

**Hawaii**  
**Association**  
**of**  
**the B** **lind**

**October 2024**  
**Newsletter**

# Upcoming Events

Stay connected with the Hawaii Association of the Blind by participating in our events. This month, we offer a mix of special events and our regularly scheduled gatherings. Be sure to mark your calendars and join us in these community activities!

# Special Events

This month, we have some exciting special events planned that are designed to bring our community together and provide enriching experiences. We hope you can join us for these unique opportunities!

# Save the Date: 58th Annual Convention

It is time to think of our State Convention once again, and please start to seriously think about reserving your hotel room, preferably by November 4th at this rate. Please know that during the weekend of our Convention, the hotel will be very busy as the Honolulu Festival will be taking place in Waikiki during that time. This means that the hotel will get booked pretty quickly, so if you intend to spend a night or two on March 7th or 8th, you are encouraged to reserve it well in advance.

## **Room Rates:**

**Kona Tower** – single/double occupancy overlooks the city facing the Ewa side and also the parking lot \$209.00 plus room tax of 17.962% equals **\$246.54**

**Waikiki Tower** – single, double/triple occupancy overlooks the Waikiki view/Ala Moana Park \$249.00 plus 17.962% tax, equals **\$293.73**.

## **When:**

March 7th and 8th, 2025

## **Questions?**

Call Vickie Kenedy

**Phone:** (808) 222-8862

**Email:** vreikok@gmail.com

## **Where:**

Ala Moana Hotel,

1420 Atkinson Drive,  
Honolulu, Hawaii

**Phone:** 808-955-4811

Start checking with your friends to see if you can reserve a room to share with each other. Make it a fun experience and reserve a room for yourself or with your friends.

If you wish to reserve your room, please call the Ala Moana Hotel at **808-955-4811** and ask for hotel reservations.

Please let them know that you are with the Hawaii Association of the Blind.

# White Cane Walk

It's that time of the year when we celebrate the significance of the white cane for individuals who are blind or have low vision. We will have our annual Oahu White Cane Walk on Friday, October 18, 2024, starting at 10:00am at the State Capitol Rotunda and ending at Iolani Palace. experience

## **When:**

October 18, 2024,

10:00 AM

## **Where:**

State Capitol Rotunda

# Dole Plantation Adventure

Hawaii Association of the Blind Parent and Youth (PAY) committee in collaboration with HAB events presents Dole Plantation the second experience

## When:

October 26, 2024,  
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

## Where:

Dole Plantation  
64-1550 Kamehameha Hwy.  
Wahiawa, Hawaii 96786



World's largest outdoor  
maze in the shape of a  
pineapple



Let's explore the world's largest outdoor maze and train ride at Dole Plantation! Test your orientation and mobility skills! Vision simulators will be provided for family members.

- Find all the stations in the world's largest outdoor maze.
- Ride the train and learn about how Dole Plantation began and how pineapples grow.
- Braille menus available

**Admission:**

Children: \$5.25

Adults: \$8.25

**RSVP:**

Leah Neumann

**Phone:** (619)770-8856

**Email:** [habpay808@gmail.com](mailto:habpay808@gmail.com)

# 2024 Thanksmas Celebration

A Heartfelt Thanksgiving & Christmas Gathering

## **When:**

November 30, 2024

4:30 PM – 8:00 PM

## **Where:**

801 South Street Condos,  
Honolulu, HI 96813

## **Event Cost:**

\$25 Adults

\$10 Children (12 and under)

## **RSVP by November 15:**

Contact Vickie Kenedy

**Phone:** 808-222-8862

**Email:** [vreikok@gmail.com](mailto:vreikok@gmail.com)

Food will be served before 5:00 PM, provided by \*\*A Catered Experience\*\*, including vegetarian dishes. Entertainment will begin at 5:00 PM.

Special Auction: Proceeds will support Maui Strong.

