

FILING THE SSI APPLICATION



To file a claim for Supplemental Security Income, call the Social Security office at 1-800-772-1213 or go to your local Social Security office. Going there without an appointment may result in a long wait. We advise calling first to set up an appointment. If you want someone to help you, such as a family member, caseworker or other representative, that person can contact the Social Security office for you. After you inquire about an application, an interview will be scheduled.

You will get a faster decision if you give Social Security the following:

- Medical records from doctors, therapists, hospitals, clinics, and caseworkers.
- School records regarding your child's disability.
- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of the child's doctors, clinics, hospitals, school staff, and anyone familiar with your child's disability.
- Names of all medications your child is taking.
- A list of your child's daily activities. Include a list of things your child cannot do because of his/her disability, or the things that take him/her longer to do since s/he became disabled.

IMPORTANT: Parents should not delay filing because they don't have all the necessary documentation. **File the application first! You can send the rest in later.** For a list of documents needed to file a SSI claim, see **"Applicant's Checklist for SSI"**.

The filing date is very important. If SSA later approves the SSI application, the child will receive **retroactive benefits**. To maximize benefits, parents should file before the first of a month. For example, if an application is filed on March 31, 2017, benefits could be paid for April, 2017. Otherwise, if the application is filed on April 1, 2017, the first possible month of payment is May 2017.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT: The application and the documentation you provided will be sent to Disability Determination Services. If they have enough information, they will make a decision. If they need more information, they will contact you. They may schedule your child for a Consultative Exam at no cost to you.

If the claim is approved, Social Security will tell you when the payments will start and the amount of the monthly cash benefits. If the claim is denied, Social Security must tell you about your appeal rights. Refer to "appeals" section for more information. Applicants often get denied 2-3 times before getting approved. Often, supporting documentation can simply be submitted with the appeal. It is important to appeal the decision rather than re-apply at a later date in order to ensure that you secure the filing date.