



Disability Determination Services Social Security Disability Claim Process

Explanation of DDS personnel roles:

Disability Examiner:

DDS employee who reviews SSA Disability application and may contact applicant for more information about disability.

Medical/ Mental Health Consultant:

Licensed doctor, contracted by DDS, who helps assess the applicant's physical or mental disability.

Consultative Examination (CE):

An exam that may be ordered and paid for by DDS to gather more information about the applicant's disability.

Claim Process:

1. An applicant files their claim at their local Social Security Office.
2. The field office sends the claim to DDS where it is assigned to a Disability Examiner.
3. The Disability Examiner analyzes the application and relevant medical and employment records to determine whether the disability criteria as established by the Social Security Administration (SSA) are met. The Disability Examiner may receive advice from in-house medical and mental health consultants.
 - a. If additional medical/ mental health evidence is needed, DDS schedules and sends applicant for a Consultative Examination (CE). The CE report is completed by an independent consultant and returned to DDS for review. The Disability Examiner will make a determination based on Federal regulations.
 - b. If there is sufficient medical/mental health evidence to make a determination, the Disability Examiner will make a determination based on Federal regulations.
4. Disability Examiner notifies SSA of their determination.
5. SSA notifies the individual of the final determination.