

## To Apply for Disability Benefits, Do You Need a Social Security Attorney?

Q: Is it necessary to be represented by a [social security attorney](#) when you apply for disability benefits?

A: It is not required that you have representation when applying for disability with social security. Most applicants can submit their application for initial review without any difficulty. You may wish to have a social security attorney, however, if you are concerned about getting paperwork in on time or do not understand the process or requirements for making a claim. A fair number of claims are not approved after they go through the first review. If your claim is submitted in the correct manner, it will assure that it is adjudicated properly. Again, many applicants that do not have a lawyer submit everything on time and without difficulty for the initial review process. Most experts recommend hiring a social security attorney if your initial claim is not approved and you plan to have it reconsidered. If you plan to go through the hearing process after your claim has been reconsidered and was not approved, it is wise to have a lawyer. The majority of claimants who have appealed to have their claim heard before a judge have a lawyer on their side. A hearing is your last chance to have your case considered. The expertise of a social security attorney will be essential to making sure your case goes through the hearing phase properly. The majority of claimants who are awarded disability benefits during a hearing process have been represented by a lawyer.

Q: Is it better to submit a new application after your disability claim was not approved, or to appeal?

A: Assuming you submitted your application correctly, it is not advisable to start back at step one again. The majority of applications for social security disability are denied after the initial review process. Your next step is to file for reconsideration. You must apply for reconsideration within 2 months of notification of denial. If you do not submit the paperwork within that timeframe, you give up your right to appeal and have to submit a brand new application at step one. Most likely, since your claim was not approved after the initial review the first time, it will not be approved the second time. You will then be back where you started and have to file for reconsideration within the 60 days. If you are denied after your case was reconsidered, you will have to move on to the hearing process. Applying for initial review a second time would have wasted your precious time. It may be helpful to consult with a social security attorney, if you have missed appeals deadlines or are confused about the process.

Q: Are you allowed to apply for disability insurance via the web?

A: Submitting your application for disability insurance can be done via the web. Social Security has a section on its web site to help walk you through applying online ([www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).)

## About the Author

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