Please Note: If you have attended the previous HAB Dole Plantation experience you will need to pay the Kama'aina price and tickets can be picked up at the Dole Plantation box office.

*Liability Disclaimer. All participants are responsible for their own safety throughout the event. Hawaii Association of the Blind shall not assume any liability resulting in injury or death.*

# **Regularly Scheduled Events**

Stay engaged with our community through these regularly scheduled events.

# Holo Holo Shoppers Event

## **When:**

October 4, 2024,  
4:00 PM – 7:00 PM

## **Where:**

Pearl City Foodland Farms  
1150 Kuala Street,  
Pearl City, Hi 96782



Shopping cart filled with  
fresh fruit

*To provide a supported social gathering in a community setting to strengthen shopping, communication, and O&M skills*

**RSVP:**

Sherri Martinez, COMSa

**Email:** sherrimartinez46@gmail.com

**Phone:** (808)561-5968

*Liability Disclaimer. All participants are responsible for their own safety throughout the event. Hawaii Association of the Blind shall not assume any liability resulting in injury or death.*

# HAB General Monthly Meeting

Attend our general monthly meetings to stay informed and involved with our community.

## **When:**

October 5, 2024

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

## **Contact:**

Call (808) 521-7648 for inquiries

## **Where:**

Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD)

402 Kapahulu Avenue,  
Honolulu, HI 96815



# LBPD Monthly Book Club

Join us for our monthly book club and social time.

## **When:**

October 5, 2024

2:00 PM – 3:30 PM

## **RSVP:**

Call: 808-733-8444

Email: [olbcirc@librarieshawaii.org](mailto:olbcirc@librarieshawaii.org)

## **Where:**

Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD)

402 Kapahulu Avenue,  
Honolulu, HI 96815

# Walking Club

Join our walking clubs to stay active and enjoy the community.

## Waipio Walking Club

### When:

Every Monday

4:00 PM – 6:00 PM

### Dates:

- October 7, 2024
- October 14, 2024
- October 21, 2024
- October 28, 2024

### Where:

Patsy Mink Park,

8007 Fort Weaver Road,  
Honolulu, HI 96819

(Parking lot on the Waipio Uka or  
Jack in the Box side)

# Pearlridge Walking Club

## When:

Every Wednesday

2:15 PM

## Dates:

- October 2 2024
- October 9, 2024
- October 16, 2024
- October 23, 2024
- October 30, 2024

## Where:

Pearlridge Mall,

91-1001 Moanalua Road,  
Aiea, HI 96701

(By the food court on the Uptown  
or Macy's side)

# ***HAB News***

# Six Reminders for the General Election

By: Office of Elections

Ahead of the 2024 General Election on November 5, we have a few key reminders for Hawaii voters.

1. Hawaii is a vote-by-mail state. Your General Election ballot will arrive by mail. Registered Hawaii voters automatically receive a mail ballot for every election.
2. Check that your voter

registration is current. Visit [elections.hawaii.gov](https://elections.hawaii.gov) or call (808) 453-VOTE (8683) to verify that your voter registration is accurate. If you have moved or changed your mailing address since the Primary Election, you must update your voter registration to ensure that your mail ballot is sent to your current address. Conveniently update online or by submitting

a Voter Registration Application. Voter Registration Applications are also available at post offices or libraries.

3. Sign up for ballot notifications. Be able to track when your ballot has been mailed and when your voted ballot has been received through ballot notifications. Sign up to receive alerts by text, email, or a phone message at [elections.hawaii.gov](https://elections.hawaii.gov).
4. Sign your ballot return envelope. You can expect to receive your ballot packet by October 18 for the General Election. Before your ballot arrives, review

statements from the candidates at [elections.hawaii.gov](https://elections.hawaii.gov). You must sign the return envelope for your ballot to be counted.

