



**Social Security is with you
throughout life's journey**

Michigan Updates

A Social Security Newsletter highlighting
Social Security Disability (SSDI) and
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

July 2017

2017 Trustees Report – Live Facebook Chat with Social Security's Chief Actuary

The Social Security Board of Trustees has released its annual report quantifying the long-term financial status of the Social Security trust funds. Please see the [press release](#) for details.

On Monday, July 17 at 7:00 p.m. ET, join us for a conversation on the future of Social Security with special guest Steve Goss, Chief Actuary of the Social Security Administration.

During this Facebook Live, Mr. Goss will discuss the annual Trustees Report, explain key facts, and highlight important dates. Find out what this information means for current beneficiaries and future generations.

Have a question about the Social Security Trust Funds? Mr. Goss will be taking your questions LIVE on Facebook. Don't miss this engaging discussion on news you need to know. [RSVP](#) today!





You are invited to participate in Social Security's seventh National Disability Forum on:

"Serving Individuals with Disabilities: Best Practices and the Modern Day Workforce."

**Tuesday, August 1, 2017
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. EDT**

National Education Association
1201 16th Street NW
Washington DC.

You may also participate in the forum via teleconference. [Register to participate.](#)

Best Practices from Other Disability Programs

This forum will focus on understanding best practices from other disability programs. Specifically, it will be a moderated question and answer session to obtain insights from private industry, non-profit and federal government experts in the disability arena about their programs' operations and best practices in the following areas:

- Obtaining information to conduct functional assessments for individuals with disabilities
- Strategies for retrieving medical and non-medical evidence in an electronic format
- Using video technology, decision support tools (e.g., natural language processing and machine learning), and data analytics
- Developing a communication strategy when implementing new policy and technology
- Identifying a clear path for individuals with disabilities to return to work

Winthrop Cashdollar, Executive Director, Product Policy, America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), will moderate the discussion.

Join the Online Discussion

We also invite you to follow us on Twitter and ask questions during the event. The Twitter handle is [@SSAOutreach](#). Please use #SSANDForum.

For all of the details on the forum, go to www.ssa.gov/ndf/.

The Disability Decision Process

By: Hillary Kanady, Area Work Incentive Coordinator

To qualify for Social Security disability benefits, an individual must have worked in jobs covered by Social Security and must have a medical condition that meets Social Security's definition of disability. In general, we pay monthly cash benefits to people who are unable to work for a year or more because of a disability.

1. Is the individual working?

In 2017, if earnings average more than \$1,170 a month, an individual generally cannot be considered disabled. If not working, we will send the application to the [Disability Determination Services](#) office that will make the decision about the medical condition. (Steps 2-5).

2. Is the condition severe?

The condition must interfere with basic work-related activities for the claim to be considered. If it does not, we will find that the individual is not disabled. If the condition does interfere with basic work-related activities, we go to Step 3.

3. Is the condition found in the list of disabling conditions?

For each of the major body systems, we maintain a [list of medical conditions](#) that are so severe they automatically mean that an individual is disabled. If the condition is not on the list, we have to decide if it is of equal severity to a medical condition that is on the list. If it is, we will find that the individual is disabled. If it is not, we then go to Step 4.

4. Can the individual do previous work?

If the condition is severe but not at the same or equal level of severity as a medical condition on the list, then we must determine if it interferes with the ability to do the work the individual did previously. If it does not, the claim will be denied. If it does, we proceed to Step 5.

5. Can the individual do any other type of work?

If the individual cannot do the work he or she did in the past, we see if the individual is able to adjust to other work. We consider medical conditions and age, education, past work experience and any transferable skills he or she may have. If the individual cannot adjust to other work, the claim will be approved. If the individual can adjust to other work, the claim will be denied.

To learn more about Disability benefits, use our Disability Planner at <https://www.ssa.gov/planners/disability/>.

Hillary Kanady is the Area Work Incentive Coordinator for Social Security located in Grand Rapids MI. If you have a client that you are assisting with returning to work and have questions or you have an event or training need, contact Hillary Kanady at hillary.kanady@ssa.gov

Social Security is... Social!

We once considered Twitter, Facebook, and other social media as casual pastimes. Now they are a vital part of the way your government communicates with you. We keep you and your clients up-to-date with policy changes and benefits information, and inform people about newly developed tools that make conducting business with us easier and more secure.



Connect with Social Security on

- Advocate Twitter (www.twitter.com/SSAOutreach);
- Facebook (www.facebook.com/socialsecurity); and
- Our social media hub (www.socialsecurity.gov/socialmedia)

In addition, you can always access www.socialsecurity.gov for detailed program and benefit information.

We listen. We respond.

Below is a recent comment from a member of our Facebook community and our response:



“Our Social Security office in Concord, NH is equally well-staffed. Everyone, from the front lobby staff to the office staff are exceptionally customer service oriented. I have been there for two appointments over the past couple of years and the quality of sincere attentiveness until all questions have been answered is truly remarkable.” - Gail A.W. Thank you for your kind feedback, Gail! You can also do much of your business with Social Security online, see all your options here: <http://ow.ly/22ho30b0QMY>

Future Michigan Updates

If you would like to be on the mailing list to receive future Michigan Updates, or if you would like to be removed from the mailing list, please send an email to vonda.vantil@ssa.gov