

Checklist for applying for Social Security Disability and Supplemental Security Income benefits due to early-onset (younger-onset) Alzheimer's disease

Both programs provide monthly benefit checks and are administered by the Social Security Administration.

- **Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)** — An applicant must have sufficient work credit, be unable to work and meet the disability criterion for younger-onset (early-onset) Alzheimer's disease. Family members (e.g., a spouse or minor child) may also be eligible to receive benefits under these programs based on the applicant's work record.
- **Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** — An applicant must be aged, blind or disabled and have limited income and assets.
- While the programs are different, SSA uses the same criterion for determining whether an applicant is disabled due to younger-onset (early-onset) Alzheimer's disease.

How to apply

- In person at your local SSA office (strongly recommended): Applicants should call 800.772.1213 to schedule an appointment. Do not walk in for service without an appointment.
- By telephone: Call SSA's toll-free telephone number, 800.772.1213. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you can call SSA at TTY 800.325.0778.
- Online: socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability.

Important tips when applying

- Do not delay applying for SSDI benefits. You should apply for benefits if you have younger-onset (early-onset) Alzheimer's disease and are unable to work. You may lose substantial benefits by waiting to apply.
- When asked by the SSA claims representative what the disabling condition is, specify "early-onset Alzheimer's disease," not just Alzheimer's disease.
- Many applicants receive help with the application process from their families, close friends or professionals.

Information needed

To apply for SSDI or SSI benefits, the following information needs to be obtained and documents completed, either in person or online:

- Application for SSDI benefit: socialsecurity.gov/applyfordisability.
 - There is no online SSI application at this time.
- Medical Release Form (SSA-827): ssa.gov/online/ssa-827.pdf.

- Adult disability report:
socialsecurity.gov/disability/disability_starter_kits_adult_eng.htm.
- Medical and Job Worksheet – optional but very helpful for interview:
ssa.gov/disability/Documents/SSA-3381.pdf
- Original or certified copy of your birth certificate.
 - If born in another country, proof of age and U.S. citizenship or legal residency.
- If you were in the military, an original or certified copy of military discharge papers.
- If you worked, a copy of the W-2 from last year. Or if self-employed, a copy of your federal tax return with Schedules C and SE.
- Workers' compensation information, if applicable.
- Social Security number for spouse and minor children, if applicable.
- Your checking and/or savings account numbers, if you have them.
- Name, address and phone number of a person SSA can contact if unable to reach you.

Medical information needed — to prove that you have been diagnosed with early-onset (younger-onset) Alzheimer's disease:

- Names, addresses and telephone numbers of your health care providers, including primary physician, neurologist, neuropsychologist and/or psychiatrist.
- The name and dosage information for all the medications that you are taking or have taken, especially for early-onset Alzheimer's disease.
- Medical records from your health care providers, including primary physician, neurologist, neuropsychologist and/or psychiatrist. It is very helpful and important for the health records to show that there is a progressive decline in function or test scores over time.
 - If you do not have the medical records, SSA will help obtain them for you, but this may delay the determination process.
- Pertinent clinical information, which should be included in the medical records, includes: history of onset (appropriate time when symptoms began); description of cognitive and functional impairments at home and at work; results from neurological, cognitive or neuropsychological examinations; and results from neuroimaging.
- Activities of daily living report or similar report completed by a relative or caregiver.
- Documentation of dementia by standardized testing, such as Clinical Dementia Rating (CDR) with a score of > 1, Mini Mental State Exam (MMSE) of <24, or equivalent test, is helpful.

After you apply

The Social Security office will assist you in filling the application for benefits, but the actual decision is made by a disability case examiner in your state, usually working for an agency called the Disability Determination Service or Disability Determination Bureau. If you receive written correspondence or a phone call from a disability examiner, that person is working on your claim and requires your cooperation.

Helpful resources

The Alzheimer's Association: alz.org.

Social Security Administration: socialsecurity.gov. Specifically, there is a Social Security Disability Planner at socialsecurity.gov/dibplan.

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