

## WHAT DO I DO IF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION DENIES ME BENEFITS AFTER A HEARING?

If you received a decision with which you are not satisfied with the decision from the Social Security Administration (SSA) judge, you have the right to appeal the decision.

### HOW DO I APPEAL THE JUDGE'S DECISION?

You can appeal a decision by the local Office of Disability Adjudication and Review to another section of SSA called the Appeals Council. If you ask, the Appeals Council will review the decision to see if it's correct. If it decides the local Office of Disability Adjudication and Review was wrong, it will change the decision to make it right.

You must file a Request for Review of the local judge's decision within 60 days of the date of that decision. You do so by filing the attached form at your local SSA office.

You may also mail a copy of the Request for Review by certified mail to the Appeals Council directly. Make sure to keep the green receipt as proof of your appeal. Attached is a sample letter that you can send to the Appeals Council with the Request for Review. The letter asks the Appeals Council to send you the exhibit file and a copy of the hearing tapes. This information will be helpful if you find an attorney to help you with your case.

## HOW CAN I FIND AN ATTORNEY TO HELP ME?

If you want other legal advice on this matter, you can check the yellow pages of the phone book for the names of private attorneys. We also suggest that you check with friends and relatives for the names of attorneys that they can recommend.

Finally, you can contact the Miami-Dade Lawyer Referral Service at (305) 350-5297 and can ask for a referral to an attorney who is on the Low Cost Panel. You must pay \$25.00 in advance to obtain a referral to an attorney. Please call their phone number for more information about this service.

## HOW LONG WILL THE APPEAL TAKE?

Right now, the Appeals Council takes 18 to 24 months to review appeals. Because of this, you may want to file a new application for benefits with SSA. This should not affect your appeal and may protect any current benefits for which you might be eligible.

Date

Appeals Council  
Office of Disability Adjudication and Review  
5107 Leesburg Pike  
Falls Church, VA 22041-3255

Re:  
SSN

Dear Appeals Council Members:

In the above referenced case an unfavorable was issued by the Administrative Law Judge on . I disagree with the decision and therefore timely request review of the same.

Please send me copy of the exhibit file and hearing tape(s) and allow me 45 days from the date of mailing of the same to obtain legal representation and file written comments and additional evidence.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Claimant

Street address & Apt No.

City, State & Zip Code

Area Code & Phone #