

PINAL COUNTY NETWORK NEWS

Featuring items of special interest to organizations and individuals working to improve the lives of people in our County. Published and emailed by Community Action Human Resources Agency (CAHRA), with support provided by Arizona Department of Economic Security Division of Community Assistance and Development .

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UNSHeltered SIGN UP TO RECEIVE MAIL

Service for the Unsheltered With No Address

Mail can be received at the following locations:

- CG Helps, 350 E. 6th St., Casa Grande, AZ 85122 (Register with Johnnie to begin service at 520-483-0010)
- Genesis Project, 564 N. Idaho Rd., Suite 5, Apache Junction, AZ 85119 (Register with Trinity to receive service at (480-225-7757))



Let lrushing@cahra.org know if other agencies also offer mail service for those who are homeless with no address.



PINAL-GILA COUNCIL FOR SENIOR CITIZENS REBRANDS TO CENTRAL ARIZONA AGING UNVEILS NEW BRAND IDENTITY REFLECTING A RENEWED COMMITMENT TO AGING SERVICES

Pinal-Gila Council for Senior Citizens, the state designated Area Agency on Aging for Region V, is proud to announce its official rebranding, including a new name and refreshed logo. PGCSA will now operate under the name Central Arizona Aging, signaling a renewed commitment to its mission of providing comprehensive programs, advocacy, and resources for seniors and caregivers across Pinal and Gila Counties. This rebrand reflects both the evolution of the organization’s services over the last 50 years and its deepened focus on addressing the needs of our aging population in today’s rapidly changing world.

“We’re very excited to introduce our new identity to the world,” states Ana G. Medina, President/CEO. “Our mission has always been to serve older adults with respect, compassion, and commitment and that will not change. As the aging population grows, so too do the complexities of the challenges seniors face. This rebrand marks the next chapter of our journey as we enhance our efforts to create healthier, more supportive communities for our seniors.”

The decision to rebrand comes after an extensive period of reflection, community feedback, and strategic planning by the agency’s Board Directors, Advisory Council and Staff. The plan highlighted the organization’s expanded scope of work and its desire to better align its brand with agency values and aspirations of the senior community.

The new name, Central Arizona Aging, was chosen as it clearly defines the agency’s service area and more succinctly reflects the organization’s long-standing dedication to providing aging services. The refreshed logo includes a saguaro cactus, which serves as “a perfect symbol of how we see the aging experience: full of resilience, beauty, strength and the ability to thrive despite adversity.” states Medina. “As we continue our work, our new logo is a reminder that aging is not something to fear or endure — it is a stage of life to be embraced with strength, wisdom, and support. This rebrand reflects that belief and reinforces our commitment to serving seniors with compassion and respect.”

Looking ahead, Central Arizona Aging will continue to build strong partnerships with policymakers, local government, providers and community organizations to advocate for programs and services that benefit older adults. Central Arizona Aging remains committed to providing coordinated services that help seniors live independent, fulfilling lives and ensuring that the voices of older adults are heard in decisions that impact their well-being.

For more Information Contact: Ana G. Medina, President/CEO Central Arizona Aging at 520-836-2758, anam@caaging.org www.caaging.org

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER



The Pinal County Network News is a monthly publication. If you wish to advertise meetings, events, items of interest, etc., please submit material by the 25th of the previous month to: lrushing@cahra.org.



NATIONAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY

**HELP THE ELOY VETERAN'S CENTER
HONOR LOCAL HEROES!**

**SPONSOR A WREATH TODAY
TO BE PLACED ON A VETERAN'S GRAVE**



DECEMBER 14, 2024 - 10:00 AM

**THE ELOY MEMORIAL PARK
5839 E. MILLIGAN ROAD
ELOY, AZ 85131**



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO MAKE A DONATION ONLINE OR VISIT
WWW.WREATHSACROSSAMERICA.ORG/AZ0163**

#LiveWithPurpose

SOCIAL SECURITY COLUMN

By Jack Burns, Social Security Public Affairs Specialist, SSA Administration



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM SOCIAL SECURITY

We hope your holidays are filled with joy and warmth.

During this and every season, we want you to know that we are here to serve you. Did you know that our online services are available to help you do business with us in an easy, convenient, and secure way?

You can create a personal *my Social Security* account online to:

- Apply for retirement, spouse, or disability benefits.
- Request a replacement Social Security card.
- Check your application or appeal status.
- Request a name change (in some cases you may have to visit your local office).

If you receive benefits, you can use your personal *my Social Security* account to:

- Change your address. (Social Security benefits only)
- Change your direct deposit information. (Social Security benefits only)
- Instantly get proof of benefits.
- Print your SSA-1099.

