



The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 closed the loophole that allowed couples to utilize the “file and suspend” technique in filing their Social Security benefits. However, individuals who were born on or before January 1, 1954 may have the opportunity to utilize a filing option called “restricted application”. Once you reach full retirement age (and have not yet claimed your benefits), you may be able to file a restricted application to claim a spousal benefit, while letting your own benefit collect the delayed retirement credits. At age 70, you could switch to your own higher benefit amount – up to 32% more than the full retirement age benefit.

Clients may be able to utilize the restricted application filing method if all the below apply:

- Born on or before 1/1/1954
- Married and both spouses have 40 credits (10 years) of work history
- Spouse should be around the same age (must be full retirement age to utilize restricted application)
- To file for restricted application, you cannot have previously filed for your benefit
- Spouse must have filed for their own retirement benefit before the restricted application for spousal benefit can be filed (can be done at same time)

Example: John and Jane are both 66 and are exploring their Social Security filing options. John’s benefit at full retirement age (FRA) is \$32,000 and Jane’s is \$30,000. They were both born prior to 1/1/1954 so they are able to utilize the restricted application filing method. Jane files for her benefit at FRA and receives \$30,000 a year. John files a restricted application and receives spousal benefits off Jane’s account (\$15,000 a year) and allows his own benefit to grow at 8% a year. At 70, he files for his own higher benefit. This strategy allows John to accumulate delayed retirement credits, effectively increasing his retirement benefit up to 32%.

Please feel free to contact us with questions at 866-230-5879

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