

Social Security Disability and VA Disability

If you're currently receiving benefits from the VA, you may not realize that you could be entitled to assistance from the [Social Security Administration \(SSA\)](#) as well. The SSA offers monthly disability benefits for people of all ages who are no longer able to work due to a [serious disability](#). Many veterans' claims will even be expedited, meaning you could be approved in as little as 10 days.

Medically Qualifying for Social Security Disability

The Social Security disability application process is a little different than the VA disability process. You must be *completely* unable to work to receive Social Security disability benefits. This means that veterans with a low disability rating from the VA may have a tough time qualifying unless they have another disability that was diagnosed after leaving the armed forces. Usually, if your disability rating is 70% or higher, you'll have a good chance of approval.

The SSA uses [its own manual](#) of qualifying conditions to review and approve Social Security applicants. Common qualifying conditions for wounded warriors often include amputations, spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, or PTSD. For example, if you lost the use of your legs while on active duty, your claim could be approved if you cannot do any one of the following activities:

- Stand from a seated position
- Balance while standing
- Walk without use of two crutches, a walker, and a wheelchair

You can review the SSA's manual of disability eligibility criteria [online](#) with your doctor to determine if you have a disability that will qualify for benefits.

Expedited Claims for Wounded Warriors

The process for approval for disability claims can be very lengthy. For example, it usually takes 5 months to even hear back from the SSA regarding your claim. If your claim is denied, it may take up to two *years* to schedule a hearing to present your case in front of a judge.

The SSA will automatically expedite claims for any veterans who have a [100% P&T disability rating](#), or who were wounded on active duty on or after October 1, 2001. While you won't be guaranteed benefits if you fall into either category, you'll have a better chance of approval and you'll hear back from the SSA in just a couple of weeks. Simply mark your status as a wounded warrior on the final page of your Social Security disability application.

Starting Your Application

When you're ready to apply for disability, you can do so easily on the [SSA's website](#). If you'd rather apply with the help of a Social Security representative, you can do so by making an appointment to apply at your [closest SSA office](#). You can call the SSA toll free at 1-800-772-1213 with any questions regarding your application.

Social Security disability and VA disability payments should not affect one another. Once approved, you can focus on what matters most: Your health and transition back to civilian life.

Resources Found Via:

- <https://www.ssa.gov>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/planners/disability/qualify.html#anchor2>
- <https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/glossary/social-security-blue-book>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/disability/professionals/bluebook/>
- <https://secure.ssa.gov/iClaim/dib>
- <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10565.pdf>
- <https://www.disability-benefits-help.org/social-security-disability-locations>