

Qualifying for Social Security Disability Benefits With a Rare Disease

Rare diseases are extremely difficult to prove and win for Social Security Disability Insurance. Our attorneys work on these cases everyday.

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Suffering any illness or chronic disease can take a considerable toll on both your physical and mental health, along with your finances. When your condition is one that is rare or difficult to diagnose, challenges can seem almost insurmountable at times. [Social security disability benefits \(SSDI\)](#) provide a lifeline in these situations, helping to ensure your needs are provided for by offsetting losses in income you suffer. Unfortunately, the less common your condition, the more likely you will have to fight for your rights. This is where our Social Security disability attorney can help.



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We have 12 offices conveniently located throughout Pennsylvania, and you pay nothing unless we win your case.”

Jason Krasno, CEO

At [Krasno, Krasno & Onwudinjo](#), our firm has been dedicated to helping Pennsylvania residents get the benefits to which they are entitled since 1936. With three generations of attorneys ready to assist you, we act as a trusted legal advocate on your behalf. We can guide you through the often complicated and confusing SSDI application process, working with you to help you get the benefits to which you are entitled.

Rare Diseases and Social Security Disability

The Social Security Administration (SSA) provides government funded, financial assistance to those who suffer disabilities that prevent them from working through Social Security Disability Insurance

(SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits.

As outlined in a previous post on the difference between SSI and SSDI benefits, SSI is a taxpayer-funded, need-based program, whereas funding for SSDI comes directly from taxes you pay through your paycheck. This is why it is referred to as insurance. You pay into the program while you work so that benefits are there when you need them, due to injuries or chronic health conditions that result in ongoing disabilities.

The SSA definition of a disability is a condition that prevents you from engaging in substantial gainful activity (SGA), which is work either for or intended for pay or profit. To qualify for SSDI benefits, a medical determination must indicate that you suffer a condition that either has lasted or is expected to last for a period of a year or more, or to eventually result in your death. This is where it can be particularly challenging for those with rare conditions, which often involve unnamed conditions or symptoms that are difficult for a doctor to diagnose.

The Genetic and Rare Diseases Information Center (GARD), which is funded by the National Institutes of Health, states that a rare condition is one that fewer than 200,000 people suffer. In addition to chromosome disorders and genetic or congenital diseases, these conditions can also include the following:

- Autoimmune diseases;
- Behavioral and mental disorders;
- Diseases affecting the connective tissues;
- Disease of the endocrine system;
- Nervous system diseases;
- Viral or bacterial infections;
- Diseases affecting the heart, lungs, or kidneys;
- Rare forms of cancer;
- Skin diseases.

According to GARD, there is also a whole classification of diseases in which sufferers experience a variety of symptoms, yet the condition itself is as yet unnamed.

SSDI Requirements

SSDI requirements are based both on your medical condition as well as your work history. Under the SSA guidelines, you must pass a recent work test based on the age you became disabled, and the amount of time you spent working prior to the disability. Under this formula, even a young person with a limited work history can be approved, provided they worked a minimum number of years.

There are also medical requirements which must be met to be eligible for SSDI benefits, and these can prove more challenging for those with rare conditions. The SSA has a list of impairments which it considers to be severe enough to qualify as a disability, particularly if they prevent you from working in your previous field or from obtaining other employment. To determine whether you qualify as having

one of these conditions, you need to present medical evidence. This may include:

- The names and address of previous and current medical providers;
- Statements from your doctors, specialists, caseworkers, and other professionals familiar with your condition;
- Any diagnostic testing you have undergone and test results;
- Medical and hospital records pertaining to treatments you have received;
- A list of medications you are currently taking or have been previously prescribed.

Obtaining a decision on social security disability benefits can be a lengthy and time-consuming process, particularly if you suffer a rare or unnamed condition. In these situations, our Social Security disability attorney may be able to advise you on qualifying under the Compassionate Allowances program.

This can help cut through red tape and quickly identify a serious condition, allowing you to get your SSDI benefits sooner. The SSA keeps a list of rare diseases which qualify under this program. If your condition is not currently listed, we may be able to help you submit it so it can be added.

Social Security Disability Benefits Questions

In a previous post, we addressed some social security disability benefits questions clients often ask. Among the most common, particularly for those with rare diseases, include:

What Types of SSDI Benefits are Available?

Social security disability provides compensation based on your previous earnings. The SSA offers online calculators, to help you get a general idea of what the amount you are entitled to might be. While SSDI benefits do not include medical coverage, you may be eligible for Medicaid or Medicare once you have been receiving benefits for a period of time.

Can I Still Work While Receiving SSDI Benefits?

In most cases, you may continue to work provided your income does not exceed SGA limits. Social security even offers incentive programs providing additional assistance, such as job training and help with any medical devices or transportation costs associated with your job.

Are Benefits Available to My Family Members?

Once you are approved for SSDI benefits, your spouse, former spouse, young children, or any adult children with disabilities may be eligible for benefits of up to 50% of your own disability rate.

What if My Social Security Disability Benefit Application is Denied?

SSDI benefit denials are common. If your application is denied or if you think you are not getting the total amount of benefits to which you are entitled, our Social Security disability attorney may be able to help you request a reconsideration, an administrative hearing, or file an appeal in your case.

Contact Our Social Security Disability Attorney Today

When suffering the devastating effects of a rare disease or a chronic, unnamed condition, it can prevent you from working and providing for yourself and those you love. In times like these, Social Security disability benefits can help provide the financial security you need.

At Krasno, Krasno & Onwudinjo, we offer experienced, professional legal representation you can count on to help you get the benefits to which you are entitled. Whether it is in guiding you in filing your claim, gathering the necessary medical evidence for your application, or appealing a denied claim, we act as a strong legal advocate on your side, helping to ensure that your rights are protected.

Contact our office at 800-952-9640 and request a one on one consultation with one of our experienced Philadelphia social security disability attorneys today. We have 12 offices conveniently located throughout Pennsylvania, and you pay nothing unless we win your case.

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