency or reputable company will solicit your personal information by email or request advanced fees for services in the form of wire transfers or gift cards. Avoid falling victim to fraudulent internet “phishing” schemes by not revealing personal information, selecting malicious links, or opening malicious attachments. You can learn more about the ways we protect your investment, personal information, and *my Social Security* account at <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount/security.html>. Be the first to know. Sign up for or log in to your personal *my Social Security* account today at <https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount> and choose email or text under “Message Center Preferences” to receive your COLA notice online!

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