

Providing a Solid Foundation for Your Social Security Benefits Claim

Q: When filing for social security disability, what should you do to increase the likelihood that your application will be approved?

A: The majority of social security benefits claims are denied when they go through the first phase of the disability application cycle, but you can assure that you give your claim the fairest chance possible. Having a doctor who supports your decision to file for disability is integral to helping your case. The disability examiner for your case places a lot of value on the statement provided by your doctor. One of the big causes of delays for a decision on a case is incomplete or lack of medical information. Assure that you have submitted thorough and current copies of all your medical data. Do so again when having your case reconsidered or requesting to have it heard before an administrative judge. Always be cordial and polite when dealing with Social Security. The representatives want to reach a social security benefits decision as quickly as possible, so are not working against you. By being as cooperative and available as you can, it makes it easier for them to fairly process your case. Another factor to give your case the best chance is to not miss a deadline. Make sure you keep track of where your claim is in the social security benefits process and understand the required paperwork and deadlines. Many people find the claims process for social security benefits confusing and daunting. If you fear you cannot properly apply or respond to requests, you would be wise to consider hiring a social security attorney.

Q: What should the statement from your doctor say when applying for [social security disability](#)?

A: The letter your physician provides for your social security benefits file will need several components to solidly support your claim. The statement should start off by detailing your medical condition. Next, the letter needs to make clear what your physical restrictions are and how that impacts your employment. The third thing the letter will need to elucidate is the outlook for your injury and your recovery.

Q: Are reconsideration and appeal the same thing in the social security benefits process?

A: Both are part of the appeals process. The first step if your claim was not approved after the initial review process is to file for reconsideration. This must be done within 60 days of when you received notification that your application was denied. If your claim is not awarded benefits after reconsideration, your next step is to request a hearing. Some states may be skipping the reconsideration process right now, so check with your claims representative to see whether you should file for reconsideration or move on to the hearing process.

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