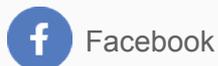




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The results are in and it looks like our furry friend the groundhog is predicting an early spring! However, we haven't yet seen the last of the cold weather—so I recommend staying indoors, keeping warm, and reading our latest Social Security Disability and SSDI newsletter.

As you know, the process of applying for disability benefits, waiting for a decision and, very often, appealing a denial can be a long and very complicated process. That is one reason that our clients choose the Jan Dils team to make sure that the right information is provided at the right step in the process, and to present the strongest case to move your claim through the system as quickly and successfully as possible.

We keep each client informed every step of the way, outlining the process and sharing key updates. The process of determining whether or not Social Security will consider you disabled and approve your benefits is broken into 5 main steps. We have included a short overview of those 5 steps here, along with an article with some basic guidelines to help you determine how much work history you will need under Social Security to qualify.



[Social Security Disability While on Unemployment](#)

[Can Social Security Disability Benefits be Garnished?](#)

[New Social Security Fraud Unit](#)

[Can felons get social security disability benefits?](#)

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So stay warm, read up, and as always please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have. We're always happy to hear from you, and we're always happy to help!

Sincerely,



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THE 5-STEP DISABILITY DECISION PROCESS

If you have enough work to qualify for disability benefits, Social Security uses a step-by-step process involving five questions to decide if you are disabled:

1. Are you working?

If you are working in 2016 and your earnings average more than \$1,130 a month, you generally cannot be considered disabled. If you are not working, Social Security will send your application to the [Disability Determination Services](#) office that will make the decision about your medical condition. (Steps 2-5).

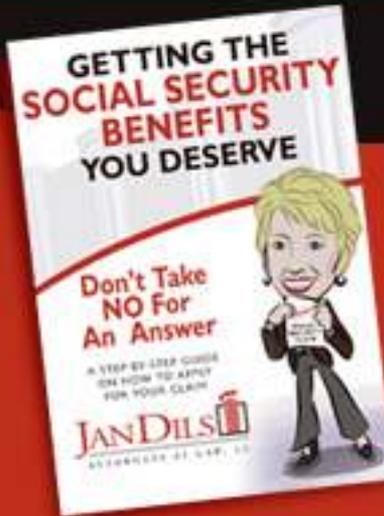
2. Is your condition "severe"?

Your condition must interfere with basic work-related activities for your claim to be considered. If it does not, Social Security will find that you are not disabled. If your condition does interfere with basic work-related activities, the process moves to Step 3.

3. Is your condition found in the list of disabling conditions?

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 decide if it is of equal severity to a medical condition that is on the list. If it is, they will find that you are disabled. If it is not, the process moves

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on to Step 4.

4. Can you do the work you did previously?

If your condition is severe but not at the same or equal level of severity as a medical condition on the list, then Social Security must determine if it interferes with your ability to do the work you did previously. If it does not, your claim will be denied. If it does, the process moves to Step 5.

5. Can you do any other type of work?

If you cannot do the work you did in the past, Social Security will see if you are able to adjust to other work. They consider your medical conditions and your age, education, past work experience and any transferable skills you may have. If you cannot adjust to other work, your claim will be approved. If you can adjust to other work, your claim will be denied.



Source:

<https://socialsecurity.gov/planners/disability/dqualify5.html#&a0=4>



In addition to meeting the [definition of disability](#), you must have worked long enough—and recently enough—under Social Security to qualify for disability benefits.

Social Security work credits are based on your total quarterly wages or self-employment income. You can earn 1 credit per quarter with a total of 4 credits per year. The amount needed for a credit changes from year to year. In 2016, for example, you will receive one credit each quarter that you earn a minimum of \$1,260 of wages or self-employment income. It's also important to note that if you are self-employed, you must elect to pay FICA taxes in order to earn credits.

The number of work credits you need to qualify for disability benefits depends on your age when you become disabled. Generally, you need 40 credits, 20 of which were earned in the last 10 years ending with the year you become disabled. However, [younger workers may qualify with fewer credits](#). Remember that whatever your age is, you must have earned the required number of work credits within a certain period ending with the time you become disabled. If you qualify now but you stop working under Social Security, you may not continue to meet the disability work requirement in the future.



Source:

<https://socialsecurity.gov/planners/disability/dqualify2.html>

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

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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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