



**SOCIAL SECURITY  
& VETERANS DISABILITY**  
We Won't Take NO For An Answer®



OCTOBER 2014

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT  
COMPASSIONATE ALLOWANCES  
AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS  
FOR SOCIAL SECURITY**

Most people would say without a doubt that they know the definition of "disability". But, just like anything else, disability can be a matter of degree. Social Security has its own definition of what makes someone disabled enough to qualify for benefits. The process of determining whether or not an individual qualifies for Social Security Disability Benefits can be very complex. Then, on the other hand, there are certain illnesses and conditions that are so severe they always meet the standard of disability.

Our newest newsletter focuses on definitions of the term "disabled", and I think the two articles we have included here will help shed new light on how Social Security determines who will receive benefits. The first of these gives a broad overview of the most basic requirements to meet the standard of disabled. The second article looks at "Compassionate Allowances", and helps outline medical conditions that are severe enough that they obviously meet Social Security's criteria for disability.

I hope these articles will help better define what it means to be disabled as far as Social Security is concerned. Of course, if you have any questions about your physical or mental condition, or that of a loved one, I hope you will feel free to give us a call. Our experienced team has an incredible amount of experience in every aspect of Social Security Disability, and we are always happy to help answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to hearing from you soon. In the meantime, happy reading!

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**JAN DILS**  
Social Security Disability  
law blog

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## WHAT ARE THE ACTUAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY BENEFITS?

To qualify for Social Security disability benefits, you must have worked long enough in jobs covered by Social Security (usually 10 years). Then, you must have a medical condition that meets Social Security's [definition of disability](#). But how is disability defined by the Social Security Administration?

The definition of disability under Social Security is different than other programs. Social Security pays only for total disability. No benefits are payable for partial disability or for short-term disability.

**"Disability" under Social Security is based on your inability to work. Social Security will consider you disabled if:**

- You cannot do work that you did before
- Social Security decides that you cannot adjust to other work because of your medical condition(s)
- Your disability has lasted or is expected to last for at least one year or to result in death

**There are special situations that may be considered as well such as:**

- If You Are Blind
- If You Are The Worker's Widow Or Widower
- Benefits For A Disabled Child
- Disability Benefits For Wounded Warriors

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In general, Social Security pays monthly benefits to people who are unable to work for a year or more, or who have a condition expected to end in death. The disability must be so severe the worker cannot work, considering age, education and experience. For each of the major body systems, Social Security maintains a [list of medical conditions](#) that are so severe they automatically mean that you are disabled. If your condition is not on the list, Social Security will then have to decide if it is of equal severity to a medical condition that is on the list. If it is, Social Security will find that you are disabled.

For more information on the list of medical conditions that automatically qualify, visit <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/listing-impairments.htm>.

Source: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/dibplan/dqualify4.htm>

## WHAT ARE COMPASSIONATE ALLOWANCES?

Social Security has an obligation to provide benefits quickly to applicants whose medical conditions are so serious that their conditions obviously meet disability standards.

Compassionate Allowances (CAL) are a way of quickly identifying diseases and other medical conditions that invariably qualify under the Listing of Impairments based on minimal objective medical information. Compassionate Allowances allow Social Security to target the most obviously disabled individuals for allowances based on objective medical information that can be obtained quickly. Compassionate Allowances is not a separate program from the Social Security Disability Insurance or Supplemental Security Income programs.

CAL conditions are selected using information received at public outreach hearings, comments received from the Social Security and Disability Determination Services communities, counsel of medical and scientific experts, and Social Security's research with the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Also, Social Security considers which conditions are most likely to meet their current [definition of disability](#).

Social Security has held seven Compassionate Allowances public outreach hearings. The hearings were on rare diseases, cancers, traumatic brain injury (TBI) and stroke, early-onset Alzheimer's disease and related dementias, schizophrenia, cardiovascular disease and multiple organ transplants and autoimmune diseases.

A comprehensive list of diseases and conditions that qualify for Compassionate

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Allowances is available at [www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm](http://www.ssa.gov/compassionateallowances/conditions.htm), along with answers to some frequently asked questions.

Source: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/compassionateallowances/>

*Jan Dils keeps you updated on Social Security disability benefits news and important issues that matter the most. We not only focus on Social Security Disability, we also provide legal assistance for Veterans Disability Benefits. We understand the claims process and specialize in making sure Veterans receive the proper representation needed for receiving benefits. For more information on our Veterans Disability services, please visit [www.fight4vets.com](http://www.fight4vets.com)*

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Jan Dils, Attorneys at Law, handles Social Security disability and Veterans' disability claims for clients throughout West Virginia with offices located in Parkersburg-Beckley-Charleston-Huntington-Logan as well as one additional office located in Charlotte, North Carolina. But regardless of where you are located we are able to serve you or a family member Nationwide.

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