



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Social Security Checks Again Arriving Early in Gulf Coast States as Hurricane Ike Approaches

Michael J. Astrue, Commissioner of Social Security, announced that benefit checks are being delivered to Gulf Coast residents on Tuesday, before the anticipated arrival of Hurricane Ike and one day ahead of the regular payment date. More than 40,000 people in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida will receive their Social Security checks September 9th, rather than on Wednesday, the regularly scheduled payment day. At the end of August, the Social Security Administration took similar action to arrange for early delivery of nearly 400,000 checks ahead of Hurricane Gustav.

"Hurricane Ike, the second major storm to threaten the area in the last two weeks, has led Social Security to take the critically important step of sending early payments to people all along the Gulf Coast," said Commissioner Astrue. "People in these states who may not receive their checks early should not ignore evacuation instructions simply to wait for their payments. Anyone who does not receive a regularly scheduled payment from Social Security as a result of the hurricane can go to any open Social Security office and request an immediate payment. To find the nearest open Social Security office, call **1-800-772-1213** (TTY 1-800-325-0778). In the future, beneficiaries should be mindful that Direct Deposit is a more secure and convenient way to receive payments, particularly when natural disasters strike."

Social Security has worked closely with the U.S. Postal Service and the Department of the Treasury to make the early delivery of checks possible. People living in areas with the following first three digits in their zip codes will receive early delivery:

Alabama 364-366
Florida 323-325
Louisiana 700-714
Mississippi 393-395
Texas 770-779, 781 and 783-785

The Department of the Treasury, through the Federal Reserve, has encouraged financial institutions in the Gulf Coast states to honor the paper checks as well as consider making Direct

Deposit payments available as early as Tuesday, September 9th. The federal government has requested this for people in the affected states, but it is up to individual banks to choose to make these Direct Deposit funds available early.

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