

The Student Earned Income Exclusion

If you are a student under age 22 who is working, you may qualify for the Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE). The SEIE is a great way for students to earn and save money!

What is the SEIE? When you receive SSI and you work, your SSI dollar amount usually goes down by about \$1 for every \$2 earned. With the Student Earned Income Exclusion (SEIE), you can earn money from a job, up to a certain amount, and keep your full SSI check!

Am I eligible? You must be:

- Receiving SSI;
- Under the age of 22;
- “Regularly attending school;” and
- Working.

Am I regularly attending school? “Regularly attending school” means you are one of the following:

- In grades 7-12 for at least 12 hours a week.
- In college for at least 8 hours per week. This includes online schools if approved by Social Security.
- In a training program to prepare for employment, for at least 12 hours a week. **This includes high school transition programs.**

A combination of hours in the classroom, hours in the community with school staff, and hours working can meet the 12-hour attendance requirement.

If you take the summer off but plan to go back to school in the Fall, you may still qualify for the SEIE during the summer months.

How much can I earn? In 2020, you can earn up to \$1,900 gross (before taxes) per month from a job, up to \$7,670 total for the year, and use the exclusion.

How does it work? Let’s say you receive \$783 SSI and you start a job, earning \$800 per month.

1. You let Social Security know you are a student and begin reporting your income. See *SEIE – Student Instructions* for more information.
2. If you qualify for the SEIE, your SSI will not go down for that month. You will receive \$783 SSI plus your \$800 earnings from your job.
3. Your SSI will not go down for each month you work until your total earnings reach \$7,670. Your SSI will then begin to go down about \$1 for every \$2 you earn.
4. The SEIE starts new each year, beginning in January. If you still qualify for the exclusion, you can use the SEIE all over again in the new year!

Building wealth What to do with all this money? Save it in an ABLÉ account!

Student Earned Income Exclusion – Student Instructions

Step #1 Documentation	<p>Gather the following documentation. You can begin to do this before finding a job.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A photocopy of your student identification card, if you have one;2. A letter written and signed by your teacher. Give your teacher the next page titled “Teacher Instructions”3. A wage stub, once you start working.
Step #2 Visit your Social Security office	<p>Once you begin working, you can apply for the Student Earned Income Exclusion.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Go to your local Social Security office.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can just walk in to your local office or you can call 1-800-772-1213 and ask for an appointment.• If you do not know where your local office is, search “SSA Office Locator” on the web. You will find the Social Security website that can show your office based on your zip code.2. Bring all your documentation from Step #1.3. When you talk to a Social Security Claims Representative, tell the person you want to use the Student Earned Income Exclusion.4. Ask the Claims Rep to make a copy of everything, stamp it as “received,” and hand it back to you.5. Ask the Claims Rep about ways to report income. These include calling in wage information, using the phone app, or mailing in copies of wage stubs.
Step #3 Wage reporting	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Report your gross wages every month, by the 6th day of the following month.2. Watch your SSI check. If you qualify for the SEIE, it should not go down as long as you are earning less than \$1,870 gross per month, and \$7,550 total for the year.3. If your SSI check does go down and you think it shouldn’t, call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 or visit your SSA local office to speak with a Claims Rep.4. When you stop being student who regularly attends school, or you turn age 22, let Social Security know!

Student Earned Income Exclusion – Teacher Instructions

Your student may qualify for the Student Earned Income Exclusion with Social Security. This exclusion is a great opportunity for your student to build wealth while working!

To apply for the exclusion, your student will need the following information from you:

A letter on school letterhead

Write a letter on school letterhead. Include the following:

1. A statement that the student is in a transition program that helps him/her prepare for employment.
 2. A statement about how many hours the student attends each week. This includes time in the community with school staff and time working with support. (A minimum of 12 hours per week is needed for the student to qualify for the exclusion.)
 3. The date when the student will exit the transition program, if known.
 4. Your signature, title, and phone number and/or email.
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Here is an example letter:

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is to confirm that **[Student Name]** is enrolled in a transition program in **[School name or district]**. This transition program helps students build skills to become employed. **[Student Name]** attends school for **[##]** many hours per week, working toward **[his/her]** vocational goals. **[Student Name]** is expected to exit the transition program on **[date]**.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

Teacher's name

Title

Phone number; Email address