

Social Security Administration

§ 404.241

(b) To the primary insurance amount computed under the guaranteed alternative, we apply any automatic cost-of-living or *ad hoc* increases in primary insurance amounts that go into effect in the year you reach age 62 and in years up through the year you become entitled to benefits. (See appendix VI for a list of the percentage increases in primary insurance amounts since December 1978.)

Example: Mr. C reaches age 62 in January 1981 and becomes entitled to old-age insurance benefits in April 1981. He had no social security earnings before 1951 and his year-by-year social security earnings after 1950 are as follows:

Year	Earnings
1951	\$3,600
1952	3,600
1953	3,600
1954	3,600
1955	4,200
1956	4,200
1957	4,200
1958	4,200
1959	4,800
1960	4,800
1961	4,800
1962	4,800
1963	4,800
1964	4,800
1965	4,800
1966	6,600
1967	6,600
1968	7,800
1969	7,800
1970	7,800
1971	7,800
1972	9,000
1973	10,800
1974	13,200
1975	14,100
1976	15,300
1977	16,500
1978	17,700
1979	22,900
1980	25,900
1981	29,700

Mr. C's elapsed years are the 30 years 1951 through 1980. We subtract 5 from his 30 elapsed years to find that we must use 25 benefit computation years in computing his average monthly wage. His computation base years are 1951 through 1980 which are years after 1950 up to the year he reached age 62. We will use his 25 computation base years with the highest earnings to compute his average monthly wage. Thus, we exclude the years 1951-1955. The year 1981 is not a base year for this computation.

We total his earnings in his benefit computation years and get \$236,000. We then divide by the 300 months in his 25 benefit computation years, and find his average monthly

wage to be \$786.66 which is rounded down to \$786.

The primary insurance amount in the benefit table in appendix III that corresponds to Mr. C's average monthly wage is \$521.70. The 9.9 percent and 14.3 percent cost of living increase for 1979 and 1980, respectively, are not applicable because Mr. C reached age 62 in 1981.

The average indexed monthly earnings method described in §§ 404.210 through 404.212 considers all of the earnings after 1950, including 1981 earnings which, in Mr. C's case cannot be used in the guaranteed alternative method. Mr. C's primary insurance amount under the average indexed earnings method is \$548.40. Therefore, his benefit is based upon the \$548.40 primary insurance amount. As in the guaranteed alternative method, Mr. C is not entitled to the cost of living increases for years before the year he reaches age 62.

**OLD-START METHOD OF COMPUTING
PRIMARY INSURANCE AMOUNTS**

§ 404.240 Old-start method—general.

If you had all or substantially all your social security earnings before 1951, your primary insurance amount computed under the "1977 simplified old-start" method may be higher than any other primary insurance amount computed for you under any other method for which you are eligible. As explained in § 404.242, if you reach age 62 after 1978, your primary insurance amount computed under the old-start method is used, for purposes of the guaranteed alternative described in § 404.230, if the old-start primary insurance amount is higher than the one found under the average-monthly-wage method. We may use a modified computation, as explained in § 404.243, if you are entitled to a pension based on your employment which was not covered by Social Security.

[47 FR 30734, July 15, 1982, as amended at 52 FR 47917, Dec. 17, 1987]

§ 404.241 1977 simplified old-start method.

(a) *Who is qualified.* To qualify for the old-start computation, you must meet the conditions in paragraphs (a) (1), (2), or (3) of this section:

(1) You must—

(i) Have one "quarter of coverage" (see §§ 404.101 and 404.110 of this part) before 1951;