



Disability Facts You Should Know:

Disability statistics

The problem is more widespread than you'd imagine.

- In just the past hour, almost 3,000 Americans became disabled. That's 49 every minute.ⁱ
- Over 51 million Americans – 18% of the population – are classified as disabled.ⁱⁱ
- Every :01 second another disabling injury occurs in the US. Every four minutes the injury is fatal.ⁱ
- Almost one-third of Americans entering the work force today (3 in 10) will become disabled before they retire.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Nearly 7 million workers currently receive Social Security Disability benefits. Almost half are under age 50.

Disability causes severe financial hardship

How long could *you* afford to be without a paycheck?

- 350,000 personal bankruptcies every year are blamed on injuries and unexpected illnesses.^{iv}
- A new Harvard University report reveals that 62 percent of all personal bankruptcies filed in the U.S. in 2007 were due to an inability to pay for medical expenses.^v

Disability prevents people from earning a living

- Accident or illness will force 1 in 5 U.S. employees to miss work for at least a year before they turn 65.^{vi}
- One in 7 of us can expect to be disabled for more than five years.^{vii}
- The average long-term disability absence lasts 2 ½ years.^{viii}

Few American workers are financially prepared

- Do you spend more than you earn? 44% of U.S. families do.^{ix}
- Do you have private pension coverage? Most of us – over 50% – don't.
- Retirement savings? One-third of us have none.^x And only 40% of adult Americans have savings earmarked for emergencies.^{xi}

- 71% of American employees live from paycheck to paycheck,^{xii} without enough savings to cushion the financial blow.

Think Social Security or Workers' Comp will cover it?

Think again.

- Can your family live on \$1004 a month? That's the average monthly benefit paid by Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI).^{xiii}
- More claims are denied than approved.
- More than half of the 2.1 million workers who applied for SSDI benefits in 2005 were denied. Less than half – 39% – were approved.^{xiv}
- Only a small fraction – 10% – of disabling accidents and illnesses are work related. The other 90% are not, meaning Workers Compensation doesn't cover them.^{xv}

Most American workers are not covered by disability insurance:

- Over 100 million workers are without private disability income insurance.^{xvi}
- 70% of workers in the private sector have no long-term disability insurance.^{xvii}

ⁱ National Safety Council, Injury Facts 2008 Ed.

ⁱⁱ US Census Bureau, Nov 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ Social Security Administration, Fact Sheet Jan 31, 2007

^{iv} "Illness and Injury as Contributors to Bankruptcy," Health Affairs, Feb 2, 2005

^v The American Journal of Medicine, June 4, 2009

^{vi} Life and Health Insurance Foundation for Education, Nov 2005

^{vii} Life and Health Insurance Foundation for Education, Nov 2005

^{viii} Commissioners Disability Table, 1998, Health Insurance Association of America, NY Times, Feb 2000

^{ix} Commissioner's Individual Disability Table A

^x Federal Reserve Board, Survey of Consumer Finances 2004

^{xi} Social Security Administration, Fact Sheet 2007

^{xii} Consumer Federation of America national survey by Opinion Research Corp., Feb 2007

^{xiii} American Payroll Association, "Getting Paid in America" Survey, 2008

^{xiv} Social Security Administration, Fact Sheet 2008

^{xv} Social Security Administration, Office of Disability and Income Security Programs

^{xvi} National Safety Council, Injury Facts 2008 Ed.

^{xvii} Council for Disability Awareness, Long Term Disability Claims Review, 2005

^{xviii} Social Security Administration, Fact Sheet Jan 31, 2007