If you do not receive Social Security benefits, you can use a personal *my Social Security* account to:

- Get personalized retirement, spouse, or disability benefit estimates.
- Get your *Social Security Statement*.
- Get instant proof that you do not receive benefits.

You can use these services on the go or from the comfort of your home.

Please visit www.ssa.gov/myaccount to view the services available to you.

If you cannot use our online services, you may be able to use our automated telephone services by calling 1-800-772-1213. Automated services are always available.

SSA TALKS: CHILD BENEFITS

Kathleen Romig, Senior Advisor in the Office of the Commissioner, joined the latest episode of *SSA Talks* to discuss the Social Security benefits available to children.

These include:

Survivors benefits for children if their parent dies. For more information, please read our publication titled *Survivor Benefits* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10084.pdf.

- **Supplemental Security Income (or SSI)** for children if they have a disability or blindness and their families have limited income and resources. Visit our SSI webpage at www.ssa.gov/ssi to learn more.
- **Child benefits also known as “family benefits”** on the record of a parent receiving retirement or disability benefits. For more information, please read our publication titled *Benefits for Children* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10085.pdf.
- **Social Security Disability Insurance Benefits for Youth with Disabilities** for adults who have a disability that began before they reached age 22. These benefits are paid from their parent’s Social Security earnings record. For more information, please read our publication titled *Benefits for Children with Disabilities* at www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10026.pdf.

As an advocate and the mother of a child with disabilities, Kathleen knows well the challenges that children and their families encounter. During the episode she discusses how Social Security benefits and SSI help children. She also explains how we are taking more proactive steps to reach children who may be eligible for our benefits and programs.

You can listen to the episode on our *SSA Talks* webpage at www.ssa.gov/news/audio-series.html and subscribe to receive alerts about future episodes. You can also listen to previous episodes like “Commissioner O’Malley’s Top Priorities” and “Will Social Security be there when i retire?”.

For more information and news about Social Security, check out our *Communications Corner* webpage at www.ssa.gov/news.



WE’RE MAKING IT EASIER TO DO BUSINESS WITH US ONLINE



We’ve listened to your feedback concerning your preference to do business with us online. You want the option to submit forms, evidence, and other information electronically. You also want to sign documents electronically before submitting them.

This year we released *eSignature/Upload Documents* as an option to submit documents. This new, online service option allows our employees to electronically request, and our customers to electronically submit, 50 forms and nearly 80 types of evidence. This option eliminates the need to mail, fax, or deliver information to a local Social Security office. By streamlining our document submission process and reducing mail, we are improving the way you do business with us.

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Securing today
and tomorrow

By Dawn Bystry, Associate Commissioner
Office of Strategic and Digital Communications

In our ongoing commitment to serve the public more efficiently, SSA is expanding appointment-based services at the [local Social Security offices](#). By scheduling appointments, SSA will aim to reduce wait times, streamline service delivery, and improve the overall customer experience. Nearly 400 field offices have already moved to appointment-based service this year. These offices have seen significant improvements in wait times due to more efficient and helpful visitor experiences and increases in the number of customers able to complete their business online.

SSA is implementing appointment-based services nationwide in two phases. The first phase is a transition period now through January 5, 2025. The purpose of this transition period is to educate our customers about needing to schedule an appointment for SSA services. As a reminder, many of the services can be provided via phone with an appointment and do not require a customer to walk into an office for service.

Effective January 6, 2025, SSA will require customers to schedule an appointment for service in our field offices, including requests for Social Security cards.

SSA encourages customers to become accustomed to the: [online services](#), where many transactions can be completed conveniently and securely, and [automated services](#) available on the National 800# at 1-800-772-1213.

Customers who are not able to handle their business online or with the automated options, may call their [local Social Security office](#) or the National 800# to schedule an appointment.

SSA wants to make it clear that they will not turn people away for service who are unable to make an appointment or do not want to make an appointment. For example, members of vulnerable populations, military personnel, people with terminal illnesses, and individuals with other situations requiring immediate or specialized attention may still walk in for service at our field offices. Some of the offices also have minimal to no wait times, and they will still serve customers who walk in.

SSA appreciates all the partnerships who share this information and help customers through this transition. Thank you for your continued support as we work together to improve service accessibility and responsiveness.

Continued from Previous Page 3, Social Security Column

How Does it Work?

Our employee sends the customer a link with the request for the forms and evidence we need to process their application.