5. Your ballot must be received by 7:00 pm on November 5. Voted ballots can be returned by mail or dropped off at a ballot drop box. Visit [elections.hawaii.gov](https://elections.hawaii.gov) for location details. Ballots received after the deadline cannot be counted.
6. Assistance is available. In need of assistance? Consider the following accessible options:
  - 1) Visit a voter service center to vote using accessible voting equipment, or
  - 2) Request an

electronic ballot and mark your ballot using your personal compatible device. personal compatible device.

2) Visit [elections.hawaii.gov](https://elections.hawaii.gov) to learn more about accessible voting.

# On the Rail We Go!

By Terri-lynn Higashi Akamine

On September 14, 2024, the Hawai'i Association of the Blind and the Parent and Youth (PAY) committee went on a trip on the rail. We brought our friends and family along to enjoy the experience.

Things that we learned:

- how to get a Holo card using the talking feature on the Holo card machine
- How to use your Holo card
- Tips on how to navigate through

the station

- Learning different features of the rail such as a call button to push for assistance

Those that attended enjoyed that it was their first time and that they could explore and venture out with others. It was amazing to hear canes tapping, people laughing as we navigated the rail and bridge. Here are some of the participant comments:

"I loved being able to reload my Holo card using the audio feature



and learn how to push the button for assistance.” - Dominique

“It was great to experience the rail with other people in a safe gathering.”- Sandra and Pat

“we have been waiting to experience the rail and learn about navigating the station.” - Yumiko, Dennis, and, Lorenzo

Much Mahalo to all those who came out as we would not have an event without your attendance. To the O and M instructors and interns thank you for taking the time to help navigate this wonderful experience. Finally, Thank you to the staff at the rail stations. They

were so helpful and informative.

# **Other News**

# Hawaiian Electric Public Safety Power Shutoff

To help keep your community safe, it may be necessary for Hawaiian Electric to turn off electricity to lessen the risk of wildfires during extreme weather events. This is known as Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS).

We want to ensure that you are prepared for any potential power outages. In some extreme cases, outages could last for multiple days due to weather conditions or the need for repairs.

Please take a moment to review resources and information available at [hawaiianelectric.com/psp](http://hawaiianelectric.com/psp) or feel free to call customer service to speak with a customer care representative at any of these numbers:

- Oahu: 808-548-7311
- Maui: 808-871-9777
- Molokai / Lanai: 1-877-871-8461 toll free
- Hilo: 808-969-6999

- Kona: 808-329-3584
- Waimea: 808-885-4605

It's crucial to have a plan in place for maintaining your medical device if the power goes out. This includes arranging for backup power sources and having a list of emergency contacts ready.

No single factor drives PSPS. Hawaiian Electric carefully reviews a combination of criteria when determining if power should be turned off for safety. These factors generally include forecasts of strong winds and very low humidity levels, along with critically dry vegetation and on-the-ground observations from

field crews.

If we need to turn off power for safety, we will attempt to contact you in advance to give you time to prepare. For customers who are on life support or use medical devices that need electricity, it is important to prepare before a PSPS.

## **How to prepare**

We all rely on electricity for everyday life. If you or someone you know relies on power for medical needs, access a useful checklist to support preparedness published by The Pacific Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Center at [adata.org/](http://adata.org/)

factsheet/emergency-power. To help prepare for PSPS outages, Here are some things you may want to consider:

- Planning for medical needs like medications that require refrigeration or devices that use electricity.
- Building or restocking an emergency kit with flashlights, batteries, first aid supplies and cash.
- Having contact information for your medical provider and/or close family or friends who can provide assistance during an emergency.
- Updating your contact information with your current phone number and email at [hawaiianelectric.com/myaccount](http://hawaiianelectric.com/myaccount) or by calling 808-548-7311.
- If you have medical needs and rely on electricity but do not have an electric account with us, please be sure to fill out our Medical Needs Communication Form at [hawaiianelectric.com/medicalneedsalerts](http://hawaiianelectric.com/medicalneedsalerts).
- Ensuring evacuees with health needs are either capable of taking care of their own needs or will be accompanied by a caregiver.

