



# Social Security

## How We Decide If You Are Still Disabled

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# How We Decide If You Are Still Disabled

**I**n most cases, you are reading this leaflet because you just got a letter telling you we were going to review your medical condition. We are required by law to review the medical condition of all people receiving disability benefits from time to time to make sure they continue to be disabled.

Generally, if your health has not improved, or if your disability still keeps you from working, you will continue to receive your benefits.



## We will gather the information

To help us make our decision, we first will gather new information about your medical condition.

- We will ask your doctors, hospitals, and other medical sources for your medical records. We will ask them how your medical condition limits your activities, what your medical tests show, and what medical treatments you have been given.
- If we need more information, we will ask you to go for a special examination or test for which we will pay.

## We will review the facts

Next, we will look at what your medical condition was when we last reviewed your case. We also will look at any new health problems you may have.

We will make a decision about whether or not your medical condition has improved. If we decide your medical condition has improved, we will make a decision about whether or not your medical condition has improved enough to allow you to work.

We also will look to see if your overall medical condition affects the kind of work you can do. This includes the work you did in the past and any other kind of work you might be able to do now.

## How your benefits are affected

If your medical condition has improved to the extent that we decide you can work, your benefits will stop.

Your disability benefits also will stop in the following situations:

- You have benefited from vocational training or advances in medical treatment or vocational technology and because of this you can work.
- We made a mistake in an earlier decision to give you or continue your disability benefits.
- You are not following the treatment your doctor ordered (without a good reason), and you probably could work if you followed the treatment.
- You gave us false or misleading information when we made an earlier decision.
- You are not cooperating with us, and you do not have a good reason for not cooperating.

- You are working and your average monthly earnings show that you are doing substantial gainful work. The amount of earnings we consider substantial and gainful changes each year. For the current figure, refer to the annual *Update* (Publication No. 05-10003). However, this situation will not affect Supplemental Security Income payments.

If we decide your disability benefits will stop, and you disagree, you can appeal our decision. That means you can ask us to look at your case again. When you get a letter telling you about our decision, the letter will tell you how you can appeal the decision.

## Contacting Social Security

For more information and to find copies of our publications, visit our website at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov) or call toll-free, **1-800-772-1213** (for the deaf or hard of hearing, call our TTY number, **1-800-325-0778**). We treat all calls confidentially. We can answer specific questions from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday. We can provide information by automated phone service 24 hours a day.

We also want to make sure you receive accurate and courteous service. That is why we have a second Social Security representative monitor some telephone calls.



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