

Tips to Help You Apply for Social Security Disability Benefits with Tourette's Syndrome

Applying for Social Security Disability benefits can be a complex and overwhelming process. Fortunately, if you are suffering from Tourette's syndrome and are unable to work due to the severity of your condition, there are things you can do to make the application process easier and increase your chances of a successful application outcome. The following tips will help you increase your chances of receiving Social Security Disability benefits due to Tourette's syndrome.

Tip #1: Determine Whether or Not You Medically Qualify for Benefits

In most cases, in order to receive disability benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA), you must be able to prove that you meet the criteria of a condition that has been listed in the SSA's Blue Book. The Blue Book is a listing of all of the conditions that may qualify an individual for benefits, along with the criteria that must be met in order to qualify under each listing. Unfortunately, there is no specific listing for Tourette's syndrome. That does not mean, however, that you cannot qualify for benefits with this condition. In order to qualify for benefits, you will have to work to prove that you are unable to perform any type of work activity through a Residual Functional Capacity (RFC) Evaluation. To determine whether or not you qualify, the SSA will evaluate your ability to sit, stand, walk, lift, climb, and perform other activities. They will also evaluate your ability to interact with co-workers. Oftentimes, those who are applying for disability benefits due to Tourette's will be more likely to qualify through the mental RFC since the symptoms of the condition can severely inhibit your ability to interact with others and be productive in the workplace. If your condition is not severe enough to prevent you from interacting with co-workers and being productive in the workplace, you may not be able to qualify for SSDI or SSI benefits.

For more information on medically qualifying with Tourette's visit: <http://www.disability-benefits-help.org/disabling-conditions/tourettes-syndrome>

Tip #2: Understand the Different Disability Programs

The SSA operates two different disability programs including Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). Each program has its own qualifying criteria.

In order to qualify for SSDI benefits, you must have earned enough work credits through prior work activity. The exact number of credits needed to qualify will vary depending on your age. Income is not considered when approving an individual for SSDI benefits.

If you do not have enough work credits to qualify for SSDI benefits, you may still be able to qualify for SSI benefits. You must, however, meet the SSA's income guidelines in order to qualify for SSI. As of 2014, you must not earn more than \$721 per month for an individual and \$1,082 per month for a couple. You must also not have more than \$2,000 in assets as an individual or \$3,000 as a couple.

For more information on the different disability programs visit: <http://www.ssa.gov/disability/>

Tip #3: Find Out What Medical and Financial Evidence You Need to Gather

Knowing what evidence you need to gather before submitting your application can make the process go much more smoothly. You will need to gather as much medical evidence as possible and, if you are applying for SSI benefits, you will also need to gather financial evidence.

To qualify for Social Security Disability benefits with Tourette's syndrome, you should prepare a complete copy of your medical records. This includes all test results and a complete treatment history. You should also try to obtain a written statement from your treating physician explaining how your condition limits your ability to work. If you are applying for SSI benefits, make sure you bring proof of any household income and assets including paycheck stubs and bank statements.

Tip #4: Understand the Disability Application and Appeals Process

One of the most important things to do when applying for benefits is ensure that you understand the application and appeal process.

During the initial application process, it is your job to prove to the SSA (through medical evidence and written statements from treating physicians) that your condition is so severe it prevents you from performing any type of work activity whatsoever. During this process, the SSA may request you to attend a consultative exam. During this exam, the physician that you visit will determine the extent of your disability. It will take approximately three to six months from the date you apply to receive a decision from the SSA regarding your application.

If your initial application for disability benefits is denied (and a good percentage are), it's important that you do not give up hope. Many denied applicants go on to successfully appeal the SSA's decision to deny their benefits. You have 60 days from the date you receive the denial notice to file an appeal. In most states, the first stage of appeal is the Request for Reconsideration. It is important to remember, however, that fewer than 20 percent of these appeals are decided in the favor of the applicant. The second stage of appeals, the disability hearing, is when you have the greatest chance of being awarded the benefits you are fighting for. Nearly two-thirds of applicants are awarded benefits as a result of a disability hearing.

If you do need to appeal the SSA's decision to deny your benefits, consider retaining the services of a disability attorney. Statistics have proven that applicants who pursue an appeal with the help of an attorney are more likely to be awarded benefits than applicants who try to represent themselves.

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Social Security Disability Help