- Having a contingency plan set up with an equipment company or home health agency that includes a backup generator for life support systems. If a backup generator is not available, call 911 or your local hospital.

All households are encouraged to visit [preparenowhawaii.org](https://preparenowhawaii.org) for additional emergency preparedness tips and resources in support of health and wellbeing.

## **What we have done**

Hawaiian Electric has begun deploying a network of high-resolution video cameras using artificial intelligence (AI)

technology and weather stations to provide enhanced situational awareness and early detection of ignitions in elevated fire risk areas near company infrastructure. The public will also have access to the live feeds from any of the cameras at <https://alertwest.live/>.

Thank you for your attention and please stay safe.

# CNET – Friday, September 6, 2024 at 3:54 PM

By Pamela Vachon on Sept. 12, 2024 3:47 p.m. PT

## Instacart Just Got a Whole Lot Cheaper

Instacart and other grocery delivery services offer convenience but the knock on most, especially on-demand delivery operations, is the excessive fees, bloated prices when you shop in-app or membership costs.

Good news for those of you who have never dabbled in grocery delivery due to the annoying

upcharges: Instacart just rolled out new initiatives to pass much-needed savings along to customers. The best of which includes waving the \$8 delivery fee for those who schedule their delivery at least 24 hours in advance.

If you've never been one, now might be the best time to check out whether the service might regularly or even occasionally work for you.

Save \$8 on delivery fee by planning ahead

Schedule your delivery a day in advance and Instacart now waves the \$8 fee.

In addition to the slightly inflated grocery store prices you incur by shopping through the Instacart service, the add-on fees beyond the cost of goods are what can make Instacart feel more like a luxury than a convenience, and may be the barrier to entry for some shoppers.

To start, a minimum \$7.99 delivery fee is applied to each order -- more if you want it in a bigger hurry. A variable "service fee"

is tacked on to each order to support the Instacart platform, depending on your order and location, and a delivery driver tip is calculated based on a percentage of the cost of the items you purchase. (You can select the tip percentage, but this is not the place to save yourself some money by disregarding the fact that someone is delivering for you and is tipped as part of their compensation.)

Depending on the size of your order, these are the bits that can make your typical Instacart grocery shop feel overly inflated. A \$60 grocery shop can easily become \$80 or more. In that



example, if you can handle the idea of basically paying someone \$20 to shop for you, then you can understand the appeal.

The biggest and most obvious savings with Instacart's new initiative, then, is the elimination of the \$7.99 delivery fee if you're simply willing to plan for delivery the following day and within a three-hour window. In many stores, you can even place the order before bed for delivery first thing in the morning after your shop opens.

Normally, delivery by Instacart is designed to happen on the same day as you place an

order, typically within a couple of hours depending on the size of the order, for the normal \$7.99 delivery fee. A "Priority" option tacks on a few additional dollars beyond that if you want to get it in the next hour or so, and make sure your shopper/driver is dropping off your order first. The fee drops to a modest \$2.99 if you're able to pick a delivery window later on the same day.

Although \$8 may feel like a drop in the bucket depending on how much you're spending to have groceries delivered, consider that the average Instacart order in 2023, according to statistics published by the brand, was only

\$35.64. This amounts to savings of almost 20% if you're willing to think a little bit ahead. Add your loyalty club memberships for additional savings

You can power up your loyalty card memberships via Instacart for added savings and rewards.

Instacart now allows you to connect your loyalty card from various retailers for additional savings. Major outlets such as Albertsons, Costco, Food Lion, Kroger, and Wegmans, among others, participate in the platform, and your loyalty card may be added once you click on the particular store to begin

shopping, or at checkout, by providing the email, phone, or account number linked with your loyalty club membership.