The customer authenticates by signing in to, or creating, their personal *my* Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. The customer then reviews the request, completes the form, electronically signs (when signatures are required), and uploads the completed forms and any supporting evidence to our portal.

Note: Customers have 30 days to electronically submit requested information and may receive an email reminder. If the electronic request expires, they can contact our office to ask for a new request or submit the forms and information by mail, fax, or by visiting an office.

To learn more about Upload Documents, visit our FAQ webpage at faq.ssa.gov/en-US/Topic/?id=CAT-01360.

Online Forms and Signature Removal

In addition to the eSignature/Upload Documents option, we are converting many of our frequently used forms to more convenient online versions. Customers will have the option to complete a user-friendly, fillable online form, then electronically sign and submit it.

Some of our frequently used forms now available to sign and submit electronically include:

- SSA-827, *Authorization to Disclose Information to Social Security Administration.*
- SSA-820/821, *Work Activity Reports.*
- SSA-632, *Request for a Waiver of Overpayment Recovery.*
- SSA-634, *Request for Change in Overpayment Recovery Rate.*

We have removed the signature requirement for 12 of our most used forms. These forms include:

- SSA-L4201, *Employer Requesting Wage Information.*
- SSA-789, *Request for Reconsideration/Disability Cessation Right to Appear.*
- SSA-787, *Statement of Patient's Capability to Manage Benefits.*

To learn more about the removal of signature requirements from certain Social Security forms, check out our YouTube video *Signature Removal from SSA Forms* at www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmben-skPo4&t=2s.

Whether you do business with us online, by phone, or in person, we're committed to making it easier for you. We continue to explore more opportunities to make doing business with us easier. Please share this information with others.



RESIDENTS MAY NOW APPLY FOR 2025 RESIDENT LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The City of Casa Grande is excited to announce that applications are now open for the 2025 Leadership Academy. This nine-week program offers residents a unique chance to go behind the scenes of their local government, learning firsthand about the services and functions that keep Casa Grande thriving.

Each week, participants will dive into a new aspect of city operations, gaining insights through presentations and tours led by department directors and elected officials. Since 2003, this free academy has provided Casa Grande residents with valuable knowledge about their community and how it's managed.

The Leadership Academy is open to Casa Grande residents aged 18 and older, with sessions held every Wednesday evening from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. starting on February 5, 2025. This year's program also includes an optional session on March 5 featuring the State of the City. The academy wraps up with a graduation ceremony for participants who have completed the program.

Arizona Public Service (APS) has been a proud, long-standing supporter of the Leadership Academy. Richard Rosales, APS Public Affairs Manager for the Southeast, shared, "It's an honor to support Casa Grande residents as they learn about their city and gain valuable tools to become more engaged in their community."

Many academy graduates have gone on to make meaningful contributions, volunteering with local nonprofits and serving on city boards, commissions, and committees. "The academy offers a great opportunity for new and long-time residents," said Mayor-Elect Lisa Navarro-Fitzgibbons. "We encourage our community to stay informed and engaged and the Leadership Academy is a wonderful way to do so."

Applications must be submitted by December 22, 2024. Those selected will be notified after January 6, 2025, and will need to attend at least eight of the nine sessions. Space is limited to 20 participants, so interested residents are encouraged to apply soon.

To access the full schedule and application, please [visit the City Website](#).

For any questions, contact the Public Information Office at (520) 421-8600 or by [email](#).

SSA.gov

SOCIAL SECURITY RECOGNIZES NATIONAL HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS MONTH

November is National Homelessness Awareness Month.

As a member of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH), we actively support USICH's mission of preventing and ending homelessness in the United States.

Below are resources that can assist your clients who are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity.

[People Experiencing Homelessness & Their Service Providers](#)

[How to Get Help from Social Security](#)

[Supplemental Security Income and Other Benefits](#)

[What You Need to Know About Your Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\) When You Turn 18](#)

[When People Need Help Managing Their Money](#)

