

§ 404.230

20 CFR Ch. III (4–1–10 Edition)

months preceding the effective month in column IV). As explained in § 404.212(e), there is a minimum primary insurance amount of \$122 payable for persons who became eligible or died after 1978 and before January 1982. There is also an alternative minimum of \$121.80 (before the application of cost-of-living increases) for members of this group whose benefits were computed from the benefit table in effect in December 1978 on the basis of either the old-start computation method in §§ 404.240 through 404.242 or the guaranteed alternative computation method explained in §§ 404.230 through 404.233. However, as can be seen from the extended table in appendix III, the lowest primary insurance amount under this method is now \$1.70 for individuals for whom the minimum benefit has been repealed.

Example: In the example in § 404.221(d), we computed Mr. B's average monthly wage to be \$502. We refer to the December 1978 benefit table in appendix III. Then we find his average monthly wage in column III of the table. Reading across, his primary insurance amount is on the same line in column IV and is \$390.50. A 9.9 percent automatic cost-of-living benefit increase was effective for June 1979, increasing Mr. B's primary insurance amount to \$429.20, as explained in §§ 404.270 through 404.277. Then, we increase the \$429.20 by the 14.3 percent June 1980 cost-of-living benefit increase and get \$490.60, and by the 11.2 percent June 1981 increase to get \$545.60.

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GUARANTEED ALTERNATIVE FOR PEOPLE REACHING AGE 62 AFTER 1978 BUT BEFORE 1984

§ 404.230 **Guaranteed alternative.**

(a) *General.* If you reach age 62 after 1978 but before 1984, we compute your primary insurance amount under a modified average-monthly-wage method as a *guaranteed alternative* to your primary insurance amount computed under the average-indexed-monthly-earnings method. We also compute your primary insurance amount under the old-start method (§§ 404.240 through 404.242) and under the special rules for a person who had a period of disability (§§ 404.250 through 404.252), if you are eligible. In §§ 404.231 through 404.233, we explain the average-monthly-wage

method as the alternative to the average-indexed-monthly-earnings method.

(b) *Restrictions.* (1) To qualify for this guaranteed-alternative computation, you must have some creditable earnings before 1979.

(2) You or your survivors do not qualify for a guaranteed-alternative computation if you were eligible (you attained age 62, became disabled, or died before age 62) for social security benefits based on your own earnings at any time before 1979 unless—

(i) Those benefits were disability insurance benefits which were terminated because you recovered from your disability or you engaged in substantial gainful activity; and

(ii) You spent at least 12 months without being eligible for disability benefits again.

(3) This guaranteed alternative method applies only to old-age insurance benefits and to survivor benefits where the deceased worker reached the month of his or her 62nd birthday after 1978 but before 1984 and died after reaching age 62.

§ 404.231 **Steps in computing your primary insurance amount under the guaranteed alternative—general.**

If you reach age 62 after 1978 but before 1984, we follow three major steps in finding your guaranteed alternative:

(a) First, we compute your average monthly wage, as described in § 404.232;

(b) Second, we find the primary insurance amount that corresponds to your average monthly wage in the benefit table in appendix III.

(c) Then we apply any automatic cost-of-living or *ad hoc* increases in primary insurance amounts that have become effective in or after the year you reached age 62.

§ 404.232 **Computing your average monthly wage under the guaranteed alternative.**

(a) *General.* With the exception described in paragraph (b) of this section, we follow the rules in § 404.221 to compute your average monthly wage.

(b) *Exception.* We do not use any year after the year you reach age 61 as a computation base year in computing your average monthly wage for purposes of the guaranteed alternative.