The kinds of savings you would see in-store available to club members are also available to club members shopping through Instacart. Prices are still inflated for the Instacart service, but similar sales are nonetheless offered for online shoppers. By adding my Wegmans Shoppers Club membership, for example, various sales promotions appeared in the online store of the type you'd see in store: "Buy one, get one..." "spend \$X on eligible items, save \$X," etc.

Plus, your Instacart purchases also contribute to whatever loyalty rewards your particular membership affords you. Stores such as CVS that offer cash back to their members can add up if you're not limited to earning those points while in-store only.

Shop your personal digital flyer for savings

Instacart now allows you to peruse digital flyers before submitting an order.

When a Lidl opened in my neighborhood, I collected all of the promotional circulars that had been dropped off in my apartment lobby that hadn't

been collected by neighbors and proceeded to score something like \$100 in free groceries over the following week. If you're also that kind of shopper, the new "Flyers" Instacart feature will appeal.

There's an easier way to find sale items at a given store on Instacart all in one place or to be able to find savings regardless of whether you have a club membership. Grocery retailers don't only offer sales and savings to their members. We've all been recipients of the aforementioned weekly circulars that you may find in your mailbox, on your stoop, or in your physical shopping cart that outline weekly in-store deals

that are available for all shoppers. Instacart now offers the digital version of these flyers, located in an icon called “Fliers” on your app’s home screen, making it easier to find useful savings.

Stores you frequently shop or that carry the products you usually buy will appear as available flyers, or you can search among all available flyers for something different.

After selecting a store, you can browse several tabs for savings: “For you” is based on items you’ve purchased in the past, (the app gets wiser to your preferences the more you use it) and “Top savings” shows you what the

best deals are for that week.

Otherwise, you can shop the sale items by department, just as you might be looking out for brightly-colored sale price tags if you were pushing an actual cart down an actual aisle. The expiration date for the available savings is also helpfully located in the app, just as you’d see in-store so you don’t lose out on taking advantage.

The best part about the Flyers feature is that you can see what the savings are for sale items compared to the original Instacart price -- a boon to those who are prone to shopping off-list who are moved by buying items just because they are on sale.

What is Instacart and how does it work?

Instacart can have your order of groceries to you fast, sometimes within an hour.

Founded in 2012, Instacart is an app that partners with national and local brick-and-mortar retailers to allow you to buy groceries without leaving the house. You shop the digital store, and once your order is placed, a human shopper assembles your order and delivers your groceries to you, typically within a couple of hours of placing the order -- hence the "Insta" in the brand name.

My first experience with Instacart was following back surgery when I was saddled with a recovery order to do no lifting for six weeks. Rather than prevailing upon friends for the semi-weekly grocery shops that are required for limited-storage, NYC kitchens, I chose to maintain positive friendships and have an Instacart shopper do it for me. I've used it several times a year ever since, especially following travel, while sick, or even just when workloads get overwhelming. Occasionally during inclement weather.

Instacart's primary drawback is its inflated expense. In addition to several fees that are tacked on

to your grocery order (outlined below), the prices themselves are slightly higher than what you'd see in the physical market, as a means of supporting the service. I have found Instacart to be worthwhile anyway, but I was especially thrilled to see these new additions to the service that can help where it most counts: with the receipt.

<https://www.cnet.com/news/instacart-just-got-a-whole-lot-cheaper/#ftag=CAD590a51e>

# Be My Eyes and Meta Announce Accessibility Partnership

San Francisco, September. 25, 2024

Be My Eyes, the company that connects people who are blind or have low vision with sighted volunteers and companies, through live video and AI, is thrilled to announce a groundbreaking partnership with Meta to provide its award-winning technology on Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses, which blend cutting edge technology with

iconic design.

