

## Can a Social Security Lawyer Help with an SSD Appeal?

Q: What is the difference between SSI and SSDI?

A: Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income are both disability benefits, but they are not the same. Those who have contributed to social security during their work history and have accumulated enough credits, are eligible for SSDI. How long you have been employed, your income record and accumulated work credits are all factored into your qualification to receive SSDI benefits. A credit is earned roughly every quarter of the year a person works and earns at least a minimum amount of income (established each year by Social Security). An individual can generally qualify for SSDI if he has worked the calendar equivalent of 5 years out of the last 10. SSI, on the other hand, is awarded based on financial need. SSI can be awarded, regardless of work history. To be eligible for SSI, an individual cannot earn more than \$1,433 per month in wages (\$694 per month if the income is not from wages). An individual must report all wages, resources and income when applying for SSI. If you have any questions about whether you qualify for SSI or SSDI, contact a social security lawyer.

Q: Should I hire a social security lawyer if my application for disability was not approved?

A: You do not need to have a social security lawyer in order to appeal your claim. But, claimants are often advised to hire a social security lawyer for the appeals process. The first step after an application is denied is to have the case reconsidered. Frequently, a claim is denied again after reconsideration. If you wish to appeal further, you will need to move on to the hearing process. It is strongly recommended that you have a social security lawyer for the hearing process. The likelihood that your claim will be denied decreases with an advocate like a lawyer on your side. A social security lawyer will also know how to properly file paperwork within deadlines and assure that your case is adjudicated properly. Additionally, a lawyer can help establish the best date of onset for your condition and file for any back pay benefits.

Q: Do I let my lawyer complete and submit all forms for social security disability benefits?

A: If you have hired the services of a social security lawyer, he will assure that your paperwork has been filed correctly and within the required deadlines. That being said, you should understand and know what paperwork is required. This is your case, after all, and you should be involved. Your lawyer will assist you, but there are some things that should be completed by you. The application for disability benefits and anything that involves your employment history, for example, can be filled out by you.

## About the Author

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