A CLOSER LOOK AT MANDATORY SPENDING

Primarily payments for benefit programs for which laws set eligibility rules and benefit formulas

AT A GLANCE

$2.7 Trillion
Mandatory spending (net of offsetting receipts) by the federal government in 2019

$1.7 Trillion
Spending on Social Security and Medicare (net of offsetting receipts) in 2019

11.5% of GDP
Average mandatory spending (net of offsetting receipts) between 1999 and 2018

12.9% of GDP
Mandatory spending (net of offsetting receipts) in 2019

MANDATORY SPENDING IN 2019
Billions of Dollars

-300 0 300 600 900 1200 1500

MANDATORY SPENDING IN 1999 AND 2019
Percentage of GDP

Funds collected by government agencies from other government accounts or from the public that are credited as an offset to gross spending. Offsetting receipts include Medicare premiums, intragovernmental payments for federal employees’ retirement, and receipts related to natural resources (such as those from oil and gas exploration and development).

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Source: Congressional Budget Office, April 2020

All data are for federal fiscal years, which run from October 1 to September 30.
Numbers may not add up to totals because of rounding.