In a market first, the Ray-Ban Meta and Be My Eyes partnership will allow the user to initiate Be My Eyes' "Call a Volunteer" experience entirely by voice command. Saying "Hey Meta, Call a Volunteer on Be My Eyes" will connect users to a sighted volunteer, who speaks the user's

language, via a one-way video, two-way audio call. Through this integration, the volunteer will see through the lens of the smart glasses in order to provide a real-time description to the user through their open-ear speakers, for everyday tasks such as setting a thermostat, finding the right supermarket aisle, or preparing meals—all while keeping the user's hands free. The Be My Eyes service is completely free for the end user, and already available any time of the day or night.

The “Call a Volunteer” feature on Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses is the first product offering of a wider, combined development

partnership between Be My Eyes and Meta, and will be available soon, initially for users in the US, Canada, UK, Ireland, and Australia.

The combined development work will deliver new levels of accessibility for people who are blind or have low vision, and for the first time, will provide hands-free access to Be My Eyes technology and their global network of 7.7 million volunteers. The development partnership is focused around platform-native integration and ease-of-use, with direct input and unprecedented testing from the blind and low-vision community.



For example, the “Call a Volunteer” integration will allow for easy toggling between glasses and smartphone camera, and back again, providing the user with the flexibility of switching between the world view and the selfie view. This level of functionality is only possible through close development co-operation between the two companies.

The integration of the Be My Eyes platform with Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses is also being designed with simplicity and elegance from the outset, and with a suite of hands-free capabilities, which will provide

an unprecedented, powerful description tool for blind people at work, school or home.

“The Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses hands-free form factor makes them uniquely versatile to serve everyone, including the blind and low vision community,” said Freddy Abnousi, VP of Health Technology at Meta. “The Call a Volunteer feature is the first product offering of combined development between Meta and Be My Eyes and we look forward to seeing how it evolves with direct input from this community.”

“Our collaboration with Meta launches an experience that

addresses something that our community of blind and low-vision users has been requesting for a long time, namely hands-free access to our services.” said Mike Buckley, CEO of Be My Eyes. “The Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses have enabled that, and with our integration we have now opened a gateway to unprecedented levels of accessibility, unlocking new opportunities for those navigating their daily lives. And this is just the beginning.”

“At Meta, our approach to inclusive innovation is a guiding principle that shapes how we build and design our products. We’re working to

build technologies that are truly reflective of the diversity of our nearly 4 billion global users, and our partnership with Be My Eyes is a significant step towards making the world more inclusive and accessible for people who are blind or have low vision,” said Maxine Williams, Chief Diversity Officer at Meta. “We’re excited about the potential of this collaboration and look forward to continuing our work in making accessibility a core part of our product development.”

Potential use cases for the Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses with Be My Eyes are vast. From assisting with grocery shopping, locating a

dropped item, reading important documents, or simply getting a visual description of a complex environment such as a busy airport. Whatever the situation, the glasses combined with Be My Eyes services provide an essential tool that now brings new levels of hands-free accessibility to everyday life.

“As an avid user of Be My Eyes since its launch in 2015, I was excited to test out the integration with Ray-Ban Meta smart glasses,” said Chancey Fleet, a tech educator and advocate who is blind. “It’s the same core connection between a blind or low-vision user and

a sighted volunteer, but, now that it’s hands-free, I can focus on the conversation and what’s happening around me, without the distraction of holding and pointing a phone camera. Last week, for example, I used the integration to find my way through a busy airport, from curbside through security to my gate. Sharing my view from the glasses with a volunteer freed my hands up to manage my bags, react to my guide dog’s cues, and use my phone to show my boarding pass. This partnership gives Be My Eyes users a powerful new way to actively explore the world.”

# Request Waiver Wait Time with Uber or Lyft

To those who take Uber and Lyft and have a disability:

You may have had the experience of having an Uber or Lyft driver show up at a pick-up location that is different from where you are waiting, especially at places like businesses that have multiple entrances and exits or airports with multiple pick-up spots, and you may have then had to call for another ride. To add insult to injury, you may have also incurred a charge for missing your first ride. For those who did

not know, you can get a waiver of all wait fees from Uber and Lyft by certifying that you have a disability. Here are the steps to follow using your smart phone app:

## **Uber:**

1. Open the app.
2. Tap the Account button in the lower right corner.
3. Tap the Help button near the

top left side Scroll down to All Help Topics and tap on the Accessibility button.

