

(d) *Which index we use.* We use the CPI if the OASDI fund ratio is 15.0 percent or more for any year from 1984 through 1988, and if the ratio is 20.0 percent or more for any year after 1988. We use either the CPI or the AWI, depending on which has the lower percentage increase in the applicable measuring period (see § 404.274), if the OASDI fund ratio is less than 15.0 percent for any year from 1984 through 1988, and if the ratio is less than 20.0 percent for any year after 1988. For example, if the OASDI fund ratio for a year is 17.0 percent, the cost-of-living increase effective December of that year will be based on the CPI.

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§ 404.273 When automatic cost-of-living increases are to be made.

We make automatic cost-of-living increases if the applicable index, either the CPI or the AWI, rises by 3.0 percent or more over a specified measuring period (see the rules in § 404.274). If the cost-of-living increase is to be based on an increase of 3.0 percent or more in the CPI, the increase becomes effective in December of the year in which the measuring period ends. If the increase is to be based on an increase of 3.0 percent or more in the AWI, the increase becomes effective in December of the year after the year in which the measuring period ends.

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§ 404.274 Measuring the increase in the indexes.

(a) *General.* Depending on the OASDI fund ratio, we measure the rise in one index or in both indexes during the applicable measuring period (described in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section) to determine whether there will be an automatic cost-of-living increase and if so, its amount.

(b) *Measuring period based on CPI.* For the increase effective December 1984 and later years, the measuring period we use for finding the amount of the CPI increase—

(1) Begins with—

(i) Any calendar quarter in which an *ad hoc* benefit increase is effective; or, if later,

(ii) The third calendar quarter of any year in which the last automatic increase became effective; and

(2) Ends with the third calendar quarter of the following year, but only if the CPI has increased by at least 3.0 percent (after rounding to the nearest one-tenth of one percent) since the beginning of the measuring period. (If the CPI increase is less than 3.0 percent, we extend the measuring period to the third quarter of the next year, doing so repeatedly until the 3.0 percent level is reached.) If this measuring period ends in a year after the year in which an *ad hoc* increase was enacted into law or took effect, there can be no cost-of-living increase based on this measuring period, and we will apply the rule in paragraph (d) of this section.

(c) *Measuring period based on AWI.* The measuring period we use for finding the amount of the AWI increase—

(1) Begins with—

(i) The calendar year before the year in which an *ad hoc* benefit increase is effective; or, if later,

(ii) The calendar year before the year in which the last automatic increase became effective; and

(2) Ends with the following year, but only if the AWI has increased by at least 3.0 percent (after rounding to the nearest one-tenth of one percent) in that one-year period. (If the AWI increase is less than 3.0 percent, we extend the measuring period to the next year, doing so repeatedly until the 3.0 percent level is reached.) If this measuring period ends in a year in which an *ad hoc* increase was enacted into law or took effect, there can be no cost-of-living increase based on this measuring period, and we will apply the rule in paragraph (d) of this section.

(d) *When no automatic cost-of-living increase is possible.* No automatic cost-of-living increase is possible for the calendar year that immediately follows a year in which an *ad hoc* increase was enacted into law or took effect. The measuring period for the next automatic cost-of-living increase—

(1) Where the measuring period is based on the CPI,

(i) Begins with the calendar quarter in which the *ad hoc* increase took effect; and