

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

Q: What are the steps your file goes through after you submit an application for social security disability benefits?

A: The first step in the social security disability process is the initial review. If you have not already had an interview via phone or in person with a social security representative, you will be contacted. 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. You will then be notified as to whether or not you will be awarded social security disability. Most claims are not approved when initially reviewed. You can then request a reconsideration for your claim. A disability examiner and consultative physician that only deal with reconsidered files will evaluate your case. 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. The hearing is your last chance to have your case considered. 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: Will your social security attorney handle everything to apply for disability benefits?

A: A social security attorney typically handles all the paperwork after you have applied for benefits. You should submit your own application for an 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. A social security attorney will keep contact with your claims representative to assure that your file is being adjudicated properly and that no deadlines are missed.

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

A: Social Security does accept applications via their secure web page. The application and report on your employment history and injury can both be submitted via the web. A basic guide is also available on the site, to help you complete everything. Visit <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/applyonline> to find out more.

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## About the Author

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