4. Under the Resources for Riders with Disabilities heading, tap "I have a disability, how do I request a waiver of wait time fee..."

On this screen, you can request a refund but then further down you can enter your initials to certify that you have a disability and you will be refunded any wait time charges you may incur. Enter your initials here and tap the Submit button

## **Lyft:**

1. Open the app.
2. Tap the Menu button at the top.
3. Scroll down to the "Help" choice and tap on it.
4. Scroll down to "Accessibility" and tap on it.
5. Tap on "Wait Time Fee Waivers."
6. Near the bottom of the screen you can follow the steps as described above for Uber to enter your initials to certify you have a disability and tap on Submit.

# Press Release

Thursday, September 5, 2024

Social Security Administration  
Digitizes or Removes Signature  
Requirements for Many Forms  
Move Eases Burden on Millions of  
Customers

Today, the Social Security Administration (SSA) announced progress this year to reduce customer burden by transitioning wet (physical) signature requirements to digital signatures for over 30 forms as well as removing the signature requirements altogether for 13

forms. These actions simplify application processes for people, including removing a potential reason for claims to be sent back or denied.

“Across forms that Americans use most often, we’re eliminating as many pain points as possible, from helping people sign at the click of a button to reducing the need to drive or mail something in whenever possible,” said Martin O’Malley, Commissioner of Social Security. “This means faster and

more error-free processing and better service for our customers, who deserve a government that meets their needs efficiently and effectively.”

As a result of this work, SSA will now allow an electronic signature rather than a wet signature for more than 30 forms, which make up 90% of the most commonly used forms by SSA customers in local field offices. Collectively, these forms represent about 14 million signed forms submitted annually.

Furthermore, also this year, SSA has removed the signature requirement entirely for 13

of its most commonly used forms totaling about 1 million submissions in volume annually. This includes removing the signature requirement for the Medical Source Opinion of Patient’s Capability to Manage Benefits (Form SSA-787, which has a total annual volume of 768,000), the Letter to Employer Requesting Wage Information (Form SSA-L4201, which has an annual volume of 133,000), and Request for Reconsideration/Disability Cessation Right to Appear (Form SSA-789, which has an annual volume of 49,000). Customers may also upload many of the 13 forms online, further reducing the

burden felt by customers.

To build on this progress, SSA is considering removal of signature requirements on other forms that would ease requirements on about 1 million additional transactions.

Social Security works to pay the right people at the right time in the correct amount. These efforts ensure we maintain strong anti-fraud protections while removing onerous requirements that are not serving their intended purposes.

These efforts also complement other initiatives to modernize and streamline operations. The

agency is expanding paperless communication options for the millions of my Social Security users so they can see their online Social Security Statement, track the status of their claims, and calculate potential retirement benefits. Notices from across 60 categories are now provided through my Social Security for easy online access by customers, including the Cost-of-Living Adjustment, their SSA-1099, Benefit Rate Increases, Appointment Confirmations, and more.

New my Social Security account holders can choose online-only communications with one click,



and others are encouraged to transition for an enhanced experience.

Social Security is undertaking this work in alignment with the Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government (E.O. 14058), the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) guidance Delivering a Digital-First Public Experience (M-23-22), and OMB guidance Improving Access to Public Benefits Programs Through the Paperwork Reduction Act (M-22-10).

To hear directly from

Commissioner O'Malley and learn more about the efforts to remove wet signature requirements, visit the agency's YouTube page.

For more information on online services visit Online Services | SSA. To create a my Social Security account, please visit [www.ssa.gov/myaccount](https://www.ssa.gov/myaccount).

To get more Social Security news, follow the Press Office on X @SSAPress.

<https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases/2024/#2024-09-05>