



SSI At-A-Glance: What Happens When I Turn 18?

A Supplemental Security Income (SSI) child benefit will go through a review called the Age-18 Redetermination. You will automatically get a form requesting information.

Adult Definition of Disability

Social Security bases the new decision on the adult definition of disability. Some conditions are assumed to be disabling and are automatically approved, others are not. In general, in order to qualify for SSI as an adult, your disability must:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Significantly limit your ability to work2. Be expected to or has lasted a year or more3. Prevent Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)* | } | If medical and vocational reports fully support this, then SSI should continue. |
|---|---|---|

*[Substantial Gainful Activity](#) is Social Security's limit on how much you can earn and still be considered disabled. This amount changes every year.

What if my benefits are denied?

If Social Security decides at the Age-18 Redetermination that you do not meet the adult definition of disability, your benefits will end after 2 months.



Actions You Can Take Immediately to Disagree With This Decision

After a denial, if you believe your disability limits your ability to work, you must act quickly if you want to try to keep your benefit.

- To disagree you must **APPEAL within 60 days**. Follow the instructions in the denial letter to appeal or call Social Security's toll free number 800-772-1213 to request an appeal form; **and**
- You may also **CONTINUE YOUR SSI CHILD BENEFITS DURING THE APPEAL PROCESS** if you go to a Social Security office **WITHIN 10 CALENDAR DAYS of the date on the letter**. Be aware, you can appeal several times but if all appeals are denied, your SSI will end and you will have to pay back the benefits paid to you during the appeal process, but you will have a right to appeal this, too.
- Keep in mind: if all appeals are denied and your SSI stops you can re-apply later when you have more proof that you can't work.



What Can I Do to Avoid a Denial at the Age 18 Re-determination?

MAKE SURE EVALUATIONS ARE CURRENT: Before you turn 18, be sure to get updated medical, educational and/or psychological evaluations that clearly tell how the disability affects you and how it will limit your ability to work. Be sure Social Security knows how to collect this information by adding the evaluators' contact information to the form you receive from Social Security.

TELL SOCIAL SECURITY YOUR SCHOOL OR VOCATIONAL PLANS: In the Remarks Section of the form that you receive from Social Security, state if you plan to remain in high school and/or if you are a client of DARS or any other work or training assistance program. If you continue your education or are getting help to work, Social Security may continue your SSI benefit while you complete these programs even if they decide you do not meet the adult definition of disability.

EXPLAIN ANY WORK EFFORTS: In the Remarks Section of the form, list each work effort, even those that only lasted a few days, weeks, or months. List the title of the job, # of hours a week you worked, your hourly wage, difficulties you had on the job, and why the job ended. Include all assistance you needed to get and keep the job such as a special work program or even if it is a parent finding the job or setting up an interview.

Keeping Medicaid and Your Waiver Services

Once you turn 18, keeping your waiver services under Medicaid depends on you receiving SSI. If you do not receive SSI benefits as a child you will have to undergo disability determination 90 days before turning 18. Your Medicaid eligibility worker should contact your parent or responsible person to start this process so your Medicaid benefits remain in place as you apply for SSI at age 18. A parent can also start this process to be sure it happens on time.