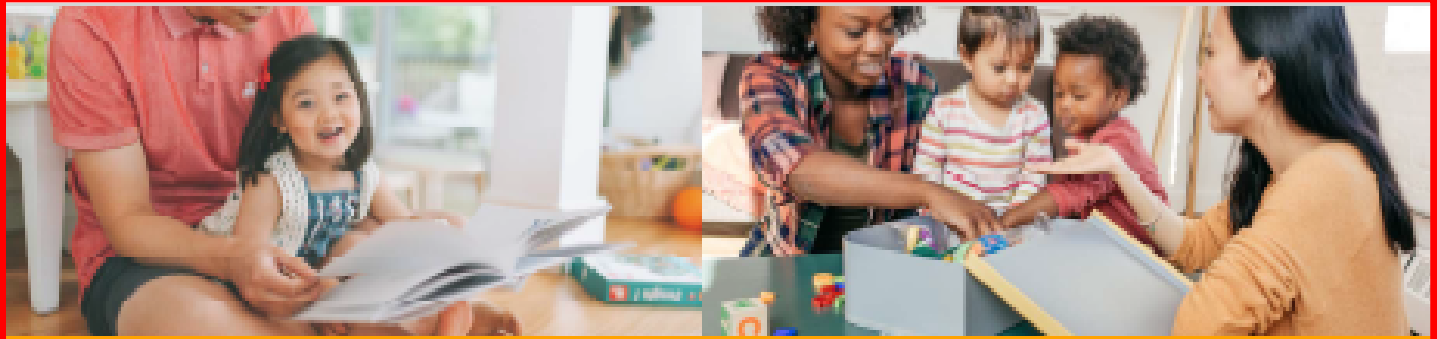
[A Guide to Supplemental Security Income \(SSI\) for Groups and Organizations 2023](#)

[How to Create a *my* Social Security Account](#) (which doesn't require a physical address and allows people to get notifications through email)

Read our [blog](#) to learn more.

I encourage you to share this information with your clients, members, colleagues, affiliates, and other interested parties.





Parents are their child's first teachers!



Early Childhood Parent Education Program

Positive Parenting Practices ● Family Well-Being ● Child's School Readiness

FREE program offering your own Parent Educator!

You will get the support, advice, and information you need for the optimal development of your child. Your Parent Educator will provide convenient visits in your home, in the community, or virtually.

Serving Families With Children In Pima, Yuma, And Pinal Counties- Prenatal Through Age Five.

Provided Services Include:

Screenings, Group Connections, Personal Visits, Resource Network.



QUESTIONS?

ParentsAsTeachers@blake.easterseals.com



To Make A Referral,
Scan the QR Code:





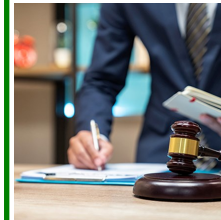
SOCIAL SECURITY'S TOP 10 WEBPAGES FOR 2025

SSA.gov is your best resource to learn about Social Security programs and benefits and conduct business with us. Our website is designed to make it easy for you to find what you need.

Here are our top 10 webpages:

- [my Social Security](http://my.SocialSecurity.gov) — You can open a personal [my Social Security](http://my.SocialSecurity.gov) account to verify your earnings, view your *Social Security Statement*, get benefit estimates, and more, at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.
- Social Security blog — You can find the latest Social Security news and updates at blog.ssa.gov. You can easily share these informative articles with others.
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) — Do you need answers to Social Security-related questions? Visit www.ssa.gov/faq to find answers to common questions and other valuable information.
- Retirement application — You can complete and submit your online application for retirement benefits in as little as 15 minutes at www.ssa.gov/retirement.
- Disability application — You can apply for disability benefits online at www.ssa.gov/benefits/disability.
- Publications — Visit our online publication library for information about key subjects at www.ssa.gov/pubs (includes audio versions).
- Medicare — Sign up for Medicare at www.ssa.gov/medicare/sign-up.
- Online Services — You can take care of most business with us by visiting www.ssa.gov/onlineservices.
- People Helping Others — Use these resources to help your family and others in your community at www.ssa.gov/thirdparty.
- Fraud and Scam Prevention and Reporting — Learn how to recognize and report Social Security fraud and scams at www.ssa.gov/fraud.

Remember, if you need information or want to do business with SSA, the first place to go to is the website.



ATTORNEY CAP FEE INCREASE

Effective November 30, 2024, there will be an increase to the fee cap representatives can charge for help when you do business with Social Security. The maximum dollar amount for fee agreements approved by Social Security will increase from **\$7,200** to **\$9,200**.

If a fee agreement is not filed, a representative can submit a fee petition after completing work on your claim(s). We'll review the value of your representative's services. We'll also let you know the fee your representative is authorized to charge and collect.

CAHRA'S MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

Mission Statement

Our mission is to build relationships and empower people by identifying and eliminating social and economic barriers for all community members. Together we embody hope, strengthen resilience, and advocate for stability and self-sufficiency for the residents of Pinal County.

Vision Statement

Since 1981, Community Action Human Resources Agency (CAHRA) has been dedicated to serving the poor and disadvantaged. We strive to help low-income individuals become self-sufficient and independent of public programs. By eliminating poverty conditions and creating opportunities, we envision a community where residents thrive, are resilient, and live with dignity and security.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS