

YOUR PATH THROUGH THE SSD APPEALS PROCESS!



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START
YOUR SUBMISSION
FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
DISABILITY BENEFITS

1 INITIAL APPLICATION

Begin the application online (SSA.gov) or file in-person at your local Social Security Office

TIMELINE:
USUALLY
SEVERAL
MONTHS

until a determination is made

DENIED?

FILE FOR RECONSIDERATION

✓ **APPROVAL!**

ODDS
5% of claims are APPROVED at Reconsideration

2 RECONSIDERATION

TIP

Be sure to submit complete information and all requested documents

At this step in the appeal process, a new DDS worker is looking at your information. New evidence can be submitted.

ODDS
50% of claims are APPROVED at this level

3 YOUR ALJ HEARING

Your testimony & medical evidence are used to make a determination of eligibility for benefits.

TIMELINE:
AVERAGE NATIONAL WAIT TIME FOR A HEARING IS 13 MONTHS

✓ **APPROVAL!**

FILE RECONSIDERATION OR APPEAL TO COURT

3 HEARING WITH AN ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE

DENIED?

FILE REQUEST FOR HEARING WITH AN ADMINISTRATIVE JUDGE (ALJ)

✓ **APPROVAL!**

TIMELINE:
WAIT
6-8 MONTHS
FOR A DECISION

TIP

Respond to all information requested from DDS, even if it's repetitive.

TIP

Be sure to keep your attorney updated

TIP

You have the chance to submit new or additional evidence at this stage

4 THE APPEALS COUNCIL

is comprised of ALJs that have the authority to grant, remand, or deny your appeal

TIMELINE:
THE WAIT FOR FOR A RESPONSE CAN TAKE 12-14 MONTHS

DENIED?

FILE US DISTRICT COURT (STEP 5)

✓ **APPROVAL!**

5 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT (STEP 5)

TIP

Less than 1% of disability claims proceed to Federal Courts

ODDS
This are approved at this stage. Around 50% of claims are awarded to the ALJ by additional evidence

At this stage your claim has moved out of administrative courts and appeals would proceed as follows:

RETURN TO STEP 1

✓ **APPROVED!
CONGRATS!**

REMANDED?

DENIED?

CONSIDER FILING A NEW CLAIM

TIMELINE:
10-12 MONTHS

U.S. DISTRICT COURT
+
U.S. CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS
+
U.S. SUPREME COURT

ODDS
40% of claims at this level are remanded to step #2

Helpful Tip

CONSIDER WORKING WITH AN SSD ATTORNEY THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS

