

## Do You Need a Social Security Attorney to Appeal?

Q: What is the process your SSDI benefits claim will go through when you file for benefits?

A: Your file will be initially reviewed after you apply for disability benefits. You will have an initial interview either at a social security office or by telephone, if it has not happened yet. The purpose of the interview is to assure that you have submitted all the requisite forms and that your file contains all the necessary details for the initial review. Your file will then be assigned to a disability examiner at your state Social Security DDS office. Once your requested medical information has been received by your case manager, he will confer with a doctor on staff to collectively make a decision about your file. At this point, you will receive notification about approval or denial for your requested disability benefits. The majority of cases are denied after the initial review process. You can then request a reconsideration for your claim. Your file will undergo another review with a case manager and doctor assigned to reconsideration. Many claimants seek the counsel of a social security attorney at this point in the process. That is because most cases are again denied after being reconsidered. And the next step would be to appeal to have your claim heard before an administrative judge. This will be your final opportunity to present your claim and be awarded benefits. That is why most claimants have an advocate like a social security attorney at this point. Although a social security attorney is not required for any step in the process, it is extremely beneficial to have the expertise of an attorney during a hearing. Most cases that are awarded benefits after the hearing process are represented by an attorney.

Q: If you have a social security attorney, do you have to do anything to file for disability?

A: A social security attorney typically handles all the paperwork after you have applied for benefits. You need to complete and submit the paperwork for your initial claim. You will normally also need to fill out forms regarding your work history and how your condition has affected your ability to work. Most lawyers make sure their clients have completed all those required items. Your social security attorney will also follow up with Social Security to make sure everything has been submitted correctly and on time.

Q: Can you submit an application for social security disability online?

A: Social Security does accept applications via their secure web page. You can download and complete the initial application, as well as the questionnaire regarding your condition and work history. A basic guide is also available on the site, to help you complete everything. To start the process, go to <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability>.

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## About the Author

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