

VETERANS ALERT

DO YOU HAVE A VETERAN COMPENSATION RATING OF 100% AND PLANNING TO APPLY FOR SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY?

The Social Security Administration recently launched an initiative to expedite disability claims filed by veterans who have a U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs Compensation rating of 100% Permanent & Total (P&T).

What Do You Need To Know?

The Veterans Affairs and Social Security Administration pay disability benefits to qualifying individuals but, their programs, processing, and criteria for receiving benefits are different. A Veterans Affairs compensation rating of 100% P&T does *not* guarantee that you will receive Social Security disability benefits but does ensure a faster decision. In order to receive disability benefits from Social Security, a person must have a severe impairment that is expected to last one year or to result in death. The impairment must prevent the person from being able to perform substantial work.

If you receive Veterans Affairs compensation, this will not affect your Social Security benefits.

How Can I Be Sure My Claim Will Be Expedited?

When you apply in person or over the phone:

- Identify yourself as a "Veteran rated 100% P&T"

If you apply online:

- Enter "Veteran 100% P&T" in the "Remarks" section of the application.

Provide Social Security with your Veterans Affairs notification letter which verifies your rating. If you apply in person bring this form with you. If you apply by phone or online you will have to mail the form to your Social Security office. Make sure to make a copy. Mail using a return receipt so you have proof you sent it and be sure to put your social security number on your correspondence.

How Will My Claim Be Expedited?

Once Social Security identifies you as a veteran rated 100% P&T, they will treat your claim as a high priority and rush it through the application and appeals process.

How to Apply for Social Security Disability or Supplemental Security Income

There are three ways to apply for these benefits:

- Apply online at www.socialsecurity.gov;
- Call the toll-free number, 1-800-772-1213. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call the SSA toll-free TTY number 1-800-325-0778; or
- Call or visit your local Social Security office.

If you live abroad, your claim will still be expedited.

How Long Does the Process Take?

The length of time it takes Social Security to make a disability decision depends on several factors including:

- The nature of your disability
- How quickly they obtain medical evidence from your doctors or other medical sources
- Whether it is necessary to send you for a medical examination

You can assist in the process by gathering the names, addresses and treatment dates of all doctors or other medical professionals treating you for the disability.

Also, prepare a list of your medications and your work history.

For More Information

You can find more information at:

www.socialsecurity.gov/pgm/disability-pt.htm

If you are a veteran and have questions about social security disability benefits you can contact the disAbility Law Center of Virginia at 804-225-2042 or (800) 552-3962 (TTY/VOICE) or email: info@dLCV.org.