

Why GIS stops in July, and how it starts again

The Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) and the Allowance are renewed each July using the income on the previous year's tax return. When Service Canada has no income information, the benefit can stop until the information arrives. The law allows back payments for no more than 11 months before the month the request is received.

Last checked: 2026-10-06. Read online:
<https://oasguide.ca/en/library/why-gis-stops-in-july>

Almost every GIS renewal happens through the tax return

A Service Canada briefing note from May 2025 says 96% of GIS recipients had their benefit renewed automatically the year before, through the tax returns they filed on time.¹ For that group, the tax return was the renewal. The remaining few percent are the people whose payments are at risk each summer, and the reason has to do with the dates of the benefit year.

The GIS is a monthly payment for people with a low income who receive the Old Age Security (OAS) pension. The Allowance, a related payment for some people aged 60 to 64, follows the same yearly cycle.² The law defines a payment period as July 1 of one year to June 30 of the next.³ Payments in that period are normally based on income from the previous calendar year.⁴ The payments that began in July 2026 therefore depend on 2025 income.

From October to December 2026, the maximum GIS for a single person is \$1,138.90 a month, with an annual income cut-off of \$23,112. The Allowance maximum is \$1,448.06 a month, with a cut-off of \$42,768.⁵

A missing tax return leaves Service Canada without an income figure

Service Canada reviews each GIS and Allowance file once a year using the federal tax return. Its own pages say the return should be filed by April 30 every year to avoid any disruption of payments.⁶² In July, each recipient gets a letter that says one of four things:

- The benefit is renewed, with the new amount.
- The benefit is stopped.
- The benefit will start or resume.
- More income information is needed.

A late return does not always mean a stopped benefit. The form Service Canada uses for income statements notes that a return filed after April 30 could delay the renewal.⁴ A return that is never filed is a larger problem, because Service Canada then has no income figure for the new payment year.

People who do not file a return can renew with a Statement of Income

Filing a tax return is not the only way to renew. A 2022 briefing note says that each July, Service Canada mails a letter to GIS recipients whose income information did not arrive.⁷ The letter explains that the benefit cannot be worked out without that information. It includes a Statement of Income form, which lets a person report income without filing a return.⁷

The form is called the Statement of Income for the Guaranteed Income Supplement, the Allowance or Allowance for the Survivor (ISP-3026). It asks for income and deductions reported the same way as on the federal tax return, using the same information slips.⁴ The same briefing note says income information can also be given by phone, by mail, or in person. A call can prevent or shorten a break in payments.⁷

Back payments are limited to 11 months

A benefit that stops in July can start again once the income information arrives. The amount that can be paid back is limited, however. Section 11 of the Old Age Security Act says no GIS can be paid for any month more than eleven months before the month the application is received.⁸

The 2022 briefing note says most people who missed the renewal send their information by May of the following year. Under the 11-month rule, they go back into pay with no loss of benefits.⁷

The following figures are an illustration of the arithmetic, not a ruling on any file. Suppose a benefit stopped with the July 2026 payment and the income information reaches Service Canada in May 2027. The eleven months before May 2027 reach back to June 2026, so July 2026 onward is covered. If the same information arrived in September 2027, the earliest months that could be paid would begin in October 2026.

A drop in income can be used instead of last year's figure

The one-year delay works against people whose income has just fallen. Someone who retired in early 2026 may have had a full salary in 2025, and the GIS paid from July 2026 would be based on that salary. Service Canada's pages say a recipient can call when their own income, or their spouse's or partner's income, is lower because of retirement. The same applies when another pension is reduced or stops. In those cases, Service Canada can set the payment using an estimate of income for the current year.⁶²

The form for this is the Statement of Estimated Income after Retirement or Reduction in Pension Income (ISP-3041). Its list of pension income includes the following:⁹

- Canada Pension Plan or Quebec Pension Plan benefits.
- Pensions from former employment or from other countries.

- Withdrawals from a registered retirement income fund (RRIF) and annuities from a registered retirement savings plan (RRSP).
- Disability benefits from private insurance, and support or maintenance payments.

Section 14 of the Act lets a person file an estimate after leaving a job, closing a business, or losing pension income. The estimate has to be filed within a set time, which ends one or two payment periods after the current one, depending on when the change happened.¹⁰

An estimate is checked against the actual income later

The form says Service Canada will base payments on either the actual income or the estimated income, whichever is to the person's advantage.⁹ It also says the benefit is recalculated at the end of the year using the income actually received.⁹ An estimate can raise payments sooner, but it is not a substitute for the yearly renewal. The renewal the following July again needs a tax return or a Statement of Income.⁷

Notes

1. Employment and Social Development Canada (Open Government Portal), "Question Period Note: Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS), SC_JUN2025_011", 2025-05-24. https://search.open.canada.ca/qpnotes/record/esdc-edsc,SC_JUN2025_011 (accessed 2026-10-06)
2. Government of Canada, "Allowance: Receiving your benefit", page modified 2026-05-26. <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/old-age-security/guaranteed-income-supplement/allowance/while-receiving.html> (accessed 2026-10-06)
3. See the definition of "payment period" in section 2, paragraph (c). Justice Laws Website (Government of Canada), "Old Age Security Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. O-9), section 2", last amended on 2022-06-23. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/o-9/page-1.html> (accessed 2026-10-06)
4. Service Canada, "Statement of Income for the Guaranteed Income Supplement, the Allowance or Allowance for the Survivor (SC ISP-3026)", form version 2026-01-29. <https://catalogue.servicecanada.gc.ca/apps/EForms/pdf/en/ISP-3026.pdf> (accessed 2026-10-06)
5. Government of Canada (Employment and Social Development Canada), "Maximum Benefit Amounts and Related Figures: CPP (2026) and OAS (October to December

2026)”, page modified 2026-09-29. <https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/pensions/pension/statistics/2026-quarterly-october-december.html> (accessed 2026-10-06)

6. Government of Canada, “Guaranteed Income Supplement: Receiving your benefit”, page modified 2026-05-26. <https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/publicpensions/old-age-security/guaranteed-income-supplement/while-receiving.html> (accessed 2026-10-06)

7. Employment and Social Development Canada (Open Government Portal), “Question Period Note: GIS yearly renewal, Seniors-JUN2022-008”, 2022-03-30. <https://search.open.canada.ca/qpnotes/record/esdc-edsc,Seniors-JUN2022-008> (accessed 2026-10-06)

8. The limit is in paragraph 11(7)(a). Justice Laws Website (Government of Canada), “Old Age Security Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. O-9), section 11”, last amended on 2022-06-23. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/o-9/page-3.html> (accessed 2026-10-06)

9. Service Canada, “Statement of Estimated Income after Retirement or Reduction in Pension Income (SC ISP-3041)”, form version 2026-01-30. <https://catalogue.servicecanada.gc.ca/apps/EForms/pdf/en/ISP-3041.pdf> (accessed 2026-10-06)

10. See subsections 14(2) to 14(6), which cover retirement from a job or business and the termination or reduction of pension income, and set the deadline for each case. Justice Laws Website (Government of Canada), “Old Age Security Act (R.S.C., 1985, c. O-9), section 14”, last amended on 2022-06-23. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/o-9/page-4.html> (accessed 2026-10-06)

OAS Guides is an independent information service. We are not part of, or connected to, the Government of Canada or Service Canada. This article is general information, not legal or financial advice. We cannot promise any result from an application or appeal. Benefit amounts change, usually every three months; this article shows the date we last checked it.